

A Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain

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A
Complete Edition
of the
Poets
of
GREAT BRITAIN.

Volume the First.

— *Containing* —
Chaucer, Surrey, Wyatt & Sackville.



L O N D O N .

Printed for John & Arthur Arch, 23. Gracechurch Street:
and for Bell & Bradfute & I Mundell & C^o Edinburgh.

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P R E F A C E.

WHEN a new collection of English Poetry is offered to the public, it will doubtless be inquired what are the deficiencies of preceding collections, which another editor may hope to supply.

On referring back to the several publications of this kind, which have exercised the abilities of other persons, the reader will see on what ground the editor judged the work, which he now presents to the world, to be necessary.

English literature is undoubtedly under no small obligations to those who have associated the scattered productions of our poets in one collection, and by that means have secured their general preservation.

Tottell, editor of the "Songes and Sonnettes" of Surrey, Wyat, and of "Uncertain Authors," 1557, the first printed Poetical Miscellany in the English language; Allot, editor of "England's Parnassus," 1600; Bodenham, editor of "Belvidere, or the Garden of the Muses," 1600; and the anonymous editors of the "Paradise of Daintie Devises," 1573; and "England's Helicon," 1600; have preserved many admirable specimens of ancient genius, which would have mouldered in manuscript, or perhaps, from their detached and fugitive state of existence, their want of length, the capriciousness of taste, the general depredations of time, inattention, and other accidents, would never have reached the present age.

Mrs. Cooper, in her "Muses Library," 1737; Mr. Hayward, in his "British Muse," 1738; Mr. Capel in his "Prolusions," 1740; Dr. Percy in his "Reliques," 1765; Mr. Evans, in his "Old Ballads," 1777; Mr. Headley, in his "Beauties of Ancient English Poetry," 1787; and Mr. Ritson, in his "Ancient Songs," 1789, followed the same plan, in consequence of which many valuable pieces are rescued from oblivion, that, from their brevity and unconnectedness, could not possibly have survived for any length of time by themselves; and many judicious selections are made, from an attentive perusal of antique and obsolete writers, which exhibit complete and satisfactory specimens of their different modes of writing.

The collections of a similar nature, formed by Davison, Dryden, Fenton, Steele, Pope, Pemberton, Lintot, C. Tooke, Doddsley, Fawkes, Donaldson, Pearch and Nichols, contain an infinite number of small poems, many of which must be allowed to possess considerable merit; being the productions of men of real genius, who, from the brevity, rather than the inferiority of their writings, have been usually styled "Minor Poets."

A degree of praise not much inferior to that which the above compilers have acquired, is due to editors, who, uniting industry with taste, have presented the public with uniform and elegant editions of the Works of the British Poets, in the manner of those of Italy, Spain, and France.

The first collection of English Poetry which appeared in these kingdoms, was formed by Dr. Blair, and printed at Edinburgh, in 42 vols. 12mo, 1773, for Messrs. Creech and Balfour, booksellers, containing the works of Milton, Cowley, Butler, Dryden, Waller, Garth, Prior, Addison, Parnell, Pope, Gay, Swift, Young, Thomson, Shenstone, Gray, and Lyttleton. The elegance of this edition is no compensation for its incompleteness. The contracted list of authors marked out by Dr. Blair, includes none of those who have justly obtained the distinction of being denominated our older classics, except Milton and Cowley. Nor do the contents of the work correspond with its title, many long and valuable pieces of Cowley, Parnell, Swift, and Shenstone, being omitted in the collection of their respective works. This mode of publishing modern works of credit, the contents of

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which happen to be unequal, unless immediately intended for the use of schools, does but multiply books to no good end. By anticipating him, it deprives the reader of that pleasure which every one feels, and of that right which every one is entitled to, of judging for himself. Cowley, Parnell, Swift, and Shenstone, are far too well known to stand in need of such partial recommendation, and, in fact, hold a most distinguished rank in the "school of the people."

In 1776, a Collection of English Poetry, upon a more extensive plan, was undertaken by Mr. Bell, bookseller in London, to be printed by the Martins, at the Apollo Press, Edinburgh, in 109 miniature volumes, ornamented with engravings, containing the entire works of the authors admitted into Dr. Blair's edition, and the works of Chaucer, Spenser, Donne, Denham, Roscommon, Buckingham, Lansdown, King, Pomfret, Congreve, Rowe, Watts, J. Philips, Smith, Hughes, Fenton, Tickell, Somerville, Broome, Savage, Pitt, A. Philips, Dyer, G. West, Hammond, Collins, Moore, Armstrong, R. West, Mallet, Cunningham, and Churchill. The works of the several authors were published separately, without any regard to chronological order, and at long intervals, some of the later volumes being printed at London in 1787. In this edition, three of our older classics appear, to whom no place had been given in Dr. Blair's edition, and several modern writers of credit are adopted as legitimate and established poets. Such, however, is the fate of the work, that we seldom see it entire, but meet with its contents wandering separately, and disjointed in every catalogue.

In 1779, while Mr. Bell's publication was going forward, the London booksellers published a collection of the "Works of the English Poets," in 60 vols. small 8vo, with Prefaces Biographical and Critical, by Dr. Johnson, and heads engraved by Bartolozzi, &c.

The following account of this undertaking, as given by Mr. Edward Dilly, in a letter to Mr. Boswell, dated, Southill, Sept. 26. 1777, will not be unentertaining to those who delight in tracing the progress of works of literature; since it was the occasion of procuring for us an elegant collection of the best biography and criticism of which our language can boast.

"The edition of the Poets now printing will do honour to the English press, and a concise account of the life of each author by Dr. Johnson, will be a very valuable addition, and stamp the reputation of this edition, superior to any thing that is gone before. The first cause that gave rise to this undertaking, I believe, was owing to the little trifling edition of the Poets printing by the Martins, at Edinburgh, and to be sold by Bell in London. Upon examining the volumes which were printed, the type was found so extremely small, that many persons could not read them: Not only this inconvenience attended it, but the inaccuracy of the press was very conspicuous. These reasons, as well as the idea of an invasion of what we call our Literary Property, induced the London booksellers to print an elegant and accurate edition of *all the English Poets of reputation, from Chaucer to the present time.*

"Accordingly a select number of the most respectable booksellers met on the occasion, and, consulting together, agreed, that all the proprietors of copy-right in the various poets, should be summoned together, and when their opinions were given, to proceed immediately to business. Accordingly a meeting was held, consisting of about forty of the most respectable booksellers of London, when it was agreed, that an elegant and uniform edition of "The English Poets" should be immediately printed, with a concise account of the life of each author, by Dr. Samuel Johnson; and that three persons should be deputed to wait upon Dr. Johnson, to solicit him to undertake the Lives, viz. T. Davies, Strahan, and Cadell. The Doctor very politely undertook it, and seemed exceedingly pleased with the proposal. As to the terms, it was left entirely to the Doctor to name his own; he mentioned two hundred guineas; it was immediately agreed to, and a farther compliment, I believe, will be made him. A committee was likewise appointed to engage the best engravers, viz. Bartolozzi, Sherwin, Hall, &c.; likewise another committee for giving directions about the paper, printing, &c.: so that the whole will be conducted with spirit, and in the best manner, with respect to authorship, editorship, engravings, &c. &c. My brother will give you a list of the Poets we mean to give, many of which are within the time of the act of Queen Anne, which Martin and Bell cannot give, as they have no property in them; the proprietors are almost all the booksellers in London, of consequence."

The plan of this edition, so happily conceived, was more ample than the execution. Instead of comprehending "all the English poets of reputation from Chaucer to the present time," it was unaccountably limited to a list of *fifty-three* authors, beginning with Cowley and ending with Lyttleton; all of whom appear in Mr. Bell's edition, except Rochester, Otway, Dorset, Stepney, Walsh, Duke, Sprat, Halifax, and Blackmore; who are displaced, to make room for Chaucer, Spenser, Donne, Armstrong, R. West, Cunningham, and Churchill.

The managers of this edition are liable to some censure, for admitting so few of our older classics in a work which bore so close a relation to the honour of the nation, and which, from its elegance and magnitude, afforded the happiest opportunity of uniting our poets, both ancient and modern, in one comprehensive view, and of combining their respective excellencies in one common interest. Ancient poetry, in thus being exhibited to the public eye, would soon have made good her claims to notice, and of herself recovered the long-lost verdure of her bays; whilst the justice of that latitude which is commonly assigned to later improvements, from a fair opportunity of a comparative examination, might have been more strictly ascertained.

It is well known, that the ostensible editor was ever glad to escape the censure which the work had fallen under, by alleging, that, with the exception of Pomfret, Yalden, Blackmore, and Watts, he had nothing to do with the selection; he had engaged himself only to furnish a set of Lives to such a list as the booksellers, who were the responsible publishers of the work, should think proper.

Dr. Johnson gave up his life to the literature of his country; a portion of it would not have been thrown away, had it been dedicated to the completion of such an undertaking. In the esteem of the booksellers, he stood very high, perhaps higher than any man of his age, and there cannot be a doubt, but that the management of the work, on the least desire intimated by him, would have been vested in his hands, with the utmost gratitude and confidence.

As the matter stands, it is difficult to guess the reason why the managers of this edition admitted some authors, while others of similar character were rejected. In an edition of poetry, where some of the "wits of Charles's days, the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease," and the heroes of the "Dunciad," are to be found, we rather wonder at not finding others; where Rochester, Roscommon, Sprat, Halifax, Stepney, and Duke, were received, why Carew, Sedley, Hopkins, Marvell, and Oldham, were refused, one is puzzled to guess; and where Pomfret, Yalden, and Blackmore, are preferred to Eusden, Welsted, and Hill, it is not easy to account for the preference. When the publication was undertaken, Armstrong and Langhorne, poets of superior rank, were living; their works, consequently, could not be properly inserted; but Churchill, Smart, and Goldsmith, were dead, and their works certainly had a just claim to admission.

When Dr. Johnson engaged to furnish the booksellers with a "Preface" to the works of each author, it was his intention to have allotted to each poet, an "Advertisement" like those which are found in the French Miscellanies, containing a few dates and a general character. That he was led beyond his intention, "by the honest desire of giving useful pleasure," will be always a subject of congratulation to every reader of taste. That he passed some partial judgments in his "Lives," that he was sometimes blinded by prejudice, that he occasionally saw through the medium of party or religion; and that, without the taste which would enable him to decide, he rashly determined from abstract reasoning, and the examination of a philosopher, where philosophy was an inadequate judge, must be allowed: But, as fine pieces of nervous writing, pregnant with valuable detached opinions, happy illustrations, nice discussions, and a variety of curious incidental information, they will ever be regarded as the richest, most beautiful, and, indeed, most perfect production of his pen.

In 1790, a new edition of this elegant collection was published, in 75 volumes 8vo, which gave the proprietors an opportunity of adding the works of Moore, Cawthorne, Churchill, Falconer, Lloyd, Cunningham, Green, Goldsmith, P. Whitehead, Armstrong, Langhorne, Johnson, W. Whitehead, and Jenyns; and of supplying some deficiencies in the works of the authors printed in the former edition.

"Of the authors now first added," says the Advertisement, "some are inserted, in compliance with the repeated calls of the public; some, in deference to the opinions of persons whose taste cannot be disputed; and some have found a place from the favourable sentiments expressed concerning them to the publishers, from various quarters. In this selection, the proprietors have not been in-

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fluenced by any partiality of their own towards the authors selected; they have endeavoured to obtain the best opinions, and they have implicitly followed them."

This edition is superior to the former, both in elegance and magnitude, and reflects much honour on the taste and liberality of the proprietors; but it is equally deficient in the works of our older classics, and affords similar instances of caprice in the admission to literary honours.

As it was thought necessary to admit P. Whitehead and Jenyns, it seems reasonable to expect that some reason had been given for showing them a distinction which has been denied to Wilkie, Grainger, Smollet and Scott, and above all, to the immortal Spenser.

Of the *fourteen* authors added to the former list of English classics, concise accounts are given, upon Dr. Johnson's original plan; which, happily for both himself and his readers, he relinquished; as it would have conferred not much reputation on the writer, nor have communicated much information to his readers. Accordingly, a few dates and facts are only set down, in the manner of the French *Notices Littéraires*, with occasionally a general character.

When such inconsiderable advances towards bringing forward to notice the older poets, were made by those who, from their situation and influence, were best suited to the task; when our great poetical biographer was not only remiss in restoring them to popularity, but, by his neglect and silence, seemed to insinuate they were undeserving of it; the solicitude of the present editor for their fate, and the attempt now made by him to do them that justice which has been denied them by his predecessors, can require no apology.

In 1792, Mundell and Son, printers in Edinburgh, having resolved to republish the Collection of English poetry, which goes under the name of Dr. Johnson, in the manner of Dr. Knox's "Elegant Extracts in Verse," in *six* volumes large octavo, he took occasion to recommend a collection, upon an enlarged plan, which might unite the works of the ancient and modern poets in one comprehensive view, and exhibit the progress of our national poetry, corresponding with the gradual refinement of language and of manners, from the rudeness and simplicity of a remote period, to the polish and elegance of modern times.

The proprietors, with a liberal spirit of enterprise, worthy of an association of opulent booksellers, readily adopted the plan he recommended, though with some limitations as to the ancient poetry, and resolved to extend their collection to *twelve* volumes, upon his promising to furnish them with a *Biographical and Critical Preface* to the works of each author; an undertaking in which he engaged with more rashness than prudence, amidst cares and avocations of a far different and more important nature, and without a suitable provision of materials.

The list of the works of the older poets, which he originally recommended for republication, comprehended those of Chaucer, *Langland*, *Gower*; the best parts of *Lydgate*, *Barclay*, *Harves*; the best parts of *Skelton*, Surrey, Wyat; the best parts of *Warner*, *Sydney*, *Sackville*, *Spenser*, *Marlow*, *Davies*, *Shakspeare*, *Drayton*, *Daniel*, *Jonson*, *Donne*, *Hall*, *Drummond*, *Stirling*, *Browne*, *P. Fletcher*, *G. Fletcher*; the best parts of *Quarles*, *King*, *Carew*, *Suckling*, *Crashaw*, *Davenant*, and the translations of *Fairfax*, *Sandys*, and *May*. The works of the authors printed in Italics were, on due consideration, omitted; it being thought safer to allure curiosity into this unfrequented track of reading, by a republication of the works of those authors, who, though not either universally read or understood (as must ever be the case with the best elder poets of every country), are notwithstanding familiar to us in conversation, and constantly appealed to in controverted points of poetical taste, than to run the risk of suppressing it totally, by a bulky republication of all or the better parts of the works of those unfortunate authors, who still remain unpopular, merely from the want of being read. The classical compositions of *Barbour*, *James I.*, *Henry the Minstrel*, *Dunbar*, *Douglas* and *Lindsay*, being written in the Scottish language, could not be received into an edition of English poetry.

The list of the works of the modern poets which he originally recommended for republication, comprehended the works of *Marvell*, *C. Cotton*, *Sedley*, *Hopkins*, *Oldham*; *Pattison*, *Hill*, *Eusden*, *Walford*, *Sewall*, *Blair*, *Hamilton*, *Harte*, *Boyse*, *Thompson*, *Cooper*, *Brown*, *Grainger*, *Smollet*, *Wilkie*, *Dodsley*, *Mendez*, *Jenner*, *Kirkpatrick*, *Smart*, *Bruce*, *Chatterton*, *Græme*, *Glover*, *Shaw*, *Lovibond*, *Penrose*, *Mickle*, *Jago*, *Scott*, *Logan*, *N. Cotton*, and *Blacklock*. He was afterwards obliged to abridge this list, and to exclude the authors printed in Italics, on account of the arrangements which the proprietors had made relative to the extent of the collection.

Notwithstanding these limitations, which, on the part of the editor, were unavoidable, it is with some degree of confidence, that he offers to public inspection a Collection of English poetry, which contains the works of *one hundred and fourteen* authors, of whom *forty-nine* are not to be found in the the last edition of the "Works of the English Poets," commonly called Dr. Johnson's edition; and *forty-five* are now, for the first time, received into an edition of English poetry.

In the works of the authors already collected, especially the later authors, some deficiencies have been supplied in the present edition. In the works of *Langborne*, in particular, the additions are numerous and important. They are such as a reader of English poetry will readily distinguish, and therefore unnecessary to be pointed out.

Though the editor has exerted himself with considerable attention, to render the works of the authors now first collected, as complete as possible; yet copies of *Surrey's* translation of the *second* and *fourth* books of the *Æneid*, *Davies's Epigrams*, *P. Fletcher's* Latin and English poem on the *Jesuits* and *Sicilides*, a *Piscatory drama*, *Harte's Essay on Reason*, *Shaw's Four Farthing Candles*, *Brown's Liberty*, and some pieces of other authors, have eluded his diligence. The works of *Chatterton* might have been enlarged by additions from *Mr. Barret's "History of Bristol,"* and "*Supplement to Chatterton's Miscellanies,*" which could not be obtained in due time. *Gray's Sonnet on Sir William Williams*, *Mickle's Prophecy of Queen Emma*, *Johnson's Marmor Norfolkense*, and some other little pieces, happened to be overlooked at the press.

The editor does not wish to be understood as having performed more than he has actually done. For the selection of the authors, he is solely responsible. What pleased himself he has ventured to recommend to others; a task of such difficulty requires the candid allowance of the reader, for the unavoidable differences of taste and judgment. The recommendation of the proper editions of the works to be reprinted, belonged to the editor; with the exception of the works of *Chaucer*, in the *first* volume, and the works of the several authors in the *fifth* volume, in which he had no concern.

For the correctness of the text, he is not answerable, as he had no concern in the revision of any part of these volumes, except the *Biographical and Critical Prefaces*, and occasionally some *additions, notes, and illustrations* in the course of the work. The chronological arrangement which he recommended has not been strictly observed, on account of the proportion which it was thought necessary to observe, in the size of the volumes. The engraved title-page, bearing to be "*A Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain,*" was improperly copied by the proprietors, in the *first* volume, from *Mr. Bell's* edition, and retained in the subsequent volumes, for the sake of uniformity.

In so complicated and extensive a work, typographical errors may be expected to occur. The editor hopes they are not very numerous, and will, he thinks, be entitled to the pardon of every candid reader. Several mistakes of this kind, he is sorry to acknowledge, remain uncorrected in his part of the work, particularly in the *Lives of Wilkie, Johnson*, and some others in the *eleventh* volume, which he desires may be attributed, not to neglect, but want of experience in affairs of this nature, and to the precipitation with which the work proceeded through the press; all the *Prefaces* having been written in little more than two years, and sent to the press, in portions, as they were wanted, without any previous revision.

There is one alteration in the present collection which the editor believes will need no apology. This is the arrangement of the poetical translations of entire works in a separate volume. To render the works of *Homer* and *Pindar* more complete, *Mr. Hole's Hymn to Ceres*, and *Mr. Pye's Six Olympic Odes*, are added to the translations of *Pope* and *West*; and the deficiencies in *Dryden's Juvenal* are supplied by the versions of those who were originally associated with him in that performance. A supplemental volume of Translations, making the *thirteenth*, has been printed, and another is still wanting to complete the arrangement, with a volume of *Fugitive Poetry*.

Of the *Lives* here offered to the public, nearly one half have been already written by *Dr. Johnson*, with such felicity of performance, that the editor might perhaps more properly have contented himself with subjoining a few corrections and additions to his elegant narratives; but that new *Lives* were thought necessary to the uniformity of this collection.

As the undertaking was occasional and unforeseen, *Dr. Johnson* must be supposed to have engaged in it with less provision of materials than might have been accumulated by longer premeditation.

Of the later writers, at least, he might, by attention and inquiry, have gleaned many particulars which would have diversified and enlivened his biography; but he was not actuated by an enthusiasm for his employment. He could not encounter weariness, perplexity, and disgust. The labour of literature was a task from which he always wished to escape. From Spence's Collections, communicated by the Duke of Newcastle, he received great assistance. In what he relates, though there is, in many articles, little, except the manner in which it is told, that is new (a deficiency which was not always in his power to remedy), yet his narration affords a luminous proof of the vigour of his mind in all its faculties, whether memory, judgment, or imagination. What he has to say on every subject is always worth hearing. Though the turn of his mind cannot be considered as peculiarly qualifying him for a critic of subjects which require more imagination than judgment, yet the lustre of his great mind seldom beamed on any thing, without lighting us to some new truth, latent trait of character, or peculiarity hitherto unobserved. Even the acrimony of his poetical censures, is, in a great measure, compensated by the force and originality of his reflections, and the elegance and correctness of his language.

In the present undertaking, the editor has not the presumption to suppose himself qualified to complete what Dr. Johnson has left unfinished, nor the temerity to court a comparison. Neither the style nor the manner are here the principal object of attention. With a view to popular information, he has endeavoured to collect what is diffused, to glean in spots which have been sometimes neglected, and sometimes forgotten, and to relate with clearness and simplicity, what is known of the personal history and literary productions of each author, whose works are associated in this collection, digested in the form of a chronicle, subjoining an estimate of his character, a critical examination of his compositions, and, by quotation, the testimonies of contemporary writers, and the judgments of the most respectable critics.

In the course of this undertaking, he has endeavoured to avail himself of the various biographical collections already in the hands of the public. Of these collections, it was necessary to form a right idea, to select from them whatever was conducive to his design, and carefully to avoid their errors, at the same time that he preserved their excellencies. What use he has made of them will be obvious, as well as what is entirely his own.

In the Lives of the authors of a remote period, the instances are numerous which stand in need of emendations and corrections, for retrenching superfluities, supplying deficiencies, and rectifying the mistakes in dates and facts, which may unintentionally have been committed, and transmitted from writer to writer without examination. The editor has exerted himself, in this respect, with considerable attention.

In the Lives of the modern authors, especially of those lately deceased, of whom there are no written memorials, the difficulty under which the editor laboured will be evident; from the want of proper information, the prejudices of friends or admirers, the calumnies of enemies, and the suggestions of envy, to which eminent characters are peculiarly liable. Time overcomes most of these impediments, except the first, which it evidently, in many cases, increases.

An accurate investigation into the powers and varieties of the human mind, is of all studies the most important; and a faithful narration of the principles, conduct, and writings of eminent men, might, perhaps, afford the surest basis for such researches; but it is almost unreasonable to expect from human intellect and virtue, sufficient discernment, discrimination and impartiality, to qualify for so difficult and delicate a task.

As far as relates to himself, the editor has endeavoured, as much as possible, to relate the circumstances of the Lives of the authors from the most authentic information, and to give an account of their writings with real impartiality. His aim has been to rise above narrow prejudices, and to record the vices and virtues, the excellencies and defects of authors, with fidelity and freedom. The well-known adage, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, seems to have been dictated by tenderness and humanity. Errors are diminished when once the grave has interposed, and the good qualities are proportionably magnified. The generous feelings add to the unwillingness to blame, and every liberal mind feels it an act of cowardice to attack those who cannot defend themselves. The best propensities of the human mind are thus engaged to repel censure and invite praise. Without violating the rights of humanity, the wish of the editor has been to speak of the dead with liberal, but not indiscriminate

praise. Hence, truth, he trusts, will appear in its fairest garb, and impartiality appear almost like praise.

In the representation of facts, and the delineation of characters, the editor has endeavoured to do full justice to the conduct and principles of men of every profession and party. But he apprehends that a philosophical liberality of mind does not imply in it, that he has no sentiments of his own. He scruples not to declare his attachment to the great interests of mankind, and his enmity to bigotry, superstition, and tyranny. A work of this nature, that is conducted without any regard to the chief privileges of human nature, without a philosophical liberality of mind, and without feelings, especially of the moral kind, would be deprived of much of its utility.

With respect to the strictures on the works of the various authors, the editor is far from being over-anxious to make others adopt his sentiments. If erroneous criticism may be sometimes suspected, who can hope that, in matters of taste, all shall agree? He will think it sufficient, if his remarks should engage the reader to review his own opinions, or recal his attention to some latent beauty, some fascinating line, or some happy expression, which, on a first perusal, had escaped him. Where he has presumed to differ from the most respectable authorities, he would be rather understood to propose a doubt than to offer a contradiction. If his praises have been sometimes, as he fears they have, too lavishly bestowed, he trusts, that the candid reader will ascribe them to a solicitude which made him more willing to recommend beauties than to expose blemishes; rather earnest to do justice to the author's merit, than to raise an admiration of his own judgment.

The obligations which the editor has received, have extended, in several cases, to the communication of entire articles, and to occasional assistance: For the life of *Spenser*, and the lives of *Milton*, *Cowley*, *Waller*, *Butler*, and *Denham*, he is indebted to two gentlemen of learning and abilities, who have not indulged him with the liberty of mentioning their names. They were solicited and obtained by the proprietors, to expedite the publication, and never seen by the editor till they were printed. He knows not whether any apology will be deemed needful for inserting them. They are composed, it must be acknowledged, with little care or diligence, and with a compendious brevity, which, though compatible with accuracy of narration, and vigour of description, precludes a critical account both of events and writings. As these articles comprehend some of the first names in English poetry, it is the intention of the editor to write them over again, for a separate edition of the *Lives*, corrected and enlarged, which it is in contemplation with the proprietors to publish.

With respect to occasional assistance, the editor has been favoured with various biographical information concerning *Moore*, *Blair*, *Wilkie*, *Brute*, and *Logan*, from the Rev. Mr. Toulmin of Taunton, the Rev. Dr. Robertson of Dalmeny, the Rev. Dr. William Thomson of London, the Rev. Dr. Blair, the Rev. Dr. Baird, the Rev. Dr. Hardy, and Professor Dalzel of Edinburgh, to whom he begs leave to make his acknowledgments. To all these gentlemen he esteems himself much indebted for their kindness and attention. From them arises the principal assistance he has to boast of. He has many reasons to flatter himself, that his information would have been much enlarged from other quarters, if a diffidence of his abilities for the undertaking had not deterred him from solicitation.

The editor cannot conclude, without an apology to the reader, which he is sorry to be under the necessity of making. In his endeavours to render these volumes worthy of attention, he has been thwarted by a situation peculiarly unfavourable for such pursuits: the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, the British Museum, the repositories, museums, and libraries of the curious, from whence only adequate materials are to be drawn, he has had no access to. His chief resource has been a small private collection, and the libraries of the University, and of the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh, neither of which is rich in old English literature.

The mention of these valuable repositories naturally reminds the editor, that he should be deficient in gratitude, if he omitted to notice the readiness with which he was allowed the free use of whatever they contained, for the service of this work.

The communication of some scarce miscellaneous collections, by Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq. of Woodhouselee, Robert Arbuthnot, Esq. Secretary to the Trustees for Fisheries, Manufactures and Improvements, and George Farquhar, Esq. of South Frederick-Street, the editor considers as a favour worthy of public acknowledgment.

How far the present work is calculated to answer what the public has a right to demand, the editor is afraid to reflect on. It was begun solely from public considerations, without any regard to personal advantage, and has been carried on through many difficulties, much ill health, and with many real doubts of his ability to finish it in such a manner as to merit applause. He has not been seduced by vanity, so far as not to perceive the many errors and defects which will be found in his part of these volumes. He is truly sensible of them; but can, at the same time, declare, they have not been caused by any relaxation of his endeavours to render the work as perfect as he was able, consistent with his attention to more important avocations. Every work of this kind is, by its nature, deficient. To those who may be dissatisfied with the manner in which it is conducted, he can only say, that the undertaking appeared to him much easier, before he engaged in it, than he found afterwards in its progress through the press. He had but an imperfect conception of the difficulties to be surmounted, the disappointments to be incurred, the books to be procured and waited for, the dates to be settled, the facts to be ascertained, and the various irritating minutiae of the press. He may safely rely on the candour of those who have experienced the trouble and difficulty attending such extensive literary undertakings.

Whatever is the determination concerning it (though the subject is what he acknowledges himself to feel some anxiety about), the editor professes himself not to have the slightest inclination to dispute the propriety of any censure which may be passed on his labours, either in part or in the whole. Perfectly satisfied with the pleasure he has received in the course of the work, he has no expectation of emolument, or wish for fame on account of his concern in it.

To do justice to neglected merit; to extend the honour of our national poetry, as far as possible, both abroad and at home; to enlarge, however little, the boundaries of literary biography and elegant criticism; to strengthen and co-operate with the taste for poetical antiquities, which, for some time past, has been considerably advancing; to hold out an incentive to the love of fame and the cultivation of the mind; to diversify the materials of common reading, and to open fresh sources of useful instruction and innocent amusement, are ends which, though to attain be beyond his powers, the honest ambition of the editor is something gratified by the attempt alone.

ROBERT ANDERSON.

EDINBURGH,
November 25. 1795.

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Containing

CANTERBURY TALES,
ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE,
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE,
THE COURT OF LOVE,
THE COMPLAINT OF FITEE,
ANNELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE,
THE ASSEMBLEE OF FOULES,
THE COMPLAINT OF THE BLACK KNIGHT,

THE BOOK OF THE DUCHESSE,
CHAUCER'S A, B, C,
THE HOUSE OF FAME,
CHAUCER'S DREME,
THE FLOUR AND THE LEFE,
THE LEGENDE OF GOODE WOMEN,
THE COMPLAINT OF MARS AND VENUS,
THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE,

¶. ¶. ¶.

To which is prefixed

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Old CHAUCER, like the *morning star*,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd,
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades,
Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM'S VERSES ON THE DEATH OF COWLEY.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MUNDELL AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE,

Anno 1793.

NOTICAL WORKS

GEOMETRICAL CHAUCER

CHANCER

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EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY WILKIE AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

1840.

THE LIFE OF CHAUCER.

IN the beginning of the eleventh century, our vernacular poetry received from the Normans, the rudiments of that cultivation which it has preserved to the present times.

In the two succeeding centuries, the principal efforts of our yet untutored versifiers, were rhyming chronicles and metrical romances, the style of which was rough, and the harmony of the numbers very defective.

In the reign of Edward I., the character of our poetical composition was considerably changed, by the introduction and increase of the tales of chivalry, and the popular fables of the troubadours of Provence.

Fictitious adventures were then substituted by the minstrels in the place of historical and traditional facts, and a taste for ornamental and exotic expression gradually prevailed over the rude simplicity of the native English phraseology.

These fabulous narratives, afterwards enlarged by kindred fancies, derived from the crusades, and enriched by the marvellous machinery of the Italian poets, formed the taste, and awakened the imagination of GEOFFREY CHAUCER, the illustrious ornament of the reign of Edward III. and of his successor Richard II., the father of the English heroic verse, and the first English versifier who wrote poetically.

Of the great poet, with whose compositions this collection of classical English poetry commences, the curiosity which his reputation must excite, will require more ample information than can now be given. His contemporaries, who revered his genius, recorded few particulars of his life; and all who have since written of him, relate nothing beyond what casual mention, uncertain tradition, and discordant conjecture, have supplied.

This meagre narration, therefore, scarcely merits the title that is given to it; but the materials for a fuller account are not to be found, without supplying the deficiency of facts by the comments and inventions of his biographers, which have nothing to recommend them to credit but the single circumstance of being often repeated.

The birth of Chaucer, in 1328, has been settled, from the inscription on his tomb-stone, signifying that he died in 1400, in the 72d year of his age.

Of the place of his nativity there is no memorial, any more than of his parents. Bale says he was a Berkshireman; Pits would entitle Woodstock in Oxfordshire to his birth; and Camden affirms that London was his birth-place: "Edmund Spenser," says he, "a Londoner, was so smiled on by the Muses at his birth, that he excelled all the English poets that went before him, if we except only his fellow citizen Chaucer." But Chaucer himself seems to have determined the point. In his *Testament of Love*, he calls himself a *Londonois* or Londoner, and speaks of the city of London as the place of his *engendrure*.

His descent has been variously assigned. Leland says that he was of a noble stock; Pits, that he was the son of a knight; Speght, that his father was a vintner; and Hearne, that he was a merchant.

This difference of opinion shews, that nothing can be said with any tolerable assurance of his family; but the patronymic name seems to indicate, that it came originally from Normandy; and there is somewhat more probability of his being the son of a gentleman rather than of a tradesman.

His biographers are as much in the dark about the place of his education. They tell us that he received the rudiments of his education in Solere's Hall, Cambridge, where he wrote his *Court of Love*; and afterwards completed his studies in Merton College, Oxford.

In his *Court of Love*, he speaks of himself under the name and character of "Philogenet—of Cambridge, Clerk." This is by no means a decisive proof that he was really educated at Cambridge; but it may be admitted as a strong argument, that he was not educated at Oxford, as Leland has supposed, without the shadow of proof. The biographers, however, instead of weighing one of these accounts against the other, have adopted both, and tell us very gravely that he was first at Cambridge, and afterwards removed from thence to complete his education at Oxford.

After he left the university, he is supposed to have added to his accomplishments by travelling into France and the Low Countries; but when he went abroad, or at what time he returned, are circumstances not determined.

His biographers agree, that on his return, he entered himself of the Inner Temple, and prosecuted for some time the study of the law. Speght has given us a record in the Inner Temple (which he says a Mr. Buckley had seen), where "Geoffrey Chaucer was fined two shillings, for beating a Franciscan friar in Fleet-street." It were to be wished that he had given the date. Leland says, "*Collegia Leguleiorum frequentavit*, after his travels in France, and perhaps before." These travels in France rest entirely on the authority of Leland, whose account is full of inconsistencies.

He appears to have been early conversant with the court, and particularly attached to the service of the king's son, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, by whose favour he obtained in marriage Philippa, daughter of Sir Payne, or Pagan Rouet, a native of Hainault, and sister of the famous Catherine Swynford, the duke's mistress, and afterwards his wife.

As the credit of the Duke of Lancaster increased with his father, Chaucer's also rose in a like proportion; and the liveliness of his parts, and the native gaiety of his disposition, rendered him a very popular and acceptable character in the English court, at that time the most gay and splendid in Europe.

That he had distinguished himself before this time by his poetical performances, is almost certain; and there is a tradition supported by some passages in his *Dream*, and *Cukoo and Nightingale*, that when he attended the court at Woodstock, he resided at a square stone house near the park stile, which still retains his name.

The first authentic memorial of Chaucer, is the patent in Rymer, 41. Edward III. by which the king grants to him an annuity of 20 marks, by the title of *Valettus noster*. He was then in the 39th year of his age. How long he had served the king in that or any other station, and what particular merits were rewarded by this royal bounty, are points equally unknown. There is, however, no ground for supposing that this mark of his Majesty's favour was a reward of Chaucer's poetical merits. If it is considered that a few years after (48. Edward III.), the king appointed him Comptroller of the Wool, &c. in the port of London, with the following injunction in the patent: "So that the said Geoffrey write with his own hand his rolls, touching the said office, and continually reside there, and do and execute all things pertaining to the said office in his own proper person, and not by his substitute;"—it should seem that Edward, though adorned with many royal and heroic virtues, had not the gift of discerning and patronizing a great poet: a gift which, like that of genuine poetry, is only bestowed on the chosen few, by the peculiar favour of Heaven;

— neque enim, nisi carus ab ortu

Diis superis, poterit magno fuisse poetæ.

MILT. MANSUS.

From this time Chaucer is frequently mentioned in various public instruments. In the 46. Edward III., [Rymer] the king appoints him Envoy (with two others) to Genoa, by the title of *Scutifer noster*. This embassy might probably have afforded him an opportunity of visiting Petrarch at Padua, where he tells us, in the prologue to the *Clerkes Tale*, he learned from him the story of Griseldis. But it is uncertain whether he ever went upon the embassy; and the biographers of Petrarch, who died the year following (1374), have not recorded the reverential visit of the English envoy.

THE LIFE OF CHAUCER.

"Some write," says Speght, "that he, with Petrarke, was present at the marriage of Lionell Duke of Clarence, with Violante, daughter of Galeasius Duke of Millain; yet Paulus Jovius nameth not Chaucer, but Petrarke, he sayeth, was there." It appears from an instrument in Rymer [42. Edward III.], that the Duke of Clarence passed from Dover to Calais in his way to Milan, in the spring of 1638, with a retinue of 457 men and 1280 horses. That Chaucer might have attended the Duke upon this occasion, is not impossible; but his name does not appear among the "Grandi Signori Baroni Inghilese," who were "Com. Messere Lionell in compagnia" [Muratori]. In the 48. Edward III., he has a grant for life of a pitcher of wine daily [Rymer]. In the 49. Edward III. the king grants to him the wardship of Sir Edmond Staplegate's heir [Rymer], for which he received 104l.; and, in the next year, some forfeited wool, to the value of 71l. 4s. 6d. [Urr. Life of Ch.]. In the last year of Edward III., he was sent to France with Sir Guichard D'Angle and Richard Stan [or Sturry], to treat of a marriage between Richard Prince of Wales, and a daughter of the French king [Freiffart].

In the next year, i. Richard II., his annuity of 20 marks was granted to him in lieu of the pitcher of wine daily. In his *Testament of Love*, he alludes to the misfortunes brought upon him by his meddling in the disturbances which happened in London in the 7. Richard II. What the real designs of John Comberton, commonly called John of Northampton, and his party, were, and how a trifling city-riot came to be treated as a rebellion, are points of great obscurity. There is good ground to believe that Comberton, in his endeavours to reform the city, according to the advice given by Wickliffe, was countenanced by the Duke of Lancaster, which may account for Chaucer's engagement with that party. When Chaucer fled to Holland, to avoid being examined in relation to these disturbances (as he says, *Test. of Love*) he was probably superseded in his office of Comptroller. It is probable, too, that he was confirmed in it on his return, though the instrument has not been produced. In the 11. Richard II., he had the king's license to surrender his two grants of 20 marks, in favour of John Scalby. This surrender was probably occasioned by his distressed circumstances. In the 13. Richard II., he appears to have been Clerk of the works at Westminster, &c., and in the following year at Windsor. In the 17. Richard II. the king granted him a new annuity of 20l. [Rymer.] If he was ever possessed of Dunnington Castle in Berkshire (as his biographers suppose), he must have purchased it about this time; for it appears to have been in the possession of Sir Richard Adderbury, in the 17. Richard II. [Monast. Ang. ii. 474]. But there is no proof of any such purchase; and the situation of his affairs makes it highly improbable. The tradition of an oak in Dunnington park, called Chaucer's oak, may be sufficiently accounted for, without supposing that it was planted by Chaucer himself, as the castle was undoubtedly in the possession of Thomas Chaucer, who is supposed to be his son, for many years.

In the 21. Richard II. the king granted him his protection for two years [Rymer]; and in 22, a pipe of wine annually [ibid]. In the next year, the 1. Henry IV., his two grants of the annuity of 20l., and of the pipe of wine, were confirmed to him [Rymer]; and at the same time, he had an additional grant of 40 marks, [ibid]. It appears that he received an annuity of 10 marks on account of his wife. He died, according to the inscription on his tombstone, in the 2. Henry IV., on the 25th of October 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. A monument was erected to his memory in 1556, by Mr. Nicholas Brigham of Oxford, upon which he caused his picture to be painted, from the original of Occleve, in the illuminated manuscript of his treatise *De regimine Principis*, together with the following inscription, which still remains.

M.S.

Qui fecit Anglorum vates noster maximus olim.
GALFRIDUS CHAUCER conditur hoc tumulo:
Annum si quæras Domini, si tempora vitæ,
Ecce notæ subsunt quæ tibi cuncta notunt.

25 Octobris 1400.

Ærumnarum requies mors.

N. Brigham hos fecit Musarum nomine sumptus.
1556.

These are the principal facts in Chaucer's life, which are attested by authentic evidences. In his *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, he informs us that he had a son called Lewis, who was ten years of age in 1391. There is no account in what station he lived, or when he died. The relation of Thomas Chaucer to him has not been ascertained. Speght says, "that some held opinion, that Thomas Chaucer was not the son of Geoffrey;" and there are certainly many circumstances which render that opinion probable. He married Maude, daughter of Sir John Burghershe, resided chiefly at Ewelme in Oxfordshire, passed through several public stations, and died on the 28th of April 1434.

The poetical compositions of Chaucer, particularly his *Canterbury Tales*, obtained him the highest place of distinction among his contemporaries. The tales, it is probable, were composed at different periods of his life. He connected them together in that admirable dramatic structure in which they are at present, about the year 1383. They were first printed by our meritorious countryman William Caxton, the first English printer, as Ames supposes, about 1475 or 1476, and again in 1491. Subsequent editions were printed by Wynken de Worde, in 1495, and by Pynson in 1491, and 1526, which was the first that included his miscellaneous pieces. The next edition was printed by Godfrey in 1532, with Mr. William Thynne's dedication to Henry VIII., and a great number of pieces never before published. This edition was many times reprinted, as the standard edition of Chaucer's works, till the appearance of the editions of Stowe and Speght in 1561, 1597, and 1602; and of the edition undertaken by Urry, which was published some years after his death, in 1721, with a preface by Mr. Timothy Thomas. An edition of the *Canterbury Tales* was published by Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esq., in 4 vols. 8vo, 1775, to which was added, in 1778, a fifth volume, containing an "Essay on the Language and Versification of Chaucer," "an Introductory Discourse to the *Canterbury Tales*, and "a Glossary."

The present edition of the *Canterbury Tales* is printed from Tyrwhitt's incomparable edition, and his learned and valuable Glossary is copied with little variation, except in the omission of the numerical references. The *Plowman's Tale*, *Tale of Gamelyn*, *Adventure of Pardoner and Tapester*, and the *Merchant's second Tale*, omitted by Tyrwhitt, have been retained, though all evidence, internal and external, is against the supposition of their being the production of Chaucer.

The genuine *miscellaneous pieces* of Chaucer are printed from Urry's edition, exclusive of those pieces which are known to be the production of other authors, and the anonymous compositions, which, from time to time, have been added to Chaucer's, in the several editions, without any evidence whatever. Besides these more considerable works, it appears that he had composed many *Balades*, *Roundels*, *Virelays*, and that he had *made many a Lay and many a Tbing*. A few pieces of this sort are still extant, and inserted here as they stand in the editions.

The works of Chaucer in prose are, a translation of Boethius *de consolacione Philosophiæ*, which he has mentioned himself in the *Legende of Goode Women*, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, addressed to his son Lewis in 1391, and the *Testament of Love*, which is evidently an imitation of Boethius *de Consolacione Philosophiæ*.

The private character of Chaucer appears to have been as respectable as his literary character was truly illustrious. In his manners he was mild and gentle; in his disposition he was open and ingenuous. He was a fine gentleman, an agreeable companion, and a learned writer. His contemporaries and disciples, Gower, Occleve, and Lydgate, are lavish in his praise. With Wickliffe, the father of the Reformation, he concurred in sentiments of religion, and co-operated in his most valuable designs; so natural is the connection between genius and the love of liberty.

On the literary character of Chaucer it is the less necessary to enlarge, as it has within these few years been so accurately and amply displayed by Mr. Warton, the learned historian of the English poetry, whose death is an irreparable loss to English literature, and Mr. Tyrwhitt, whose edition of the *Canterbury Tales* is the most curious, erudite, and valuable publication that has yet appeared in this country.

Chaucer is usually characterised as the Reformer of the English language, and the father of English poetry. He undoubtedly critically cultivated his native tongue, that he might reform its irregularities, and establish an English style; and he was certainly the first person in England to whom the appellation of a poet, in its genuine lustre, could be applied. He has attempted every spe-

cies of poetry, from an epigram to an epic poem, and has succeeded in all. If, however he appears pre-eminent in any one poetical department, it is in the descriptive. The *Canterbury Tales*, his greatest production, exhibit a wonderful variety of talents; for they abound with the sublime and the pathetic, with admirable satire, genuine humour, and an uncommon knowledge of life. They were probably composed in imitation of the "Decameron" of Boccace, though upon a different and improved plan. The general plan may be learned from the prologue he has prefixed to them. He supposes there, that a company of pilgrims going to Canterbury, assemble at an inn in Southwark, and agree, that for their common amusement on the road, each of them shall tell at least one tale in going to Canterbury, and another in coming back from thence; and that he who shall tell the best tales, shall be treated by the rest with a supper, upon their return to the same inn. It appears also that he designed to describe their journey, and all the remenant of their pilgrimage, including probably their adventures at Canterbury, as well as upon the road; but this extensive and difficult undertaking has been left imperfect; and more than one half of the tales he intended to give is wanting. The characters of the pilgrims are as various as at that time could be found in the departments of middle life; and the stories are exactly suited to their characters, and clearly evince, that Chaucer, notwithstanding the aids he derived from his acquaintance with Italian literature, was possessed of a noble invention, and a fruitful imagination.

The Knight's Tale, *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, *Tale of the Nun's Priest*, *Flower and the Leaf*, and *The Character of a Good Parson*, have been thought worthy of imitation and revival by Dryden, whose paraphrases, particularly of the *Knight's Tale*, and of the *Flower and the Leaf*, are the most animated and harmonious pieces of versification in the English language. Pope has imitated the *Merchant's Tale*, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, and *The House of Fame*, with his usual elegance of diction and harmony of versification. Mr. Betterton has translated the *Reeve's Tale* and the *Characters of the Pilgrims*; and a collection of "The Canterbury Tales Modernized," was published by Mr. Ogle, in 3 vol. 8vo, 1741.

The *Squier's Tale* is considered by Mr. Warton as Chaucer's capital poem; and he has admirably explained the origin of the fictions with which it abounds. With like ingenuity and learning he illustrates the various poems of Chaucer; and with regard to those which had a foreign original, shews how far the productions which gave rise to them have been copied, altered, and improved. The comparison turns out in many respects to the advantage of the English poet.

"Chaucer," says he, "was a man of the world; and from this circumstance we are to account, in a great measure, for the many new embellishments conferred on our poetry. The descriptions of splendid processions and gallant carousals, with which his works abound, are a proof that he was conversant with the practice and diversions of polite life. His travels likewise enabled him to cultivate the Italian and Provençal poetry with the greatest success, and induced him to polish the asperity, and enrich the sterility of his native versification, with softer cadences, and a more copious and variegated phraseology."

Concerning the licentious passages that are to be met with in Chaucer's poems, the same ingenious and learned writer observes, that they are in a great measure to be imputed to the age in which they were written. "We are apt," says he, "to form romantic and exaggerated notions about the moral innocence of our ancestors. Ages of ignorance and simplicity are thought to be ages of purity. The direct contrary I believe is the case. Rude periods have that grossness of manners, which is not less friendly to virtue than luxury itself. In the middle ages, not only the most flagrant violations of modesty were frequently practised and permitted, but the most infamous vices. Men are less ashamed as they are less polished. Great refinement multiplies criminal pleasures, but at the same time prevents the actual commission of many enormities, at least it preserves public decency, and suppresses public licentiousness."

In delineating Chaucer's talent for humour, Mr. Warton agrees with Dr. Hurd, who, in his "Letters on Chivalry," supposes that the *Rime of Sir Thopas*, was intended to expose the leading absurdities of the old romance. That this was Chaucer's aim appears from many passages taken

from *Ifambras*, *Libeaus Desconus*, and other romances, in the same style, which are still extant; and therefore the tale may justly be called a prelude to Don Quixotte.

From Mr. Warton's survey of the poems of Chaucer, these conclusions are deduced concerning him:—That in cultivation and elegance, in harmony and perspicuity of versification, he surpasses his predecessors in an infinite proportion; that his genius was universal, and adapted to themes of unbounded variety; that his merit was not less in painting familiar manners with humour and propriety, than in moving the passions, and in representing the beautiful, or the grand objects of nature, with grace and sublimity; and that he appeared with all the lustre of a true poet, in an age which compelled him to struggle with a barbarous language, and a national want of taste; and when to write verses at all was a singular qualification.

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE PROLOGUE.

WHANNE that April with his shoures sote
The droughte of March hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veine in swiche licour,
Of whiche vertue engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eke with his sote brethe
Enspired hath in every holt and hethe
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And smale foules maken melodie,
That slepen alle night with open eye,
So prieth hem nature in hir corages,
Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken strange strondes,
To serve halwes couthe in sondry londes;
And specially from every shire's ende
Of Englelond to Canterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seke.

Befelle that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay,
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Canterbury with devoute courage,
At night was come into that hostelrye
Wel nine-and-twenty in a compaignie
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
In felawship, and pilgrimes were they alle
That toward Canterbury wolden ride.
The chambres and the stables weren wide,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.

And shortly when the sonne was gon to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everich on,
That I was of hir felawship anon,
And made forword erly for to rise,
To take oure way ther, as I you devise.

But natheles while I have time and space,
Or that I forther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it accordant to reson
To tellen you alle the condition
Of eche of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degre,
And eke in what araie that they were inne;
And at a knight than wol I firste beginne.

A *Knight* ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the time that he firste began
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he ridden, no man ferre
As well in Cristendom as in Hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthinesse.

At Alisandre he was whan it was wonne
Ful often time he hadde the bord begonne †
Aboven alle nations in Pruce:
In Lettowe hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degre:
In Gernade at the sieg eke hadde he be
Of Algefir, and ridden in Belmarie:
At Leyes was he, and at Satalie,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble armee hadde he be.
At mortal bataylles hadde he ben fistene,
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene
In listes thries, and ay slain his fo.

This ilke worthy Knight hadde ben also

* Alexandria in Egypt was won (and immediately after abandoned) in 1365 by Pierre de Lusignan King of Cyprus.

† He had been placed at the head of the table, the usual compliment to extraordinary merit, as the commentators very properly explain it.

Some time with the Lord of Palatie*
 Agen another Hethen in Turkie,
 And evermore he hadde a soveréine pris,
 And though that he was worthy, he was wise,
 And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
 He never yet no vilanie ne fayde
 In alle his lif unto no manere wight :
 He was a veray parfit gentil Knight.

But for to tellen you of his araie,
 His hors was good, but he ne was not gaie,
 Of fustian he wered a gipon
 Alle besmotred with his habergeon,
 For he was late ycome fro his viage,
 And wente for to don his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone, a yonge *Squier*,
 A lover and a lusty bacheler,
 With lockes crull as they were laide in presse ;
 Of twenty yere age he was, I gesse.
 Of his stature he was of even lengthe,
 And wonderly deliver, and grete of strengthe ;
 And he hadde be sometime in chevachie
 In Flaunders, in Artois, and in Picardie,
 And borne him wel, as of so litel space,
 In hope to stonden in his ladies grace.

Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
 Alle full of freshe floures white and rede :
 Singing he was or floyting alle the day :
 He was as freshe as is the moneth of May :
 Short was his gowne, with sleeves long and wide ;
 Wel coude he sitte on hors, and sayre ride :
 He coude songes make, and wel endite.
 Juste and eke dance, and wel pourtraie and write :
 So hote he loved, that by nightertale
 He slep no more than doth the nightingale :

Curteis he was, lowly and servisable,
 And carf before his fader at the table.

A *Yeman* hadde he, and servantes no mo
 At that time, for him luste to ride so,
 And he was cladde in cote and hode of grene ;
 A shefe of peacock arwes bright and kene
 Under his belt he bare full thriftily :
 Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly :
 His arwes drouped not with fetheres lowe,
 And in his hond he bare a mighty bowe.

A not-hed hadde he, with a broune visage :
 Of wood-craft coude he wel alle the usage :
 Upon his arme he bare a gaie bracer,
 And by his side a swerd and a bokeler,
 And on that other side a gaie daggere,
 Harneised wel, and sharp as point of spere :
 A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
 An horne he bare, the baudrik was of grene :
 A forster was he sothely, as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a *Prioresse*,
 That of hire smiling was ful simple and coy,
 Hire gretest othe n'as but by Seint Eloy,
 And she was cleped Madam Eglentine ;
 Ful wel she fange the service devine,
 Entuned in hire nose ful swetely ;
 And Frenche she spake ful fayre and fetisly,
 After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
 For Frenche of Paris was to hire unknowe :
 At mete was she wel ytaughte withalle,
 She lette no morsel from hire lippes falle,

* Palathia in Anatolia.

Ne wette hire fingers in hire sauce depe ;
 Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
 Thatte no drope ne fell upon hire brest :
 In curtesie was sette ful moche hire lest :
 Hire over lippe wiped she so clene,
 That in hire cuppe was no ferthing sene
 Of grese when she dronken hadde hire draught ;
 Full semely after hire mete she raught :
 And likerly she was of grete disport,
 And ful pleasant and amiable of port,
 And peined hire to contrefetan chere
 Of court and ben estatelich of manere,
 And to ben holden digne of reverence.

But for to speken of hire conscience,
 She was so charitable and so pitous
 She wolde wepe if that she saw a mous
 Caughte in a trappe if it were ded or bledde.
 Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
 With rosted flesh, and milk, and wastel brede,
 But fore wept she if on of hem were dede,
 Or if men smote it with a yerde smert ;
 And all was conscience and tendre herte.

Ful semely hire wimple ypinched was,
 Hire nose tretis, hire eyen grey as glas ;
 Hire mouth full smale, and therto soft and red ;
 But likerly she hadde a fayre forched :
 It was almost a spanne brode I trowe,
 For hardily she was not undergrowe.

Ful fetise was hire cloke, as I was ware.
 Of smale corall aboute hire arm she bare
 A pair of bedes gauded all with grene,
 And thereon heng a broche of gold ful shene
 On whiche was first ywritten a crowned A,
 And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

Another *Nonne* also with hire hadde she
 That was hire chapelleine, and *Preesles* thre.

A *Monk* ther was, a fayre for the maistrie,
 An out-rider that loved venerie ;
 A manly man to ben an abbot able ;
 Ful many a deinte hors hadde he in stable,
 And whan he rode, men mighte his bridel here
 Gingeling in a whistling wind, as clere
 And eke as loude as doth the chapell belle
 Ther as this lord was keeper of the celle.

The reule of Seint Maure and of Seint Beneit,
 Because that it was olde and somdele streit,
 This ilke monk lette olde thinges pace,
 And helde after the newe world the trace.
 He yave not of the text a pulled hen
 That saith that hunters ben not holy men,
 Ne that a monk whan he is rekkeles
 Is like to a fish that is waterles ;
 This is to say, a monk out of his cloistre ;
 This ilke text held he not worth an oistre ;
 And I say his opinion was good.
 What ! shulde he studie and make himselfen wood,
 Upon a book in cloistre alway to pore,
 Or swinken with his hondes, and laboure,
 As Austin bit ? how shal the world be served ?
 Let Austin have his swink to him reserved :
 Therefore he was a prickasoure a right.
 Greihoundes he hadde as swift as foul of flight.
 Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
 Was all his lust ; for no cost wolde he spare.

I saw his sleeves purfled at the hond
 With gris, and that the finest of the lond ;

And for to fasten his hood under his chinne
 He hadde of gold ywrought a curious pinne;
 A love-knotte in the greter ende ther was:
 His hed was balled, and shone as any glas;
 And eke his face, as it hadde ben anoint;
 He was a lord ful fat, and in good point:
 His eyen stepe, and rolling in his hed,
 That stemed as a forneis of a led;
 His bootes souple, his hors in gret estat;
 Now certainly he was a fayre prelat:
 He was not pale as a forpined gost;
 A fat swan loved he best of any rost:
 His palfrey was as broune as is a bery.

A *Frere* ther was, a wanton and a mery;
 A limitour, a ful solempne man:
 In all the ordres foure is non that can
 So moche of daliance and fayre langage.
 He hadde ymade ful many a mariage
 Of yonge wimmen at his owen cost;
 Until his ordre he was a noble post.
 Ful wel beloved and familier was he
 With frankelens over all in his contree,
 And eke with worthy wimmen of the Toun;
 For he had power of confession,
 As faide himselfe, more than a curat,
 For of his ordre he was a licenciat:
 Ful swetely herde he confession,
 And plesant was his absolution.
 He was an esy man to give penance
 Ther as he wiste to han a good pitance;
 For unto a poure ordre for to give
 Is signe that a man is wel yshrive;
 For if he gave he dorste make avant
 He wiste that a man was repentant;
 For many a man so hard is of his herte,
 He may not wepe although him fore sinerte;
 Therefore in stede of weping and praieres
 Men mote give silver to the poure freres.

His tippet was ay farfed ful of knives
 And pinnes for to given fayre wives:
 And certainly he hadde a mery note;
 Wel coude he singe and plaien on a rote.
 Of yeddinges* he bare utterly the pris;
 His nekke was white as the flour de lis;
 Therto he strong was as a champioun,
 And knew wel the tavernes in every toun;
 And every hosteler and gay tapstere,
 Better than a lazar or a beggere;
 For unto swiche a worthy man as he
 Accordeth nought, as by his faculte
 To haven with like lazars acquaintance:
 It is not honest, it may not avance,
 As for to delen with no swiche pouraille,
 But all with riche and sellers of vitaille.

And over all, ther as profit shuld arise
 Curteis he was, and lowly of servise:
 Ther n'as no man no wher so vertuous;
 He was the beste begger in all his hous,
 And gave a certaine ferme for the grant
 Non of his bretheren came in his haunt:
 For though a widewe hadde but a shoo,
 (So plesant was his *In principio*)

* This word, being not understood, has been changed in some copies into *tidings* and *weddings*. It probably means a kind of song, from the Saxon *geddian* or *gididian*, to sing.

Yet wold he have a ferthing or he went;
 His purchas was wel better than his rent:
 And rage he coude as it hadde ben a whelp;
 In lovedayes ther coude be mochel help;
 For ther was he nat like a cloisterere,
 With thredbare cope, as is a poure scolere,
 But he was like a maister or a pope:
 Of double worsted was his semicope,
 That round was as a belle out of the presse.
 Somwhat he lisped for his wantonnesse
 To make his English swete upon his tonge;
 And in his harping, whan that he hadde songe,
 His eyen twinkeled in his hed aright
 As don the sterres in a frosty night.
 This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A *Merchant* was ther with a forked berd;
 In mottelee, and highe on hors he sat,
 And on his hed a Faundrissh bever hat.
 His bootes clapsed fayre and fetisly;
 His refons spake he ful solempnely,
 Souning alway the encrese of his winning:
 He wold the fee were kept* for any thing
 Betwixen Middelburgh and Orewell.
 Wel coude he in eschanges sheldes selle.
 This worthy man ful wel his wit besette;
 Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
 So stedfastly didde he his governance
 With his bargeines and with his chevifance.
 Forsothe he was a worthy man withalle,
 But soth to sayn I n'ot how men him calle.

A *Clerk* ther was of Oxenford also,
 That unto logike hadde long ygo.
 As lene was his hors as is a rake,
 And he was not right fat I undertake,
 But loked holwe, and therto soberly.
 Ful thredbare was his overest courtepy,
 For he hadde gotten him yet no benefice,
 Ne was nought worldly to have an office;
 For him was lever han at his beddes hed
 Twenty bokes clothed in blake or red
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie
 Then robes riche, or fidel or sautrie:
 But all be that he was a philosophe
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre,
 But all that he might of his frendes hente
 On bokes and on lerning he it spente,
 And besily gan for the foules praie
 Of hem that yave him wherwith to scolaie,
 Of studie toke he moste cure and hede;
 Not a word spake he more than was nede,
 And that was said in forme and reverence,
 And short and quike, and ful of high sentence:
 Souning in moral vertue was his speche,
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A *Sergeant of the Lawe* warre and wise,
 That often hadde yben at the paruis,
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellence;
 Discrete he was, and of grete reverence;
 He semed swiche, his words were so wise;
 Justice he was ful often in assise
 By patent and by pleine commissioun:
 For his science and for his high renoun

* i. e. guarded. The old subsidy of tonnage or poundage was given to the king "pur la sauvgarde et custodie del 'mer,'" 12 Edw. IV. c. 3.

Of fees and robes had he many on :
 So grete a pourchafour was no wher non :
 All was fee simple to him in effect,
 His pourchasing might not ben in suspect :
 No wher so besy a man as he ther n'as,
 And yet he semed besier than he was.
 In termes hadde he cas and domes alle
 That fro the time of King Will, weren falle ;
 Therto he coude endite and make a thing ;
 Ther coude no wight pinche at his writing ;
 And every statute coude he plaine by rote.
 He rode but homely in a medlee cote
 Girt with a seint of silk with barres smale.
 Of his array tell I no lenger tale.

A *Frankelcin* was in this compaignie ;
 White was his berd as is the dayesie :
 Of his complexion he was sanguin ;
 Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in win :
 To liven in delit was ever his wone,
 For he was Epicure's owen sone,
 That held opinion that plein delit
 Was veraily felicite parfite.
 And housholder, and that a grete was he ;
 Seint Julian he was in his contree.
 His brede, his ale, was alway after on ;
 A better envyned man was no wher non.
 Wichouten bake mete never was his hous
 Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous
 It snewed in his house of mete and drinke
 Of alle deintees that men coud of thinke.
 After the sondry sefons of the yere
 So changed he his mete and his sounpere.
 Ful many a fat patrich hadde he in mewe,
 And many a breme, and many a luce in stewe.
 Wo was his coke but if his sauce were
 Poinant and sharpe, and redy all his gere.
 His table dormant in his halle alway
 Stode redy covered alle the longe day.

At seffions there was he lord and sire ;
 Full often time he was knight of the shire.
 An anelace and a gipciere all of silk
 Heng at his girdel white as morwe milk.
 A shereve hadde he ben and a countour ;
 Was no wher swiche a worthy vavasour *.

An *Haberdasher*, and a *Carpenter*,
 A *Webbe*, a *Deyer*, and a *Tapifer*,
 Were alle yclothed in o livere
 Of a solempne and grete fraternite.
 Ful freshe and newe hir gere ypiked was ;
 Hir knives were ychaped not with bras,
 But all with silver wrought ful clene and wel,
 Hir girdeles and hir pouches every del :
 Wel semed eche of hem a fayre burgeis
 To sitten in a gild halle on the deis :
 Everich for the wisdom that he can
 Was shapelich for to ben an alderman.
 For catel hadden they ynough and rent,
 And eke hir wives wolde it wel assent ;
 And elles certainly they were to blame :
 It is ful fayre to ben ycleped Madame,

And for to gon to vigiles all before,
 And have a mantel reallich ybore.

A *Coke* they hadden with hem for the nones,
 To boile the chickenes and the marie bones,
 And poudre marchant, tart and galingale.
 Wel coude he knowe a draught of London ale.
 He coude roste, and sethe, and broile, and frie,
 Maken mortrewes, and wel bake a pie ;
 But gret harm was it, as it thoughte me,
 That on his shinne a mormal hadde he.
 For blanc manger that made he with the best.

A *Shipman* was ther woned fer by west ;
 For ought I wote he was of Dertemouth :
 He rode upon a rouncie, as he couthe,
 All in a gowne of falding to the knee.
 A dagger hanging by a las hadde hee
 About his nekke under his arm adoun ;
 The hote somner hadde made his hewe all broun ;
 And certainly he was a good felaw ;
 Ful many a draught of win he hadde draw
 From Burdeux ward while that the chapmen slepe :
 Of nice conscience toke he no kepe.
 If that he faught and hadde the higher hand,
 By water he sent hem home to every land.
 But of his craft to reken wel his tides,
 His strems and his strandes him besides,
 His herberwe, his mone, and his lodemanage,
 Ther was non swiche from Hull unto Cartage.
 Hardy he was, and wise, I undertake ;
 With many a tempest hadde his berd be shake :
 He knew wel alle the havens as they were
 Fro Gotland to the Cape de Finistere,
 And every creke in Bretagne and in Spaine :
 His barge ycleped was the Magdelaine.

With us ther was a *Doctour of Phisike* ;
 In all this world ne was ther non him like
 To speke of phisike and of surgerie,
 For he was grounded in astronomie.
 He kept his patient a ful gret del
 In houres by his magike naturel :
 Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
 Of his images for his patient.

He knew the cause of every maladie,
 Were it of cold, or hote, or moist, or drie,
 And wher engendred, and of what humour :
 He was a veray parfite practifour.
 The cause yknowe, and of his harm the rose,
 Anon he gave to the sike man his bote.
 Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
 To send him dragges and his lettuaries,
 For eche of hem made other for to winne :
 Hir frendship n'as not newe to beginne.
 Wel knew he the old Esculapius,
 And Dioscorides and eke Rufus,
 Old Hippocras, Hali, and Gallien,
 Serapion, Rasis, and Avicen,
 Averrois, Damascene, and Constantin,
 Bernard, and Gatifden, and Gilbertin.
 Of his diete mesurable was he ;
 For it was of no superfluitee,
 But of gret nourishing and digestible :
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.
 In sanguin and in perse he clad was alle
 Lined with tassata and with sendalle.

* The precise import of this word is often as obscure as its original. See *Du Cange* in v. In this place it should perhaps be understood to mean the whole class of middling landholders.

THE PROLOGUE.

And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in the pestilence;
For gold in phisike is a cordial,
Therefore he loved gold in special.

A good *Wif* was ther of beside *Bathe*,
But she was som del dese, and that was scathe.
Of cloth making she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ipres and of Gaunt.
In all the parish wif ne was ther non
That to the offring before hire shulde gon,
And if ther did, certain so wroth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hire coverchiefs weren ful fine of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden a pound
That on the Sonday were upon hire hede:
Hire hosen weren of fine scarlet rede,
Ful streite yteyed, and shoon ful moist and newe:
Bold was hire face, and fayre and rede of hew.
She was a worthy woman all hire live;
Housbondes at the chirche dore had she had five,
Withouten other compaignie in youthe,
But therof nedeth not to speke as nouthe;
And thries hadde she ben at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a strange streme:
At Rome she hadde ben, and at Boloine,
In Galice at Seint James, and at Coloine:
She coude moche of wandring by the way;
Gat-tothed was she, sothly for to say;
Upon an ambler esily she sat,
Ywimpled wel, and on hire hede an hat
As brode as is a bokeler or a targe,
A fote mantel about hire hippes large,
And on hire fete a pair of spores sharpe.
In felawship wel coude she laughe and carpe;
Of remedies of love she knew parchance,
For of that arte she coude the olde dance.

A good man ther was of religioun
That was a pure *Parfone* of a toun,
But riche he was of holy thought and werk;
He was also a lerned man, a Clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche;
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversite ful patient,
And swiche he was ypreved often fithes;
Ful loth were him to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven out of doute
Unto his poure parishens aboute
Of his offring, and eke of his substance;
He coude in litel thing have suffisance:
Wide was his parish, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne left nought for no rain ne thonder,
In sikenesse and in mischief to visite
The ferrest in his parish moche and lite
Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf:
This noble ensample to his shepe he yaf,
That first he wrought and afterward he taught,
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught,
And this figure he added yet thereto
That if gold ruste, what shuld iren do
For if a preest be foule on whom we trust
No wonder is a lewed man to rust;
And shame it is if that a preest take kepe
To see a shitten shepherd and cleene shepe:

Wel ought a preest ensample for to yeve
By his clenenesse how his shepe shulde live.

He sette not his benefice to hire,
And lette his shepe accombred in the mire,
And ran unto London unto Seint Poules
To seken him a chanterie for soules,
Or with a brotherhede to be withhold,
But dwelt at home and kepte wel his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not miscarie:
He was a shepherd and no mercenarie;
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was to sinful men not dispitous,
Ne of his speche dangerous ne digne,
But in his teching discrete and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven with fairenesse;
By good ensample, was his besinesse;
But it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were of highe or low estat,
Him wolde he snibben sharply for the nones;
A better preest I trowe that no wher non is,
He waited after no pompe ne reverence,
Ne maked him no spiced conscience
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve
He taught, but first he folwed it himselve.

With him ther was a *Plowman*, was his brother,
That hadde ylaid of dong ful many a fother;
A true swinker and a good was he,
Living in pees and parfite charitee:
God loved he beste with alle his herte
At alle times, were it gain or smerte,
And than his neighebour right as himselve.
He wolde thresh, and therto dike and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every poure wight
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.

His tithes paied he ful fayre and wel
Both of his propre swinke and his catel.
In a tabard he rode upon a mere.

Ther was also a Reve, and a Millere,
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also,
A Manciple, and myself; ther n'ere no mo.

The *Miller* was a stout carl for the nones,
Ful bigge he was of braun and eke of bones,
That proved wel, for over all ther he came,
At wrastring he wolde bere away the ram.
He was short shuldered, brode, a thikke gnarre,
Ther n'as no dore that he n'olde heve of barre,
Or breke it at a renning with his hede;
His berd as any sowe or fox was rede,
And therto brode as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A wert, and theron stode a tuste of heres
Rede as the bristles of a sowes eres:
His nose-thirles blacke were and wide:
A swerd and bokeler bare he by his side:
His mouth as wide was as a forneis:
He was a jangler and a Goliardeis,
And that was most of sinne and harlotries:
Wel coude he stelen corne and tollen thries;
And yet he had a thomb of gold parde,
A white cote and a blew hode wered he:
A baggepipe wel coude he blowe and sounen,
And therwithall he brought us out of tounen.

A gentil *Manciple* was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours mighten take ensample

THE PROLOGUE.

For to ben wise in bying of vitaille,
For whether that he paide or toke by taille
Algate he waited so in his achate
That he was ay before in good estate :
Now is not that of God a ful fayre grace
That swiche a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an hepe of lered men ?

Of maisters had he mo than thries ten
That were of lawe expert and curious,
Of which ther was a dofein in that hous
Worthy to ben stewardes of rent and lond
Of any lord that is in Englelond,
To maken him live by his propre good
In honour detteles, but if he were wood,
Or live as scarfly as him list desire,
And able for to helpen all a shire
In any cas that mighte fallen or happe ;
And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The Reve was a slendre colerike man,
His berd was shave as neighe as ever he can :
His here was by his eres round yshorne ;
His top was docked like a preest beforne :
Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,
Ylike a staff ; ther was no calf ysene :
Wel coude he kepe a garner and a binne ;
Ther was non auditour coude on him winne ;
Wel wiste he by the drougt and by the rain
The yelding of his seed and of his grain.
His lordes shepe, his nete, and his deirie,
His swine, his hors, his store, and his pultrie,
Were holly in his Reves governing,
And by his covenant yave he rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yere of age ;
Ther coude no man bring him in arerage.
Ther n'as bailliff, ne herde, ne other hine,
That he ne knew his sleight and his covine ;
They were adradde of him as of the deth.
His wonning was ful fayre upon an heth ;
With grene trees yshadewed was his place ;
He coude better than his lord pourchace :
Ful riche he was ystored privily ;
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly
To yeve and lene him of his owen good,
And have a thank and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mistere ;
He was a wel good wright, a carpentere.
This Reve fate upon a right good stot
That was all pomelee grey, and highte Scot :
A long surcote of perse upon he hade,
And by his side he bare a rusty blade.
Of Norfolk was this Reve of which I tell,
Beside a toun men clepen Baldefswell.
Tucked he was, as is a frere aboute,
And ever he rode the hindereft of the route.

A Sampnour was ther with us in that place
That hadde a fire-red cherubinnes face,
For fausefleshe he was, with eyen narwe ;
As hote he was and likerous as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake and pilled berd ;
Of his visage children were fore aferd.
Ther n'as quicksilver, litarge, ne brimston,
Boras, ceruse, ne oile of tartre non,
Ne oinment, that wolde clense or bite,
That him might helpen of his whelkes white,

Ne of the knobbes sitting on his chekes :
Wel loved he garlike, onions, and lekes,
And for to drinke strong win as rede as blood,
Than wolde he speke and crie as he were wood ;
And whan that he wel dronken had the win,
Than wold he speken no word but Latin :
A fewe termes coude he, two or three,
That he had lerned out of som decree ;
No wonder is, he heard it all the day :
And eke ye knowen wel how that a jay
Can clepen watte as wel as can the pope :
But who so wolde in other thing him grope
Than hadde he spent all his philosophie ;
Ay *Questio quid juris ?* wolde he crie.

He was a gentil harlot * and a kind ;
A better felaw shulde a man not find :
He wolde suffre for a quart of wine
A good felaw to have his concubine
A twelvemonth, and excuse him at the full :
Ful prively a finch eke coude he pull ;
And if he found o where a good felawe
He wolde techen him to have non awe
In swiche a cas of the archedekenes curse,
But if a mannes soule were in his purse,
For in his purse he shulde ypunished be ;
Purse is the archedekens helle, said he,
But wel I wote he lied right in dede ;
Of cursing ought eche gilty man him drede,
For curse wol sle right as affoiling saveth,
And also ware him of a *significavit*.

In danger hadde he at his owen gife
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew hir counseil and was of hir rede.
A gerlond hadde he sette upon his hede
As gret as it were for an alestake ;
A bokeler hadde he made him of a cake.

With him ther rode a gentil *Pardonere*
Of Rouncevall, his frend and his compere,
That streit was comen from the court of Rome ;
Ful loude he sang, Come hither love to me.
This Sompnour bare to him a stiff burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so gret a soun.
This Pardonere had here as yelwe as wax.
But smoth it heng as doth a strike of flax ;
By unces heng his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shulders overspradde ;
Full thinne it lay, by culpons on and on,
But hode for jolite ne wered he non.
For it was trussed up in his wallet.
Him thought he rode all of the newe get,
Dishevele, sauf his cappe, he rode all bare :
Swiche glaring eyen hadde he as an hare :
A vernicle hadde he sewed upon his cappe ;
His wallet lay beforne him in his lappe
Bret-ful of pardon come from Rome al hote ;
A vois he hadde as smale as hath a gote :
No berd hadde he, ne never non shulde have ;
As smothe it was as it were newe shave :
I trowe he were a gelding or a mare.

But of his craft, fro Berwike unto Ware

* The name of harlot was anciently given to men, as well as women.

THE PROLOGUE.

Ne was ther swiche an other Pardonere,
For in his male he hadde a pilwebere
Which, as he saide, was oure Ladies viel :
He saide he hadde a gobbet of the seyl
Thatte Seint Peter had whan that he went
Upon the see till Jesu Crist him hent :
He had a crois of laton ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with these reliques whanne that he fond
A poure persone dwelling up on lond,
Upon a day he gat him more moneie
Than that the persone gat in monethes tweie;
And thus with fained flattering and japes
He made the persone and the peple his apes.

But trewely to tellen atte last,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiast :
Wel coude he rede a lesson or a storie,
But alderbest he sang an offertorie ;
For wel he wiste whan that song was songe
He muste preache and wel afile his tonge
To winne silver, as he right wel coude,
Therefore he sang the merier and loude.

Now have I told you shortly in a clause
Th' estat, th' araie, the nombre, and eke the cause,
Why that assembled was this compaignie
In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrie
That highte The Tabard, fast by the Belle.
But now is time to you for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night
Whan we were in that hostelrie alight ;
And after wol I tell of our viage,
And all the remenant of our pilgrimage.

But firste I praie you of your curtesie
That ye ne arette it not my vilanie,
Though that I plainly speke in this matere,
To tellen you hir wordes and hir chere,
Ne though I speke hir words proprely ;
For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
Who so shall telle a Tale after a man
He mooste reherse as neighe as ever he can
Everich word, if it be in his charge,
All speke he never so rudely and so large,
Or elles he mooste tellen his Tale untrewely,
Or feinen thinges, or finden wordes newe :
He may not spare although he were his brother ;
He mooste as wel sayn o word as an other.
Crist spake himself ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye wote no vilanie is it :
Eke Plato sayeth, who so can him rede,
The wordes most ben cosin to the dede.

Also I praie you to forgive it me
All have I not sette folk in hir degree
Here in this Tale as that they shulden stonde :
My wit is short ye may well understonde.

Gret chere made our Hoste us everich on,
And to the souper sette he us anon.
And served us with vitaille of the beste ;
Strong was the win, and wel to drink us leste.
A semely man our Hoste was with alle
For to han ben a marshal in an halle ;
A large man he was, with eyen stepe ;
A fairer burgeis is ther none in Chepe :
Bold of his speche, and wise, and wel ytaught,
And of manhood elaked right him naught :

Eke therto was he right a mery man,
And after souper plaien he began,
And spake of mirthe amonges other thinges
Whan that we hadden made our rekeninges,
And saide thus ; Now Lordinges, trewely
Ye ben to me welcome right hertily,
For by my trouthe, if that I shal not lie,
I saw nat this yere swiche a compaignie
At ones in this herberwe as is now ;
Fayn wolde I do you mirthe and I wiste how ;
And of a mirthe I am right now bethought
To don you ese, and it shall coste you nought.
Ye gon to Canterbury ; God you spede,
The blisful martyr quite you your mede ;
And wel I wot as ye gon by the way
Ye shapen you to talken and to play ;
For trewely comfort ne mirthe is non
To riden by the way dombe as the ston ;
And therefore wold I maken you disport,
As I said erst, and don you some comfort,
And if you liketh alle by on assent
Now for to stonden at my jugement,
And for to werchen as I shal you say
To-morwe, whan ye riden on the way,
Now by my faders soule that is ded
But ye be mery, smiteth of my hed :
Hold up your hondes withouten more speche.

Our counseil was not long for to seche ;
Us thought it was not worth to make it wise,
And granted him withouten more avise,
And bad him say his verdit as him leste.

Lordinges, (quod he) now herkeneth for the beste ;
But take it nat, I pray you, in disdain :
This is the point, to speke it plat and plain,
That eche of you to shorten with youre way
In this viage shal tellen Tales tway,
To Canterbury ward I mene it so,
And homeward he shall tellen other two,
Of adventures that whilom han befallé.
And which of you that bereth him best of alle,
That is to sayn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,
Shall have a souper at youre aller cost
Here in this place sitting by this post,
Whan that ye comen agen from Canterbury.
And for to maken you the more mery
I wol my selven gladly with you ride,
Right at min owen cost, and be your gide.
And who that wol my jugement withsay
Shal pay for alle we spenden by the way.
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
Telle me anon withouten wordes mo,
And I wol erly shapen me therfore.

This thing was granted, and our othes swore
With ful glad herte, and praiden him also
That he wold vouchesauf for to don so,
And that he wolde ben our governour,
And of our Tales juge and reportour,
And sette a souper at a certain pris,
And we wol reuled ben at his devise
In highe and lowe* : and thus by on assent
We ben accorded to his jugement ;

* In, or, *De alto et basso*, barb Lat. *Haut et bas*, Fr. were expressions of entire submission on one side, and sovereignty on the other.

And therupon the win was sette anon :
We dronken, and to reſte wenten eche on
Withouten any lenger tarying.

A morwe when the day began to ſpring
Up roſe our Hoſte, and was our aller cok,
And gaderd us togeder in a flok,
And forth we riden a litel more than paſ
Unto the watering of Seint Thomas,
And ther our Hoſte began his hors areſt,
And ſaid, Lordes, herkeneth if you leſt :
Ye wete your forword, and I it record :
If even ſong and morwe ſong accord,
Let ſe now who ſhal telle the firſt Tale :
As ever mote I drinken win or ale
Who ſo is rebel to my jugement
Shal pay for alle that by the way is ſpent.
Now draweth cutte or that ye forther twinne ;
He which that hath the ſhortest ſhal beginne.

Sire Knight, (quod he) my maiſter and my lord,
Now draweth cutte, for that is min accord.

Cometh nere (quod he) my Lady Prioreſſe
And ye ſire Clerk ; let be your ſhamefaſtneſſe,
Ne ſtudieth nought : lay hand to every man.

Anon to drawen every wight began,
And ſhortly for tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure, or ſort, or cas,
The ſothe is this, the cutte fell on the Knight,
Of which ful blith and glad was every wight ;
And tell he muſt his Tale as was reſon,
By forword and by compoſition,
As ye han herd ; what nedeth wordes mo ?
And when this good man ſaw that it was ſo,
As he that wiſe was and obedient
To kepe his forword by his free aſſent,
He ſaide ; Sithen I ſhal begin this game,
What, welcome be the cutte a Goddes name,
Now let us ride, and hearkeneth what I ſay.

And with that word we riden forth our way ;
And he began with a right mery chere
His Tale anon ; and ſaide as ye ſhal here.

THE KNIGHTES TALE.

WHILOM, as olde stories tellen us,
 Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
 Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
 And in his time swiche a conquerour,
 That greter was ther non under the sonne;
 Ful many a riche contree had he wonne.
 What with his wisdom and his chevalrie
 He conquerd all the regne of Feminie,
 That whilom was ycleped Scythia,
 And wedded the freshe quene Ipolita,
 And brought hire home with him to his contree
 With mochel glorie and great solempnitee,
 And eke hire yonge suster Emelie.
 And thus with victorie and with melodie
 Let I this worthy duk to Athenes ride,
 And all his host in armes him beside.

And certes, if it n'ere to long to here,
 I wolde have told you fully the manere
 How wonnen was the regne of Feminie
 By Theseus and by his chevalrie,
 And of the grete bataille for the nones
 Betwix Athenes and the Amafones,
 And how assaged was Ipolita,
 The faire hardy quene of Scythia,
 And of the feste that was at hire wedding,
 And of the temple at hire home coming;
 But all this thing I moſte as now forbere:
 I have, God wot, a large feld to ere,
 And weke ben the oxen in my plow:
 The remenent of my Tale is long ynow.
 I wil not letten eke non of this route;
 Let every felaw telle his Tale aboute,
 And let se now who ſhal the ſouper winne.
 Ther as I left I will agen beginne.

This duk, of whom I made mentioun,
 Whan he was comen almoſt to the toun,
 In all his wele and in his moſte pride,
 He was ware, as he caſt his eye aſide,
 Wher that ther kneled in the highe wey
 A compaignie of ladies twey and twey,
 Eche after other, clad in clothes blake;
 But ſwiche a crie and ſwiche a wo they make,
 That in this world n'is creature living
 That ever herd ſwiche another waimenting;
 And of this crie ne wolde they never ſtenten
 Till they the reines of his bridel henten.

What folk be ye that at min home coming
 Perturben ſo my feſte with crying?
 Quod Theseus; have ye ſo grete envie
 Of min honour, that thus complaine and crie?
 Or who hath you miſboden or offended?
 Do telle me, if that it may be amended,

And why ye be thus clothed all in blake?

The oldeſt lady of hem all than ſpake,
 Whan ſhe had ſwouned with a dedly chere,
 That it was reuthe for to ſeen and here.
 She ſayde, Lord, to whom Fortune hath yeven
 Victorie, and as a conqueror to liven,
 Nought greveth us your glorie and your honour,
 But we beſeke you of mercie and ſocour:
 Have mercie on our woe and our diſtreſſe:
 Some drope of pitee thurgh thy gentilleſſe
 Upon us wretched wimmen let now falle;
 For certes, Lord, ther n'is non of us alle
 That ſhe n'hath ben a duchefſe or a quene;
 Now be we caitives, as it is wel ſene:
 Thanked be Fortune and hire falſe whele
 That non eſtat enſureth to be wele.

And certes, Lord, to abiden your preſence,
 Here in this temple of the goddeſſe Clemence,
 We han ben waiting all this fourteenight:
 Now helpe us, Lord, ſin it lieth in thy might.

I wretched wight, that wepe and waile thus,
 Was whilom wiſ to King Capaneus
 That ſtarfe at Thebes, curſed be that day;
 And alle we that ben in this aray,
 And maken all this lamentation,
 We loſten all our huſbondes at that toun,
 While that the ſiege therabouten lay:
 And yet now the olde Creon, wala wa!
 That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
 Fulfilled of ire and of iniquitee,
 He for deſpit, and for his tyrannie,
 To don the ded bodies a vilanie,
 Of alle our lordes, which that ben yſlawe,
 Hath alle the bodies on an here ycrawe,
 And will not ſuffren hem by non aſſent
 Neyther to ben yberied ne ybrent,
 But maketh houndes ete hem in deſpite.

And with that word, withouten more reſpite,
 They fallen groff, and crien pitouſly,
 Have on us wretched wimmen ſom mercy,
 And let our ſorwe ſinken in thin herte.

This gentil duk down from his courſer ſterte
 With herte piteous whan he herd hem ſpeke;
 Him thoughte that his herte wolde all to-breke
 When he ſaw hem ſo pitous and ſo mate
 That whilom weren of ſo gret eſtate,
 And in his armes he hem all up hente,
 And hem comforted in ful good entente,
 And ſwore his oth, as he was trewe knight,
 He wolde don ſo ferforthly his might
 Upon the tyrant Creon hem to wreke.
 That all the peple of Grece ſhulde ſpeke

How Creon was of Theseus yferved,
As he that hath his deth ful wel deserved.

And right anon, withouten more abode,
His banner he displaide, and forth he rode
To Thebes ward, and all his host beside:
No ner Athenes n'olde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his way that night he lay,
And sent anon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelie hire younge syster shene,
Unto the toun of Athenes for to dwell;
And forth he rit; ther n'is no more to tell.

The red statue of Mars, with spere and targe,
So shineth in his white banner large,
That all the felde gliteren up and down;
And by his banner borne is his penon
Of gold ful riche, in which that ther was ybete
The Minotaure which that he flew in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chevalrie the flour,
Til that he came to Thebes, and alight
Fayre in a feld, ther as he thought to fight.
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king
He fought, and slew him manly as a knight
In plaine bataille, and put his folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rent adoun bothe wall, and sparre, and rafter;
And to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of hir housbondes that were slain,
To don the obsequies, as was tho the gife.

But it were all to long for to devise
The grete clamour and the waïmenting
Whiche that the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the gret honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladies whan they from him wente;
But shortly for to telle is min entente.

Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slain and wonnen Thebes thus,
Still in the feld he toke all night his reste;
And did with all the countree as him leste:
To ranfak in the tas of bodies dede,
Hem for to stripe of harneis and of wede,
The pillours dide hir besinesse and cure,
After the bataille and discomfiture;
And so befell that in the tas they found,
Thurgh girt with many a grevous bloody wound,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,
Bothe in on armes wrought ful richely;
Of whiche two Arcita highte that on,
And he that other highte Palamon,
Not fully quik ne fully ded they were,
But by hir cote armure and by hir gere
The heraudes knew him wel in special,
As tho that weren of the blod real
Of Thebes and of sustren two yborne.
Out of the tas the pillours han hem torne,
And han hem carried soft unto the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenes, for to dwellen in prison
Perpetuel, he n'olde no raunson.
And whan this worthy duk had thus ydon,
He toke his host, and home he rit anon,

With laurel crouned as a conquerour,
And ther he liveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lif; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour in anguish and in wo
Dwellen this Palamon and eke Arcite
For evermo, ther may no gold hem quite.

Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,
Till it fell ones in a morwe of May
That Emelie, that fayrer was to sene
Than is the lillie upon his stalke grene,
And fresher than the May with floures new,
(For with the rose colour strof hire hewe;
I n'ot which was the finer of hem two)
Er it was day, as she was wont to do,
She was arisen, and all redy dight,
For May wol have no flogardie a night;
The seson priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,
And sayth, Arise, and do thin observance.

This maketh Emelie han remembrance
To don honour to May, and for to rise;
Yclothed was she freshe for to devise,
Hire yelwe here was broided in a tresse
Behind hire back, a yerde long I gesse;
And in the gardin at the sonne uprist
She walketh up and down wher as hire list:
She gathereth floures, partie white and red,
To make a sotel gerlond for hire hed;
And as an angel heavenlich she song.
The grete tour that was so thikke and strong,
Which of the castel was the chef dongeon,
(Wher as these knightes weren in prison,
Of which I tolde you, and tellen shal)
Was even joinant to the gardin wall,
Ther as this Emelie had hire playing, [ing

Bright was the sonne and clere that morwen-
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on high,
In which he all the noble citee sigh,
And eke the gardin, ful of branches grene,
Ther as this freshe Emelia the shene
Was in hire walk, and romed up and down.

This forweful prisoner, this Palamon,
Goth in his chambre roming to and fro,
And to himselfe complaining of his wo:
That he was borne ful oft he sayd Alas!

And so befell, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a window thikke of many a barre
Of yren gret, and square as any sparre,
He cast his cyen upon Emelia,
And therwithal he blent* and cried A!

As though he stongen were unto the herte:

And with that crie Arcite anon up sterte,
And saide, Cofin min, what eyleth thee
That art so pale and dedly for to see?
Why cridest thou? who hath thee don offence?
For Goddes love take all in patience

* This word has various senses in Chaucer, as it is derived from blinnan, *cessare*; blindan, *cacare*; or blendan, *miscere*. It seems here to be used in a fourth sense, the same in which Shakespeare uses the verb to blench, i. e. to shrink or start aside. *Johnson's Dict.* in v. *Blench*. See *Gloss.* in v. *Blent*, part. of *Blench*.

Our prison, for it may non other be;
 Fortune hath yeven us this adversite:
 Som wikke aspect or disposition
 Of Saturne, by som constellation,
 Hath yeven us this, although we had it sworn:
 So stood the heven whan that we were born:
 We mooste endure; this is the short and plain.

This Palamon answerde, and sayde again,
 Cofin, forsoth of this opinion
 Thou hast a vaine imagination:
 This prison caused me not for to crie,
 But I was hurt right now thurghout min eye
 Into min herte, that wol my bane be:
 The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
 Yond in the gardin roming to and fro
 Is cause of all my crying and my wo:
 I n'ot whe'r she be woman or goddesse,
 But Venus is it sothly as I gesse.

And therewithall on knees adoun he fill,
 And sayde; Venus, if it be your will
 You in this gardin thus to transfigure,
 Beforn me forweful wretched creature,
 Out of this prison helpe that we may scape;
 And if so be our destine be shape
 By eterne word to dien in prison,
 Of our lignage have some compassion,
 That is so low ybrought by tyrannie.

And with that word Arcita gan espie
 Wher as this lady romed to and fro,
 And with that sight hire Beaute hurt him so,
 That if that Palamon were wounded fore
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he or more:
 And with a sigh he sayde pitously,
 The freshe Beaute sleth me sodenly
 Of hire that rometh in the yonder place;
 And but I have hire mercie and hire grace,
 That I may seen hire at the leste way,
 I n'am but ded; ther n'is no more to say.

This Palamon, whan he these wordes herd,
 Dispitously he loked, and answerd,
 Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play?

Nay, quod Arcite, in ernest by my say;
 God helpe me so, me lust full yvel play.

This Palamon gan knit his browes twey,
 It were, quod he, to thee no gret honour
 For to be false, ne for to be traytour
 To me, that am thy cofin and thy brother
 Ysworne ful depe, and eche of us to other,
 That never for to dien in the peine
 Til that the deth departen shal us tweine,
 Neyther of us in love to hindre other,
 Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
 But that thou shuldest trewely forther me
 In every cas as I shuld forther thee.
 This was thin oth, and min also certain;
 I wot it wel thou darst it not withfain:
 Thus art thou of my conseil out of doute,
 And now thou woldest falsly ben aboute
 To love my lady whom I love and serve,
 And ever shal til that min herte sterve.

Now certes, false Arcite, thou shalt not so:
 I loved hire firste, and tolde thee my wo.
 As to my conseil, and my brother sworne
 To forther me as I have told before,

For which thou art ybounden as a knight
 To helpen me, if it lie in thy might,
 Or elles art thou false I dare wel sain.

This Arcita full proudly spake again.
 Thou shalt, quod he, be rather false than I,
 And thou art false, I tell thee utterly;
 For *par amour* I loved hire first or thou.
 What wolt thou sayn? thou wistest nat right now
 Whether she were a woman or a goddesse:
 Thin is affection of holinesse,
 And min is love as to a creature,
 For which I tolde thee min aventure,
 As to my cofin and my brother sworne.

I pose that thou lovedest hire before:
 Wost thou not wel the olde clerkes sawe †,
 That who shall give a lover any lawe?
 Love is a greter lawe by my pan
 Then may be yeven of any erthly man;
 And therefore positif lawe and swiche decree
 Is broken all day for love in eche degree.
 A man mooste nedes love maugre his hed;
 He may not fleen it though he shuld be ded,
 All be she maid, or widewe, or elles wif.

And eke it is not likely all thy lif
 To stonden in hire grace, no more shal I;
 For wel thou wost thy selven veraily
 That thou and I be damned to prison
 Perpetuel; us gaineth no raunson.

We strive as did the houndes for the bone,
 They fought all day, and yet hir part was none:
 Ther came a kyte, while that they were so wrothe,
 And bare away the bone betwix hem bothe.
 And therefore at the kinges court, my brother,
 Eche man for himself, ther is non other.
 Love if thee lust, for I love, and ay shal;
 And sothly, leve brother, this is al.
 Here in this prison mosten we endure,
 And everich of us take his aventure.

Gret was the strif, and long betwix him twey,
 If that I hadde leiser for to sey:
 But to th' effect. It happed on a day,
 (To tell it you as shortly as I may)
 A worthy duk that highte Perithous,
 That felaw was to this duk Theseus
 Sin thilke day that they were children lite,
 Was come to Athenes his felaw to visite,
 And for to play as he was wont to do,
 For in this world he loved no man so,
 And he loved him as tendrely again:
 So wel they loved, as olde bokes sain,
 That whan that on was dede, sothly to tell,
 His felaw wente and sought him down in hell:
 But of that storie list me not to write.

Duk Perithous loved wel Arcite,
 And had him knowe at Thebes yere by yere:
 And finally, at request and praier
 Of Perithous, withouten any raunson,
 Duk Theseus him let out of prison,

† The olde clerk is Boethius, from whose book *De Consolatione*, Chaucer has borrowed largely in many places. The passage alluded to is in l. ii. met. 12.
 Quis legem det amantibus?
 Major lex amor est sibi.

Frely to gon wher that him list over all,
In swiche a gise as I you tellen shall.

This was the forword, plainly for to endite,
Betwixen Theseus and him Arcite;
That if so were that Arcite were yfound
Ever in his lif, by day or night, o stound
In any countree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was accorded thus,
That with a swerd he shulde lese his hed;
Ther was non other remedie ne rede;
But taketh his leve, and homeward he him spedde:
Let him beware, his nekke lieth to wedde.

How gret a sorwe suffereth now Arcite?
The deth he feleth thurgh his herte smite;
He wepeth, waileth, crieth pitously,
To flee himself he waiteth prively.
He said, Alas the day that I was borne!
Now is my prison werse than beforne;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Not only in purgatorie but in helle.
Alas! that ever I knew Perithous,
For elles had I dwelt with Theseus,
Yfetered in his prison evermo;
Than had I ben in blisse and not in wo:
Only the sight of hire whom that I serve,
Though that I never hire grace may deserve,
Wold have sufficed right ynough for me.

O dere cofin Palamon, quod he,
Thin is the victorie of this aventure;
Ful blisful in prison maiest thou endure:
In prison? certes nay, but in paradise.
Wel hath Fortune yturned thee the disce,
That hast the sight of hire and I th' absence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hire presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by some cas, sin Fortune is changeable,
Thou maiest to thy desir somtime atteine:
But that I am exiled, and barreine
Of alle grace, and in so gret despaire,
That ther n'is erthe, water, fire, ne aire,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me hele or don comfort in this,
Wel ought I sterve in wanhope and distresse,
Farewel my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse.

Alas! why plainen men so in commune
Of purveiance of God or of Fortune,
That yeveth hem ful oft in many a gise
Wel better than they can hemself devise?
Som man desireth for to have richesse,
That cause is of his murdre or gret siknesse;
And som man wold out of his prison fayn,
That in his house is of his meynie slain.
Infinite harmes ben in this matere:
We wote not what thing that we praien here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous:
A drunken man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he ne wot which is the right way thider,
And to a drunken man the way is slider,
And certes in this world so faren we.

We seken fast after felicite,
But we go wrong ful often trewely.
Thus we may sayen alle, and namely I,
That wende, and had a gret opinion,
That if I might escapen fro prison

Than I had ben in joye and parfite hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Sin that I may not seen you Emelie
I n'am but ded; ther n'is no remedie.

Upon that other side Palamon,
Whan that he wist Arcita was agon,
Swiche sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resounded of his yelling and clamour.
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salte teres wete.

Alas! quod he, Arcita, cofin min,
Of all our strif, God wot, the frute is thin.
Thou walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
Thou maist, sith thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen all the folk of our kinrede,
And make a werre so sharpe on this contree,
That by som aventure or som treetee
Thou maist have hire to lady and to wif
For whom that I must nedes lese my lif.
For as by way of possibilibtee,
Sith thou art at thy large of prison free,
And art a lord, gret is thin advantage,
More than is min, that sterve here in a cage:
For I may wepe and waile while that I live,
With all the wo that prison may me yeve,
And eke with peine that love me yeveth also,
That doubleth all my tourment and my wo.

Therwith the fire of jalousie up sterte
Within his brest, and hent him by the herte
So woodly, that he like was to behold
The box-tree, or the ashen ded and cold.
Then said he; O cruel Goddes! that governe
This world with binding of your word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamant
Your parlement and your eterne grant,
What is mankind more unto yhold
Than is the shepe that rouketh in the fold?
For slain is man right as another beest,
And dwelleth eke in prison and arrest,
And hath siknesse and gret adversite,
And often times gilteles parde.

What governance is in this prescience
That gilteles turmenteth innocence?
And yet encrefeth this all my penance,
That man is bounden to his observance
For Goddes sake to leten of his will,
Ther as a beest may all his lust fulfill.
And when a beest is ded he hath no peine;
But man after his deth mote wepe and pleine,
Though in this world he have care and wo:
Withouten doute it maye stonden so.

The answer of this lete I to divines,
But wel I wote that in this world gret pine is.
Alas! I see a serpent or a thefe,
That many a trewe man hath do meschese,
Gon at his large, and wher him lust may turn.
But I moste ben in prison thurgh Saturn,
And eke thurgh Juno, jalous and eke wood
That hath wel neye destrued all the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walls wide.
And Venus fleeth me on that other side
For jalousie, and fere of him Arcite.

Now wol I stent of Palamon a lite,

And leten him in his prifon ftill dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol you telle.

The fommer paffeth, and the nightes long
Encrefen double wife the peines ftong
Both of the lover and of the prifoner;
I n'ot which hath the wofuller miftre
For fhortly for to fay, this Palamon
Perpetuelly is damned to prifon,
In chaines and in fetters to ben ded;
And Arcite is exiled on his hed
For evermore as out of that contree,
Ne never more he fhall his lady fee.

You lovers axe I now this queftion,
Who hath the werfe, Arcite or Palamon?
That on my fe his lady day by day,
But in prifon moft he dwellen alway:
That other wher him luft may ride or go,
But fen his lady fhall he never mo.
Now demeth as you lifte, ye that can,
For I wil tell you forth as I began.

When that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful oft a day he fwelt and faid Alas!
For fen his lady fhall he never mo.
And fhortly to concluden all his wo,
So mochel forwe hadde never creature
That is or fhall be while the world may dure.
His flepe, his mete, his drinke, is him byraft,
That lene he wex, and drie as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe, and grifly to behold,
His hewe falwe, and pale as afhen cold,
And folitary he was, and ever alone,
And wailing all the night, making his mone:
And if he herde fong or instrument,
Than would he wepe, he mighte not be ftent.
So feble were his fpirites, and fo low,
And changed fo, that no man coude know
His fpeche ne his vois, though men it herd.
And in his gere, for all the world he ferd
Nought only like the lovers maladie,
Of Ereos, but rather ylike manie,
Engendred of humours melancolike,
Beforne his hed in his celle fantaftike.
And fhortly turned was all up fo doun
Both habit and eke difpofitioun
Of him, this woful lover Dan Arcite,
What fhuld I all day of his wo endite?

Whan he endured had a yere or two
This cruel torment, and this peine and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I faid,
Upon a night in flepe as he him laid,
Him thought how that the winged god Mercury
Beforne him ftood, and bad him to be mery.
His fleepy yerde in hond he bare upright;
An hat he wered upon his heres bright:
Arraied was this god (as he toke kepe)
As he was whan that Argus toke his flepe,
And faid him thus; To Athenes fhalt thou wende;
Ther is thee fhapen of thy wo an ende.

And with that word Arcite awoke and ftert.
Now trewely how fore that ever me fmert.
Quod he, to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for no drede of deth fhall I not spare
To fe my lady, that I love and ferve;
In hire prefence I rekke not to fterve.

And with that word he caught a gret mirroure,
And faw that changed was all his colour,
And faw his viſage all in another kind:
And right anon it ran him in his mind,
That fith his face was fo diffigured
Of maladie the which he had endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bare him lowe,
Live in Athenes evermore unknowe,
And fen his lady wel nigh day by day.
And right anon he changed his aray,
And clad him as a poure labourer.
And all alone, fave only a ſquier,
That knew his privite and all his cas,
Which was disguised pourely as he was,
To Athenes is he gone the nexte way.
And to the court he went upon a day,
And at the gate he proffered his ſervice,
To drugge and draw what ſo men wold deviſe.
And fhortly of this matere for to fayn,
He fell in office with a chamberlain,
The which that dwelling was with Emelie,
For he was wiſe, and coude ſone eſpie
Of every ſervent which that ſerved hire:
Wel coude he hewen wood, and water bere,
For he was yonge and mighty for the nones,
And therto he was ftong and big of bones
To don that any wight can him deviſe.

A yere or two he was in this ſervice,
Page of the chambre of Emelie the bright,
And Philoſtrate he fayde that he hight.
But half ſo wel beloved a man as he
Ne was ther never in court of his degre.
He was ſo gentil of conditioun,
That thurghout all the court was his renoun.
They fayden that it were a charite
That Theſeus wold enhaunſe his degre,
And putten him in worſhipful ſervice,
Ther as he might his vertues exerciſe.
And thus within a while his name is ſpronge
Both of his dedes and of his good tonge,
That Theſeus had taken him ſo ner
That of his chambre he made him a ſquier,
And gave him gold to mainteine his degre;
And eke men brought him out of his contre
Fro yere to yere ful prively his rent;
But honeſtly and fleighly he it ſpent,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yere in this wiſe his lif he ladde,
And bare him ſo in pees and eke in werre
Ther n'as no man that Theſeus hath derre.
And in this bliſſe let I now Arcite,
And ſpeke I wol of Palamon a lite.

In derkenefſe and horrible and ftong prifon
This ſeven yere hath fitten Palamon,
Forpined, what for love and for diſtreſſe.
Who feleth double forwe and hevineſſe
But Palamon? that love diſtraineth ſo,
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo,
And eke therto he is a prifonere
Perpetuell, not only for a yere.

Who coude time in Engliſh proprely
His martirdom? forſoth it am not I,
Therefore I paſſe as lightly as I may.
It fell that, in the ſeventh yere, in May

The thridde night, (as olde bokes sayn,
That all this storie tellen more plain)
Were it by aventure or destinee,
(As when a thing is shapen it shal be)
That sone after the midnight Palamon,
By helping of a frend, brake his prison,
And fleeth the cite faste as he may go,
For he had yeven drinke his gayler so,
Of a clarre made of a certain wine,
With narcotikes and opie of Thebes fine, [shake,
That all the night though that men wold him
The gailer slept, he mighte not awake:
And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.

The night was short, and faste by the day,
That nedes cost he moste himselfen hide;
And to a grove faste ther beside
With dredful foot than stalketh Palamon:
For shortly this was his opinion,
That in that grove he wold him hide all day,
And in the night than wold he take his way
To Thebes ward, his frendes for to preie
On Theseus to helpen him werreie:
And shortly, eyther he wold lese his lif
Or winnen Emelie unto his wif.

This is the effect, and his entente plein.
Now wol I turnen to Arcite agein,
That litel wist how neighe was his care,
Till that Fortune had brought him in the snare.
The besy larke, the messager of day,
Salewith in hire song the morwe gray,
And firy Phebus riseth up so bright,
That all the orient laugheth of the sight,
And with his stremes drieth in the greves
The silver dropes hanging on the leves.
And Arcite, that is in the court real
With Theseus the squier principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day;
And for to don his observance to May,
Remembring on the point of his desire,
He on his courser, sterling as the fire,
Is ridden to the felde him to pley,
Out of the court, were it a mile or twey;
And to the grove of which that I you told
By aventure his way he gan to hold,
To maken him a gerlond of the greves,
Were it of woodbind or of hauthorn leves,
And loud he song agen the sonne shene.

Maye, with all thy flours and thy grene,
Right welcome be thou faire freshe May,
I hope that I some grene here getten may.
And from his courser with a lusty herte
Into the grove ful hastily he stertere,
And in a path he romed up and down,
Ther as by aventure this Palamon
Was in a bush, that no man might him se,
For fore asered of his deth was he.
Nothing ne knew he, that it was Arcite:
God wot he wold have trowed it ful lite.
But soth is said, gon sithen are many yeres,
That feld hath eyen, and the wood hath eres,
It is ful faire a man to bere him even
For al day meten men at unset steven.
Ful litel wote Arcite of his felaw,
That was so neigh to herken of his saw,

For in the bush he sitteth now ful still.

Whan that Arcite had romed all his fill,
And songen all the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fell sodenly,
As don these lovers in hir queinte geres,
Now in the crop, and now down in the breres,
Now up, now down, as boket in a well.
Right as the Friday, sothly for to tell,
Now shineth it, and now it raineth fast;
Right so can gery Venus overcast
The hertes of hire folk, right as hire day
Is gerfull, right so changeth she aray.
Selde is the Friday all the weke ylike.

Whan Arcite hadde yfonge, he gan to like,
And set him down withouten any more;
Alas! (quod he) the day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee
Wilt thou werreien Thebes the citee?
Alas! ybrought is to confusion
The blood real of Cadme and Amphion:
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes built, or firste the toun began,
And of the citee firste was crowned king,
Of his linage am I, and his offspring
By veray line, as of the stok real;
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serve him as his squier pourely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame,
For I dare not beknowe min owen name,
But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Ahilostat not worth a mite,
Alas! thou fell Mars, alas! thou Juno,
Thus hath your ire our linage all fordo,
Save only me and wretched Palamon,
That Theseus martireth in prison.
And over all this, to slen me utterly,
Love hath his firy dart so brenningly
Ystiked thurgh my trewe careful hert,
That shapen was my deth erst than my shert.
Ye slen me with your eyen Emelie;
Ye ben the cause wherfore that I die.
Of all the remenant of min other care
Ne set I not the mountance of a tare,
So that I coud don ought to your pleance.

And with that word he fell down in a trance
A longe time, and afterward up stertere.
This Palamon, that thought thurghout his herte
He felt a colde swerd sodenly glide;
For ire he quoke, no lenger wolde he hide:
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face ded and pale,
He stertere him up out of the bushes thikke
And sayde; Falso Arcite, falso traitour wicke,
Now art thou hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have all this peine and wo,
And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
As I ful oft have told thee herebeforn,
And hast beiaiped here Duk Theseus,
And falsely changed hast thy name thus;
I wol be ded, or elles thou shalt die:
Thou shalt not love my lady Emelie,
But I wol love hire only and no mo,
For I am Palamon thy mortal fo.

And though that I no wepen have in this place,
But out of prisson am avert by grace,
I drede nought that eyther thou shalt die
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelie :
Chese which thou wolt, for thou shalt not avertte.

This Arcite, tho with ful dispitous herte,
Whan he him knew, and had his tale herd,
As fers as a leon pulled out a swerd,
And sayde thus; By God that sitteth above,
N'ere it that thou art like and wood for love,
And eke that thou no wepen hast in this place,
'Thou shuldest never out of this grove pace,
'That thou ne shuldest dien of min hond;
For I desie the suretee and the bond
Which that thou saist that I have made to thee.
What ! veray fool, thinke wel that love is free,
And I wol love hire maugre all thy might.
But for thou art a worthy gentil knight,
And wilnest to darraine hire by bataille,
Have here my trowth, to morwe I will not faille,
Withouten weting of any other wight,
That here I wol be founden as a knight,
And bringen harneis right ynough for thee,
And chese the beste, and leve the werste for me :
And mete and drinke this night wol I bring
Ynough for thee, and cloathes for thy bedding;
And if so be that thou my lady win,
And sle me in this wode, ther I am in,
Thou maist wel have thy lady as for me.

This Palamon answered, I grant it thee :
And thus they ben departed till a morwe.
When eche of hem hath laid his faith to borwe,

O Cupide ! out of alle charitee,
O regne ! that wolt no felaw have with thee,
Ful soth is sayde, that love ne lordship
Wol nat his thankes have no felawship.
Wel finden that Arcite and Palamon.

Arcite is ridden anone unto the toun,
And on the morwe, or it were day light,
Ful prively two harneis hath he dight,
Both suffisant and mete to darreine
The bataille in the field betwix hem tweine ;
And on his hors, alone as he was borne,
He carieth all this harneis him beforne ;
And the grove, at time and place yfette,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben mette.
Tho changen gan the colour in hir face,
Right as the hunter in the regne of Trace
That stondeth at a gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the lion or the bere,
And hereth him come rushing in the greves,
And breking bothe the boughes and the leves.
And thinketh here cometh my mortal enemy,
Withouten faile he must be ded or I :
For eyther I mote slain him at the gappe,
Or he mote slen me if that me mishappe.
So ferden they in changing of hir hewe,
As fer as eyther of hem other knewe.
Ther n' as no good day, ne no saluing,
But streit withouten wordes reherfing
Everich of hem halpe to armen other
As frendly as he were his owen brother ;
And after that with sharpe speres strong
They foineden eche at other wonder long.

Thou mightest wenen that this Palamon
In his fighting were as wood leon,
And as a cruel tigre was Arcite :
As wilde bores gan they togeder smite,
That frothen white as some for ire wood ;
Up to the ancle foughte they in hir blood ;
And in this wise I let hem fighting dwelle,
And forth I wol of Theseus you telle.

The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over al
The purveiance that God hath sen beforne,
So strong it is, that though the world hath sworpe
The contrary of a thing by ya or nay,
Yet somtime it shall fallen on a day
That falleth nat este in a thousand yere
For certainly our appetites here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
All is this ruled by the sight above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to huntten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hart in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day
That he n'is clad, and redy for to ride
With hunte and horne, and houndes him beside ;
For in his hunting hath he swiche delite,
That it is all his joye and appetite
To ben himself the grete harts bane ;
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.

Clere was the day, as I have told or this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ipolitia, the fayre quene,
And Emelie, yclothed all in grene,
On hunting ben thy ridden really :
And to the grove, that stood ther faste by,
In which ther was an hart as men him told,
Duk Theseus the streite way hath hold,
And to the launde he rideth him ful right,
Ther was the hart ywont to have his flight,
And over a brooke, and so forth on his wey.
This duk wol have a cours at him or twey
With houndes, swiche as him lust to commaunde.
And when this duk was comen to the launde,
Under the sonne he loked, and anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bolles two ;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously that with the leste stroke
It semed that it wolde felle an oke,
But what they weren nothing he ne wote :
This duk his courser with his spores smote,
And at a stert he was betwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd and cried, Ho !
No more, up peine of lesing of your hed ;
By mighty Mars he shall anon be ded
That smiteth any stroke that I may sen !
But telleth me what mistere men ye ben,
That ben so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten any juge or other officere,
As though it were in listes really.

This Palamon answered hastily
And saide ; Sire, what nedeth wordes mo ?
We have the deth deserved bothe two :
Two woful wretches ben we, two caitives,
That ben accombred of our owen lives.

And as thou art a rightful lord and jure
 Ne yeve us neyther mercie ne refuge;
 And fle me first for seinte charitee,
 But fle my felaw eke as wel as me;
 Or fle him first, for though thou know it lite,
 'This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
 That fro thy lond is banished on his hed,
 For which he hath deserved to be ded;
 For this is he that came unto thy gate,
 And sayde that he highte Philostrate.
 Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yere,
 And thou hast maked him thy chief squiere,
 And this is he that loveth Emelie.

For sith the day is come that I shal die
 I make plainly my confession,
 That I am thilke woful Palamon
 That hath thy prison broken wilfully:
 I am thy mortal fo, and it am I
 That loveth so hot Emelie the bright.
 That I wold dien present in hire sight,
 Therefore I axe deth and my ieweise,
 But fle my felaw in the same wise,
 For both we have deserved to be slain.

This worthy duk answerd anon again,
 And sayd, This is a short conclusion;
 Your owen mouth, by your confession,
 Hath damned you, and I wol it recorde;
 It nedeth not to pine you with the corde:
 Ye shul be ded by mighty Mars the Rede.

The quene anon for veray womanhede
 Gan for to wepe, and so did Emelie,
 And all the ladies in the compaignie.
 Gret pite was it, as it thought hem alle,
 That ever swiche a chance shulde befaller,
 For gentilmen they were of gret estat,
 And nothing but for love was this debat;
 And sawe hir bloody woundes wide and fore,
 And alle criden bothe lesse and more,
 Have mercie Lord upon us wimmen alle,
 And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
 And wold have kist his feet ther as he stood,
 Till at the last asslaked was his mood;
 (For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte)
 And though he first for ire quoke and sterte,
 He had considered shortly in a claufe
 The trespass of hem both, and eke the cause;
 And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
 Yet in his reson he hem both excused;
 As thus; he thoughte wel that every man
 Wol helpe himself in love if that he can,
 And eke deliver himself out of prison;
 And eke his herte had compassion
 Of wimmen, for they wepten ever in on,
 And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
 And soft unto himself he sayed, Fie
 Upon a lord that wol have no mercie,
 But be a leon both in word and dede,
 To hem that be in repentance and drede,
 As wel as to a proud dispitous man
 That wol mainteinen that the first began.
 That lord hath litel of discretion
 That in swiche cas can no division,
 But wegheth pride and humbleffe after on.
 And shortly whan his ire is thus agon,

He gan to loken up with eyen light,
 And spake these same wordes all on hight.

The god of Love, a *benedicite*!
 How mighty and how grete a lord is he?
 Again his might ther gainen non obstacles,
 He may be cleped a God for his miracles,
 For he can maken at his owen gise
 Of everich herte as that him list devise.
 Lo here this Arcite, and this Palamon;
 That quitely weren out of my prison,
 And might have lived in Thebes really,
 And weten I am hir mortal enemy,
 And that hir deth lith in my might also,
 And yet hath love, maugre hir eyen two,
 Ybrought hem hither both for to die;
 Now loketh, is not this an heigh folie?
 Who may ben a fool, but if that be love?
 Behold for Goddes sake that sitteth above,
 So how they blede! be they not wel araied?
 Thus hath hir lord, the god of Love, hem paied
 Hir wages, and hir fees for hir service,
 And yet they wenen for to be ful wise
 That serven Love for ought that may befaller.
 And yet is this the beste game of alle,
 That she for whom they have this jolite
 Con hem therefore as mochel thank as me.
 She wot no more of alle this hote fare,
 By God, than wot a cuckow or an hare.
 But all mote ben assaied hote or cold;
 A man mote ben a fool other yonge or old;
 I wot myself ful yore agon,

For in my time a servant was I on;
 And therefore sith I know of loves peine,
 And wot how sore it can a man destreine,
 As he that oft hath been caught in his las,
 I you foryeve all holly this trespass,
 At request of the quene that kneleth here,
 And eke of Emelie, my fuster dere,
 And ye shul both anon unto me swere
 That never mo ye shul my contree dere,
 Ne maken werre upon me night ne day,
 But ben my frendes in alle that ye may.
 I you foryeve this trespass every del.
 And they him sware his axing fayr and wel,
 And him of lordship and of mercie praid,
 And he hem granted grace, and thus he said:

To speke of real linage and richesse,
 Though that she were a quene or a princeffe,
 Eche of you bothe is worthy douteles
 To wedden whan time is, but natheles,
 I speke as for my fuster Emelie,
 For whom ye have this strif and jalousie,
 Ye wot yourself she may not wedden twe
 At ones, though ye fighten evermo;
 But on of you, al be him loth or lese,
 He mot gon pipen in an ivy lese:
 This is to say, she may not have you bothe,
 Al be ye never so jalous ne so wrothe,
 And forthy I you put in this degree,
 That eche of you shal have his destinee
 As him is shape, and herkneth in what wise;
 Lo here your ende of that I shal devise.

My will is this for plat conclusion
 Withouten any replication,

-If that you liketh, take it for the beste,
That everich of you shal gon wher him leste
Freely withouten raunson or dangere.
And this day fifty wekes, ferre ne nere,
Everich of you shal bring an hundred knightes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes,
Alle redy to darrein hire by bataille.
And this behete I you withouten faille
Upon my trowth, and as I am a knight,
That whether of you bothe hath that might,
This is to sayn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spake of now,
Sle his contrary, or out of listes drive,
Him shall I yeven Emelie to wive
To whom that Fortune yeveth so fayr a grace.

The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even juge ben and trewe.
Ye shal non other ende with me maken
That on of you ne shall be ded or taken;
And if you thinketh this is wel ysaid,
Saith your avis, and holdeth you apaid :
This is your ende and your conclusion,

Who loketh lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who coud it tell, or who coud it endite,
The joye that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus hath don so fayre a grace?
But down on knees went every manere wight,
And thanked him with all hir hertes might,
And namely these Thebanes often sith.

And thus with good hope and with herte blith
They taken hir leve, and homeward gan they ride
To Thebes, with his olde walles wide.

I trowe men wolde deme it negligence
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so besily
To maken up the listes really,
That swiche a noble theatre as it was
I dare wel sayn in all this world ther n'as :
The circuite a mile was aboute
Walled of stone, and diked all withoute;
Round was the shape, in manere of a compas
Ful of degrees, the hight of sixty pas,
That whan a man was set on o degree
He letted not his felaw for to see.
Estward ther stood a gate of marbel white,
Westward right swiche another in th' opposite;
And shortly to concluden, swiche a place
Was never in erthe in so litel a space,
For in the lond ther n'as no craftes man
Than geometrie or arsemetrike can,
Ne portreieur, ne kerver of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devise.

And for to don his rite and sacrifice
He estward hath upon the gate above,
In worship of Venus goddesse of Love,
Don make an auter and an oratorie,
And westward, in the minde and in memorie
Of Mars he maked hath right swiche another,
That coste largely of gold a fother ;
And northward, in a touret on the wall,
Of alabastre white and red corall

An oratorie riche for to see,
In worship of Diane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus don wrought in noble wive.

But yet had I foryeten to devise
The noble kerving and the portreitures,
The shape, the contenance, of the figures
That weren in these oratories three.

First in the temple of Venus maist thou see
Wrought on the wall, ful pitous to beholde,
The broken slepes, and the sikes colde,
The sacred teres, and the waimentinges,
The firy strokes of the desiringes,
That Loves servantes in this lif enduren,
The othes that hir covenants assuren.
Plesance and Hope, Desire, Foolhardinesse,
Beaute and Youthe, Baudrie and Richeffe,
Charmes and Force, Lesinges and Flaterie,
Dispence, Besinesse, and Jalousie,
That wered of yelwe golde a gerlond,
And hadde a cuckow sitting on hire hond,
Festes, instruments, and caroles and dances,
Lust and array, and all the circumstances
Of Love, which that I reken and reken shall,
By ordre weren peinted on the wall,
And mo than I can make of mention :
For sothly all the mount of Citheron,
Ther Venus hath hire principal dwelling,
Was shewed on the wall in purtreying,
With all the gardin, and the lustinesse :
Nought was foryeten the porter Idelnesse,
Ne Narcissus the fayre of yore agon,
Ne yet the folie of King Salomon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules.
Th' enchantment of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus caitif in servage.

Thus may ye seen that wisdom ne richesse,
Beaute ne sleighte, strengthe ne hardinesse,
Ne may with Venus holden champartie,
For as hire liste the world may she gie.
Lo, all these folk so caught were in hire las
Til they for wo ful often said Alas!
Sufficeth here ensamples on or two,
And yet I coude reken a thousand mo.

The statue of Venus, glorious for to see,
Was naked fleting in the large see,
And fro the navel down all covered was
With wawes grene, and bright as any glas.
A citole in hire right hand hadde she,
And on hire hed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerlond fresh and wel smelling,
Above hire hed hire doves fleckering :
Before hire stood hire sone Cupido,
Upon his shoulders winges had he two,
And blind he was, as it is often sene ;
A bow he bare and arwes bright and kene.

Why shulde I not as wel eke tell you all
The purtreiture that was upon the wall
Within the temple of mighty Mars the Rede ?
All peinted was the wall in length and brede
Like to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the gret temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde and frosty region,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereign mansion.

First on the wall was peynted a forest,
In which ther wonneth neyther man ne best,
With knotty knarry barrein trees old
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to behold,
In which ther ran a romble and a swough,
As though a storme shuld bresten every bough;
And downward from an hill under a bent
Ther stood the temple of Mars Armipotent,
Wrought all of burned stele, of which th' entree
Was longe and streite, and ghastly for to see;
And thereout came a rage and swiche a vise
That it made all the gates for to rise.
The northern light in at the dore shone,
For window on the wall ne was ther none
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne:
The dore was all of athamant eterne,
Yclenched overthwart and endelong
With yren tough, and for to make it strong,
Ever piler the temple to sustene
Was tonne-gret, of yren bright and shene.

Ther saw I first the derke imagining
Of Felonie, and alle the compassing;
The cruel ire, red as any glede,
The pikepurse, and eke the pale drede,
The smiler with the knif under the cloke,
The shepen brening with the blake smoke,
The treson of the mording in the bedde,
The open werre, with woundes all bebledde;
Conteke with bloody knif and sharp manace:
All full of chirking was that sorry place.
The fleer of himself yet saw I there,
His herte blood hath bathed all his here;
The naile ydriven in the shode on hight,
The cold deth, with mouth gaping upright.
Amiddes of the temple fate Mischance,
With discomfort and sorry contenance;
Yet saw I Woodnesse laughing in his rage,
Armed Complaint, Outhees, and fires Outrage;
The carraine in the bush, with throte ycorven;
A thousand slain, and not of qualme ystorven;
The tirant, with the prey by force yraft;
The toun destroyed, ther was nothing last:
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres,
The hunte ystrangled with the wilde beres;
The sow fretting the child right in the cradel,
The coke yscalled for all his long ladel:
Nought was foryete by th' infortune of Marte
The carter overridden with his carte;
Under the wheel ful low he lay adoun.

Ther were also of Martes division
Th' armerer and the bowyer, and the smith,
That forgeth sharp swardes on his stith;
And all above depeinted in a tour
Saw I a Conquest, sitting in gret honour,
With thilke sharp sward over his hed
Yhanging by a subtil twined thred.
Depeinted was the slaughter of Julius,
Of gret Nero and of Antonius:
All be that thilke time they were unborne,
Yet was hir deth depeinted ther beforene,
By menacing of Mars, right by figure,
So was it shewed in that purtreiture
As is depeinted in the cercles above,
Who shal be slaine or elles ded for love.

Sufficeth on ensample in stories olde;
I may not reken hem alle though I wolde.

The statue of Mars upon a carte stood
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood,
And over his hed ther shinen two figures
Of sterres that ben cleped in scriptures,
That on Puella, that other Rubeus.
This god of Armes was araied thus;
A wolf ther stood before him at his fete
With eyen red, and of a man he ete:
With subtil pensil peynted was this storie,
In redouting of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,
To tellen you of the descriptioun,
Depeinted by the walles up and doun,
Of hunting and of shamefast chastitee.
Ther saw I how woful Calistope,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a woman til a bere,
And after was she made the lodesterre:
Thus was it peynted, I can say no ferre;
Hire sone is eke a sterre as men may see.
Ther saw I Dane yturned til a tree,
I mene not hire the goddesse Diane,
But Peneus daughter, which that highte Dane.
Ther saw I Atteon an hart ymaked,
For vengeance that he saw Diane all naked:
I saw how that his houndes have him caught,
And freten him, for that they knew him naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forthermore
How Athalante hunted the wilde bore,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroughte hem care and wo.
Ther saw I many another wonder storie,
The which me liste not drawn to memorie.

This goddesse on an hart ful heye sete,
With smale houndes all about hire fete,
And underne the hire feet she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and shulde wanen sone.
In gaudy grene hire statue clothed was,
With bow in hond, and arwes in a cas.
Hire eyen caste she ful low adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A woman travailling was hire beforene,
But for hire childe so longe was unborne
Ful pitously Lucina gan she call,
And sayed; Helpe, for thou mayest beste of all.
Wel coude he peinten listy that it wrought,
With many a florein he the hewes bought.

Now ben these listes made, and Theseus
That at his grete cost arraied thus
The temples, and the theatre everidel,
Whan it was don him liked wonder wel.
But stint I wol of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir returning,
That everich shuld an hundred knightes bring,
That bataille to derreine, as I you told;
And til Athenes hir covenant for to hold,
Hath everich of hem brought an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly ther trowed many a man
That never sithen that the world began,

As for to speke of knighthood of hir hond,
 As fer as God hath meked see and lond,
 N'as of so fewe so noble a compaignie;
 For every wight that loved chevalrie,
 And wold his thanks han a passant name,
 Hath praied that he might ben of that game,
 And wel was him that therto chosen was,
 For if ther fell to-morwe such a cas,
 Ye knowen wel that every lusty knight
 That loveth *par amour*, and hath his might,
 Were it in Englelond or elleswher,
 They wold hir thanks willen to be ther.
 To fight for a lady, a *benedicite*!
 It were a lusty fighte for to se.

And right so ferden they with Palamon.
 With him ther wenten knightes many on;
 Som wol ben armed in an habergeon,
 And in a brest plate, and in a gipon;
 And som wol have a pair of plates large,
 And som wol have a Puce shield or a targe;
 Som wol ben armed on his legges wele,
 And have an axe, and some a mace of stele.
 Ther n'is no newe guise that it n'as old.
 Armed they weren as I have you told,
 Everich after his opinion.

Ther maist thou se coming with Palamon
 Licurge himself, the grete King of Trace;
 Blake was his berd, and manly was his face;
 The cercles of his eyen in his hed
 They gloweden betwixen yelwe and red,
 And like a griffon loked he about,
 With kemped heres on his browes stout;
 His limmes gret, his braunes hard and stronge,
 His shouldres brode, his armes round and longe;
 And as the guise was in his contree,
 Ful highe upon a char of gold stood he.
 With foure white bolles in the trais,
 Insteede of cote armure on his harnais,
 With nayles yelwe, and bright as any gold,
 He hadde a beres skin, cole-blake for old.
 His longe here was kempt behind his bak,
 As any ravenes fether it shone for blake.
 A wreth of gold arm-gret, of huge weight,
 Upon his hed sate ful of stones bright,
 Of fine rubins and of diamants.

About his char ther wenten white alauns,
 Twenty and mo, as gret as any stere,
 To huntun at the leon or the dere,
 And solwed him, with mosel fast ybound,
 Colered with gold, and torettes filed round.
 An hundred lordes had he in his route
 Armed full wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.

With Arcita, in stories as men find,
 The gret Emetrius the King of Inde,
 Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele,
 Covered with cloth of gold diapred wele,
 Came riding like the god of armes Mars;
 His cote armure was of a cloth of Tars,
 Couched with perles white, and round, and grete;
 His fadel was of brent gold new ybete;
 A mantelet upon his shouldres hanging
 Bret-ful of rubies red, as fire sparkling;
 His crispe here like ringes was yronne,
 And that was yelwe, and glittered as the sonne;

His nose was high, his eyen bright citrin,
 His lippes round, his colour was fanguin,
 A fewe fraknes in his face yspreint,
 Betwixen yelwe and blake somdel ymeint,
 And as a leon he his loking caste,
 Of five-and-twenty yere his age I caste;
 His berd was wel begonnen for to spring,
 His vois was as a trompe thondering;
 Upon his hede he wered of laurer grene,
 A gerlond freshe and lusty for to sene;
 Upon his hond he bare for his deduit
 An egle tame, as any lily whit:
 An hundred lordes had he with him there,
 All armed save hir hedes in all hir gere,
 Ful richely in alle manere thinges;
 For trusteth wel that erles, dukes, kinges,
 Were gathered in this noble compaignie,
 For love and for encrese of chevalrie.
 About this king ther ran on every part
 Ful many a tame leon and leopart.

And in this wise these lordes all and some
 Ben on the Sunday to the citee come
 Abouten prime, and in the toun alight.

This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
 Whan he had brought hem into his citee,
 And inned hem everich at his degree,
 He festeth hem, and doth so gret labour
 To esen hem, and don hem all honour,
 That yet men wenen that no mannes wit
 Of non estat ne coud amenden it.
 The minstralcie, the service at the feste,
 The grete yestes to the most and leste,
 The riche array of Theseus paleis,
 Ne who sate first ne last upon the deis,
 What ladies fayrest ben or best dancing,
 Or which of hem can carole best or sing,
 Ne who most felingly speket of love,
 What haukes sitten on the perche above,
 What houndes liggen on the floor adoun,
 Of all this now make I no mentioun.
 But of the effect, that thinketh me the beste;
 Now cometh the point, and herkeneth if you leste;

The Sunday nighte or day began to spring,
 Whan Palamon the larke herde sing,
 Although it n'ere not day by houres two,
 Yet sang the larke, and Palamon right tho
 With holy herte, and with an high corage
 He rose, to wenden on his pilgrimage
 Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,
 I mene Venus, honourable and digne.
 And in hire houre he walketh forth a pas
 Unto the listes, ther hire temple was,
 And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
 And herte sore he sayde as ye shul here:

Fayrest of fayre, o lady min Venus,
 Daughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,
 Thou glader of the Mount of Citheron!
 For thilke love thou haddest to Adon,
 Have pitee on my bitter teres smert,
 And take myn humble prair at thin herte.

Alas! I ne have no langage to tell
 The effecte ne the torment of min hell;
 Min herte may min harmes not bewrey;
 I am so confuse that I cannot say:

But mercy, lady bright! that knowest wele
 My thought, and seest what harmes that I fele:
 Consider all this, and rue upon my fore,
 As wisly as I shal for evermore
 Emforth my might thy trewe servant be,
 And holden werre alway with chastite;
 That make I min avow so ye me helpe,
 I kepe nought of armes for to yelpe,
 Ne axe I nat to-morwe to have victorie,
 Ne renoun in this cas, ne vaine glorie
 Of pris of armes, blowen up and down,
 But I wold have fully possessioun
 Of Emelie, and die in her servise;
 Find thou the manere how, and in what wise.
 I rekke not but it may better be
 To have victorie of hem, or they of me
 So that I have my lady in min armes;
 For though so be that Mars is god of Armes,
 Your vertue is so grete in heaven above,
 That if you liste I shal wel have my love.
 Thy temple wol I worship evermo,
 And on thin auter, wher I ride or go,
 I wol don sacrifice, and fires bete.
 And if ye wol not so, my lady swete!
 Than pray I you to-morwe with a spere
 That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere;
 Than rekke I not when I have lost my lif
 Though that Arcita win hire to his wif.
 This is the effecte and ende of my praier,
 Yeve me my love thou blisful lady dere!

When the orison was don of Palamon
 His sacrifice he did, and that anon,
 Ful pitously, with alle circumstances,
 All tell I not as now his observances.
 But at the last the statue of Venus shoke;
 And made a signe whereby that he toke
 That his praier accepted was that day;
 For though the signe shewed a delay,
 Yet wist he wel that granted was his bone,
 And with glad herte he went him home ful sone.

The thridde hour inequal that Palamon
 Began to Venus temple for to gon.
 Up rose the sonne, and up rose Emelie,
 And to the temple of Diane gan hie.
 Hire maydens that she thider with hire ladde
 Ful redily with hem the fire they hadde,
 Th' encense, the clothes, and the remenant all,
 That to the sacrifice longen shall,
 The hornes ful of mede, as was the gife;
 Ther lakked nought to don hire sacrifice.
 Smoking the temple, ful of clothes fayre,
 This Emelie with herte debonaire
 Hire body weshe with water of a well,
 But how she did hire rite I dare not tell,
 But it be any thing in general,
 And yet it were a game to heren all;
 To him that meneth wel it n'ere no charge;
 But it is good a man to ben at large.
 Hire bright here kembed was, untressed all;
 A coroune of a grene oke cerial
 Upon hire hed was set ful fayre and mete:
 Two fires on the auter gan she bete,
 And did hire thinges as men may behold
 In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes old.

Whan kindled was the fire, with pitous chere
 Unto Diane she spoke as ye may here:

O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
 To whom both heven, and erthe, and see, is fene,
 Quene of the regne of Pluto derke and lowe,
 Goddesse of maydens, that min herte hast knowe
 Ful many a yere, and wost what I desire,
 As kepe me fro thy vengeance and thin ire,
 That Atteon aboughte cruelly!
 Chast goddesse! wel wotest thou that I
 Desire to ben a mayden all my lif,
 Ne never wol I be no love ne wif:
 I am (thou wost) yet of thy compaignie,
 A mayde, and love hunting and venerie,
 And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
 And not to ben a wif and be with childe;
 Nought wol I knowen compaignie of man;
 Now helpe me, Lady, sith you may and can,
 For though three formes that thou hast in thee:
 And Palamon that hath swiche love to me,
 And eke Arcite, that loveth me so fore,
 This grace I praie thee withouten more,
 As sende love and pees betwix em two,
 And fro me torne away hir hertes so,
 That all hir hote love and hir desire,
 And all hir besy torment and hir fire
 Be queinte, or torned in another place.
 And if so be thou wolt not do me grace,
 Or if my destinee be shapen so
 That I shal nedes have on of hem twe,
 As sende me him that most desireth me.

Beholde, goddesse of clene Chastite,
 The bitter teres that on my chekes fall:
 Sin thou art mayde, and keper of us all,
 My maydenhede thou kepe and well conserve,
 And while I live a mayde I wol thee serve.

The fires brenne upon the auter clere
 While Emelie was thus in hire praier,
 But sodenly she saw a fighte queinte;
 For right anon on of the fires quiente
 And quiked again, and after that anon
 That other fire was queinte and all agon,
 And as it queinte it made a whisteling
 As don these brondes wet in hir brenning;
 And at the brondes ende outran anon
 As it were bloody dropes many on;
 For which so fore agast was Emelie,
 That she was wel neigh mad, and gan to crie,
 For she ne wiste what it signified,
 But only for the fere thus she cried
 And wept, that it was pitee for to here.

And there withall Diane gan appere
 With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse,
 And sayde, Doughter, stint thin heviness.
 Among the goddes highe it is affermed,
 And by eterne word written and confermed,
 Thou shalt be wedded unto on of tho
 That han for thee so mochel care and wo,
 But unto which of hem I may not tell.
 Farewel, for here I may no longer dwell;
 The fires which that on min auter brenne
 Shal thee declaren er that thou go henne
 Thin aventure of love as in this cas.

And with that word the arwes in the cas

Of the goddesse clatteren fast and ring,
And forth she went and made a vanishing,
For which this Emelie astonied was,
And sayde, What amounteth this, alas!
I putte me in thy protection
Diane, and in thy disposition.
And home she goth anon the nexte way.
This is the effecte; ther n'is no more to say.

The nexte hoore of Mars folwing this
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierce Mars, to don his sacrifice
With all the rites of his payen wife.
With pitous herte and high devotion
Right thus to Mars he sayde his orison:

O stronge God, that in the regnes cold
Of Trace honoured art, and lord yhold,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes all the bridel in thin hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devise,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifice!
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhed, that I may ben on of thine,
Than praie I thee to rewe upon my pine,
For thilke peine and thilke hote fire
In which thou whilom brendest for desire
Whanne that thou usedest the beautee
Of fayre yonge Venus freshe and free,
And hadde hire in armes at thy wille;
Although the ones on a time misfille,
When Vulcanus had caught thee in his las,
And fond thee ligging by his wif, alas!
For thilke sorwe that was tho in thin herte
Have reuthe as wel upon my peines smerte.

I am yonge and unkonning as thou wost,
And, as I trow, with love offended most
That ever was ony lives creature;
For she that doth me all this wo endure
Ne recceth never whether I sinke or flete;
And wel I wot or she me mercy hete
I mozte with strengthe win hire in the place;
And wel I wot withouten helpe or grace
Of thee ne may my strengthe not availle;
Than helpe me, Lord, to-morwe in my bataille,
For thilke fire that whilom brenned thee,
As wel as that this fire now brenneth me,
And do, that I to-morwe may han victorie:
Min be the travaille and thin be the glorie.
Thy soveraine temple wol I most honouren
Of ony place, and alway most labouren
In thy plesance and in thy craftes strong;
And in thy temple I wol my baner hong,
And all the armes of my compaignie,
And evermore until that day I die
Eterne fire I wol beforne thee find;
And eke to this avow I wol be bind.
My berd, my here that hangeth long adoun,
That never yet felt non offensoun
Of rasour ne of shere I wol thee yeve,
And ben thy trewe servant while I live.
Now, Lord, have reuthe upon my forwes fore;
Yeve me the victorie; I axe thee no more.

The praier stint of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple dore that honge,
And eke the dores, clatterden ful fast,
Of which Arcita somewhat him agast.

The fires brent upon the auter bright
That it gan all the temple for to light;
A swete smell anon the ground up yaf,
And Arcita anon his hond up haf,
And more ensense into the fire he cast,
With other rites mo, and at the last
The statue of Mars began his hauberke ring,
And with that soun he herd a murmuring
Ful low and dim, that said thus, Victorie;
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.

And thus with joye and hope wel to fare
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare
As fayn as foul is of the brighte sonne.

And right anon swiche strif ther is begonne
For thilke granting in the heven above
Betwixen Venus the goddesse of Love,
And Mars the sterne god Armipotent,
That Jupiter was besy it to stent,
Til that the pale Saturnus the Colde,
That knew so many of adventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience and art
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde hath gret advantage;
In elde is both wisdom and usage:
Men may the old out-renne but not out-rede.

Saturne anon, to stenten strif and drede,
Albeit that it is again his kind,
Of all this strif he gan a remedy find.

My dere doughtere Venus! quod Saturne,
My cours that hath so wide for to turne
Hath more power than wot any man.
Min is the drenching in the see so wan,
Min is the prison in the derke cote,
Min is the strangel and hanging by the throte,
The murmure, and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning, and the prive empoysoning.
I do vengeance and pleine correction
While I dwell in the signe of the Leon.
Min is the ruine of the highe halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Upon the minour or the carpenter;
I slew Samson in shaking the piler.
Min ben also the maladies colde,
The derke trefons and the castles olde:
My loking is the fader of Pestilence.
Now wepe no more, I shal do diligence
That Palamon, that is thin owen knight,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
Thogh Mars shal help his knight yet natheles,
Betwixen you ther mot sometime be pees:
All be ye not of o complexion
That causeth all day swiche division.
I am thin ayel, redy at thy will;
Wepe now no more, I shal thy lust fulfill.

Now wol I stenten of the goddes above,
Of Mars and of Venus goddesse of Love,
And tellen you as plainly as I can
The gret effect for which that I began.

Gret was the feste in Athenes thilke day,
And eke the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to ben in swiche plesance,
That all that Monday justen they and dance
And spenden it in Venus highe servise;
But by the cause that they shulden rise

Erly a-morwe for to seen the fight,
Unto hir reste wenten they at night.
And on the morwe whan the day gan spring
Of hors and harneis noise and clattering
Ther was in the hostelrys all aboute,
And to the paleis rode ther many a route
Of lordes upon stedes and palfreis.

Ther mayest thou see devising of harneis
So uncouth and so riche, and wrought so wele
Of goldsmithry, of brouding and of stele;
The sheldes brighte, testeres, and trappures,
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote armures;
Lordes in parementes on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eke squieres,
Nailing the speres, and helmes bokeling,
Guiding of sheldes, with lainers lacing;
Ther as nede is they weren nething idel;
The fomy stedes on the golden bridel
Gnawing, and fast the armures also
With file and hammer priking to and fro;
Yemen on foot, and communes many on
With shorte staves, thicke as they may gon;
Pipes, trompes, nakeres, and clariounes,
That in the battaille blowen bloody sounes;
The paleis ful of peple up and down,
Here three, ther ten, holding hir questoun,
Devining of these Theban knightes two,
Som sayden thus, som sayde it shall be so;
Som helden with him with the blacke berd,
Som with the balled, som with the thick herd;
Som saide he loked grim, and wolde fighte;
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.

Thus was the halle full of devining
Long after that the sonne gan up spring.
The gret Theseus that of his slepe is waked
With minstrelcie and noise that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleis riche,
Til that the Theban knightes bothe yliche
Honoured were, and to the paleis sette.

Duk Theseus is at a window sette.
Araied right as he were a god in trone:
The peple preseth thiderward ful sone,
Him for to seen and don high reverence,
And eke to herken his heste and his sentence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an O,
Til that the noise of the peple was ydo,
And whan he saw the peple of noise al still
Thus shewed he the mighty dukes will.

The lord hath of his high discretion
Considered that it were destruction
To gentil blood to fighten in the gise
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise;
Wherefore to shapen that they shul not die,
He wol his firste purpos modifie.

No man therefore, up peine of losse of lif,
No maner shot ne pollax ne short knif
Into the listes send or thider bring,
Ne short swerd for to stike with point biting,
No man ne draw ne bere it by his side;
Ne no man shal unto his felaw ride
But o cours, with a sharpe ygrounden spere;
Foin if him list on foot, himself to were:
And he that is at meschief shal be take,
And not slaine, but be brought unto the stake

That shal ben ordeined on eyther side;
Thider he shal by force, and ther abide:
And if so fall the chevetain be take
On eyther side, or elles sleth his make,
No longer shal the tourneying ylast.
God spede you; goth forth and lay on fast:
With longe swerd and with mase fighteth your fill,
Goth now your way; this is the lordes will.

The vois of the peple touched to the heaven,
Se loude crieden they with mery steven,
God save swiche a lord that is so good,
He wilneth no destruction of blood.

Up gon the trompes and the melodie,
And to the listes rit the compaignie
By ordinance, thurghout the cite large,
Hanged with cloth of gold and not with farge,
Ful like a lord this noble duk gan ride,
And these two Thebans upon eyther side,
And after rode the quene and Emelie,
And after that another compaignie
Of on and other after hir degree;
And thus they passen thurghout the citee,
And to the listes comen they be time:
It n'as not of the day yet fully prime.

Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hie,
Ipolita the quene, and Emelie,
And other ladies in degrees aboute,
Unto the fetes preseth all the route.
And westward thurgh the gates under Mart
Arcite, and eke the hundred of his part,
With baner red, is entred right anon;
And in the selve moment Palamon
Is, under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner white, and hardy chere and face.
In all the world to seken up and down,
So even without variatioun
Ther n'ere swiche compaignies never twey;
For ther was non so wise that coude sey
That any hadde of other advantage
Of worthinesse, ne of estat ne age,
So even were they chosen for to gesse:
And in two renges sayre they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names red were everich on,
That in her nombre gile were ther non,
Tho were the gates shette, and cried was loude,
Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude.

The heraudes left hir priking up and down.
Now ringin trompes loud and clarioun.
Ther is no more to say, but est and west
In gon the speres sadly in the rest;
In goth the sharpe spore into the side:
Ther see men who can juste and who can ride:
Ther shiveren shaftes upon sheldes thicke;
He seleth thurgh the herte spone the pricke:
Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out gon the swerdes as the silver brighte:
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede;
Out brest the blod with sterne streames rede:
With mighty maces the bones they to-breste;
He thurgh the thickest of the throng gan threste:
Ther stomblen stedes strong, and down goth all;
He rolleth under foot as doth a ball:
He foineth on his foo with a tronchoun,
And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun:

He thurgh the body is hurt, and sith ytake
Maugre his hed, and brought unto the stake,
As forword was, right ther he must abide;
Another lad is on that other side:
And somtime doth hem Theseus to rest,
Hem to refresh and drinken if hem lest.

Ful oft a day han thilke Thebanes two
Togeder met and wrought eche other wo:
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem tway.
Ther n'as no tigre in the vale of Galaphey,
Whan that hire whelpe is stole whan it is lite,
So cruel on the hunt as is Arcite
For jalous herte upon this Palamon;
Ne in Belmarie ther n'is so fell leon
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to fleen his foo Arcite:
The jalous strokes on hir helmes bite;
Out renneth blood on both her sides rede.

Somtime an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne unto the reste went
The strong King Emetrius gan hent
This Palamon, as he fought with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to bite;
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and ydrawen to the stake:
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The stronge King Licurge is borne adoun;
And King Emetrius for all his strengthe
Is borne out of his fadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon or he were take:
But all for nought, he was brought to the stake:
His hardy herte might him helpen naught;
He mošte abiden whan that he was caught
By force and eke by composition.

Who forweth now but woful Palamon,
That mošte no more gon again to fight?
And whan that Theseus had seen that fight
Unto the folk that foughten thus eche on
He cried, Ho! no more, for it is don.
I wol be trewe juge and not partie,
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
That by his fortune hath hire fayre ywonne.

Anon ther is a noise of peple begonne
For joye of this so loud and high withall
It seemed that the listes shulden fall.

What can now fayre Venus done above?
What faith she now? what doth this quene of Love
But wepeth so for wanting of hire will
Til that hire teres in the listes fill:
She sayde, I am ashamed doutelees.

Saturnus sayde, Daughter, hold thy pees:
Mars hath his will, his knight hath all his bone,
And by min hed thou shalt ben esed sone.

The trompoures with the loud minstrelcie,
The heraudes, that so loude yell and crie,
Ben in hir joye for wele of Dan Arcite.
But herkeneth me, and stenteth noise a lite,
Whiche a miracle ther befell anon.

This fierce Arcite hath of his helme ydon,
And on a courser for to shew his face
He priketh endelong the large place,
Loking upward upon this Emelie,
And she again him cast a frendlich eye,

(For women, as to spoken in commune,
They folwen all the favour of Fortune)
And was all his in chere as his in herte.
Out of the ground a Fury infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And lepte aside, and foundred as he lepe;
And er that Arcite may take any kepe
He pight him on the pomel of his hed,
That in the place he lay as he were ded,
His brest to-broken with his fadel bow;
As blake he lay as any cole or crow,
So was the blood yronnen in his face.

Anon he was yborne out of the place,
With herte fore, to Theseus paleis:
Tho was he corven out of his harneis,
And in a bed ybrought ful fayre and blive,
For he was yet in memorie and live,
And alway crying after Emelie.
Duk Theseus with all his compaignie
Is comen home to Athens his citee
With alle blisse and gret solempnite.
Al be it that this aventure was falle
He n'olde not discomforten hem alle.
Men sayden eke that Arcite shal not die,
He shal ben heled of his maladic,
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther non yslain,
Al were they fore yhurt, and namely on,
That with a spere was thirled his brest bone,
To other woundes and to broken armes
Som hadden salves and some hadden charmes;
And fermacies of herbes, and eke save
They dronken, for they wold hir lives have:
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Comforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel all the longe night
Unto the strange lordes, as was right.
Ne ther n'as holden no discomforting
But as at justes or a tourneying;
For sothly ther n'as no discomfiture,
For falling n'is not but an aventure:
Ne to be lad by force unto a stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,
O person all alone, withouten mo,
And haried forth by armes, foot, and too,
And eke his stede driven forth with staves,
With footmen, bothe yemen and eke knaves,
It was aretted him no vilanie;
Ther may no man clepen it cowardie.
For which anon Duk Theseus let crie,
To stenten alle rancour and envie,
The gree as wel of o fide as of other,
And cyther side ylike, as others brother;
And yave hem giftes after hir degree,
And helde a feste fully dayes three;
And conveyed the kinges worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely;
And home went every man the righte way;
Ther n'as no more but Farewel, Have good day,
Of this bataille I wol no more endite,
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the fore
Encrefeth at his herte more and more,

The clotered blood for any leche-craft
 Corrupeth, and is in his bouke ylast,
 That neyther veine-blood ne ventousing,
 Ne drinke of herbes, may ben his helping.
 The vertue expulsif of animal,
 Frothilke v. rtue cleped natural,
 Ne may the venime voiden ne expell;
 The pipes of his longes gan to swell,
 And every lacerte in his brest adoun
 Is shent with venime and corruptioun.
 Him gaineth neyther for to get his lif
 Vomit upward ne downward laxatif:
 All is to-brosten thilke region;
 Nature hath now no domination:
 And certainly ther nature wol not werche.
 Farewel phylike; go bere the man to cherche.
 This is all and som, that Arcite moste die;
 For which he sendeth after Emelie,
 And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
 Than sayd he thus, as ye shuln after here.

Nought may the woful spirit in myn herte
 Declare o point of all my forwes smerte
 To you my lady, that I love most,
 But I bequethe the service of my gost
 To you aboven every creature,
 Sin that my lif ne may no lenger dure.

Alas the wo! alas the peines strong,
 That I for you have suffered, and so longe!
 Alas the deth! alas min Emelie!
 Alas departing of our compaignie!
 Alas min hertes quene! alas my wif!
 Min hertes ladie, ender of my lif!
 What is this world? what axen men to have?
 Now with his love, now in his colde grave
 Alone withouten any compaignie.
 Farewel my swete, farewell min Emelie!
 And softe take me in your armes tway
 For love of God, and herkeneth what I sey.

I have here with my cosin Palamon
 Had strif and rancour many a day agon
 For love of you, and for my jalousie;
 And Jupiter so wis my soule gie,
 To speken of a servant proprely,
 With alle circumstances trewely,
 That is to sayn, trouth, honour, and knightede,
 Wisdom, humbleffe, estat, and high kinrede,
 Freedom, and all that longeth to that art,
 So Jupiter have of my soule part,
 As in this world right now ne know I non
 So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
 That serveth you, and wol don all his lif;
 And if that ever ye shal ben a wif,
 Foryete not Palamon, the gentil man.

And with that word his speche faille began;
 For from his feet up to his brest was come
 The cold of deth that had him overnome;
 And yet moreover in his armes two
 The vital strength is lost and all ago;
 Only the intellect, withouten more,
 That dwelled in his herte fike and fore,
 Gan failen whan the herte felte deth;
 Dusked his eyen two, and failled his breth:
 But on his ladie yet cast he his eye;
 His laste word was, Mercy, Emelie!

His spirit changed hous, and wente ther
 As I cam never I cannat tellen wher;
 Therefore I stent, I am no divinistre;
 Of soules find I not in this registre:
 Ne me lust not th' opinions to telle
 Of hem, though that they written wher they dwelle.
 Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gie.
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelie.

Shright Emelie, and houleth Palamon,
 And Theseus his sifter toke anon
 Swouning, and bare her from the corps away.
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
 To tellen how she wep both even and morwe?
 For in swiche cas wimmen have swiche sorwe,
 Whan that hir housbonds ben fro hem ago,
 That for the more part they forwen so,
 Or elles fallen in swiche maladic,
 That atte laste certainly they die.

Infinite ben the forwes and the teres
 Of olde folk and folk of tendre yeres
 In all the toun for deth of this Theban;
 For him ther wepeth bothe child and man:
 So gret a weping was ther non certain
 Whan Hector was ybrought all fresh yslain
 To Troy: alas! the pitee that was there;
 Cratching of chekes, rending eke of here.
 Why woldest thou be ded? thise women crie,
 And haddest gold ynough and Emelie.

No man might gladen this Duk Theseus
 Saving his olde fader Egeus,
 That knew this worldes transmutation,
 As he had seen it chaungen up and down,
 Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
 And shewed him ensample and likenesse.

Right as ther died never man (quod he)
 That he ne lived in erth in som degree,
 Right so ther lived never man (he seyde)
 In all this world that somtime he ne deyde:
 This world n'is but a thurghfare ful of wo,
 And we ben pilgrimes passing to and fro:
 Deth is an end of every worldes fore.

And over all this yet said he mochel more
 To this effect, ful wisely to enhort
 The peple that they shuld hem recomfort.

Duk Theseus with all his besy cure
 He casteth now wher that the sepulture
 Of good Arcite may best ymaked be,
 And eke most honourable in his degree;
 And at the last he toke conclusion
 That ther as first Arcite and Palamon
 Hadden for love the bataille hem betwene,
 That in that selve grove, fote and grene,
 Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
 His complaint, and for love his hote fires,
 He wolde make a fire, in which the office
 Of funeral he might all accomplise;
 And let anon commande to hack and hewe
 The okes old, and lay hem on a rew
 In culpons, wel araied for to brenne.
 His officers with swifte feet they renne
 And ride anon at his commandement.
 And after this, this Theseus hath sent
 After a bere, and it all overspradde
 With cloth of gold the richeist that he hadde,

And of the same suit he cladde Arcite.
Upon his hondes were his gloves white,
Eke on his hed a croune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
Therwith he wept that pitee was to here;
And for the peple shulde seen him alle,
Whan it was day he brought him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.

Tho came this woful Theban Palamon
With floterý berd and ruggy ashy heres,
In clothes blake, ydropped all with teres,
And (passing over of weping Emelie)
The reufullest of all the compaignie.

And in as much as the service shuld be
The more noble and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus let forth three stedes bring,
That trapped were in stele all glittering,
And covered with the armes of Dan Arcite;
And eke upon these stedes gret and white
Ther saten folk, of which on bare his shield,
Another his spere up in his hondes held;
The thridde bare with him his bow Turkeis,
Of brent gold was the cas and the harneis;
And riden forth a pas with forweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shal after here.

The noblest of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carrieden the bere,
With flacke pas, and eyen red and wete,
Thurghout the citee, by the maister strete,
That sprad was all with black, and wonder his
Right of the same is all the strete ywrie.

Upon the right hand went olde Egeus,
And on that other side Duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hond of gold ful fine,
All ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wine;
Eke Palamon with ful gret compaignie,
And after that came woful Emelie
With fire in hond, as was that time the gife,
To don the office of funeral service.

High labour and ful gret apparailing
Was at the service of that fire making,
That with his grene top the heaven raught,
And twenty fadom of brede the armes straught;
This is to sain, the boughes were so brode.
Of fire first there was laied many a lode.

But how the fire was maked up on highte,
And eke the names how the trees highte,
As oke, fir, birch, aspe, alder, holm, poplere,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chestein, lind, laurere,
Maple, thorn, beche, hasel, ew, whipultre,
How they were feld, shal not be told for me;
Ne how the goddes rannen up and down
Disherited of hir habitatioun,
In which they woneden in rest and pees,
Nimphes, Faunes, and Amidriades;
Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere whan the wood gan falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was not wont to see the sonne bright;
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre,
And then with drie stickes cloven a-thre,
And than with grene wood and spicerie,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrie,

And gerlonds hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, the encense also with swete odour;
Ne how Arcita lay among all this,
Ne what richesse about his body is;
Ne how that Emelie, as was the gife,
Put in the fire of funeral service;
Ne how she swouned whan she made the fire,
Ne what she spake, ne what was hire desire;
Ne what jewelless men in the fire caste,
Whan that the fire was gret and brente faste;
Ne how som cast hir shield and som hir spere,
And of hir vestimentes which they were,
And cuppes full of wine, and milk, and blood,
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with a huge route
Three times riden all the fire aboute
Upon the left hond, with a loud shouting,
And thries with hir speres clatering,
And thries how the ladies gan to crie;
Ne how that led was homeward Emelie;
Ne how Arcite is brent to ashen cold;
Ne how the liche-wake * was yhold
All thilke night; ne how the Grekes play;
The wake-plaies ne kepe I not to say;
Who wrestled best naked, with oile enoint,
Ne who that bare him best in no disjoint:
I woll not tellen eke how they all gon
Home till Athenes whan the play is don,
But shortly to the point now wol I wende,
And maken of my longe Tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certain yeres
All stenten is the mourning and the teres
Of Grekes by on general assent:
Than semeth me ther was a parlement
At Athenes upon certain points and cas;
Amonges the which points yspoken was
To have with certain contrees alliance,
And have of Thebanes fully obeisance:
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let senden after gentil Palamon.
Unwist of him what was the cause and why:
But in his blacke clothes forwefully
He came at his commandment on hie;
Tho sente Theseus for Emelie.

Whan they were set, and husht was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hath a space,
Or any word came from his wife brest
His eyen set he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked still,
And after that right thus he sayd his will.

The firste Mover of the cause above,
Whan he firste made the fayre chaine of love,
Gret was th' effect, and high was his entent;
Well wist he why and what therof he ment;
For with that fayre chaine of love he bond
The fire, the air, the watre, and the lond,
In certain bondes, that they may not flee:
That same prince and Mover eke (quod he)

* The custom of watching with dead bodies (*lice*, Sax.) is probably very ancient in this country. It was abused, as other wakes and vigils were. See *Du Cange* in v. *Virgilii*. "In vigiliis circa corpora mortuorum vetantur choreae et cantilenae, seculares ludi et alii turpes et fastul." *Synod. Wigorn. an. 1240*, c. 5.

Hath stablisht, in this wretched world adoun,
 Certain of dayes and duration
 To all that are engendred in this place,
 Over the which day they ne mow not pace,
 Al mow they yet the dayes well abrege.
 Ther nedeth non autoritee allege,
 For it is preved by experience,
 But that me lust declaren my sentence.
 Than may men by this ordre wel discerne
 That thilke Mover stable is and eterne;
 Wel may men knowen, but it be a fool,
 That every part deriveth from his hool;
 For Nature hath not taken his beginning
 Of no partie ne cantel of a thing,
 But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
 Descending so til it be corruptible;
 And therefore of his wise purveyance
 He hath so wel beset his ordinance,
 That spesces of thinges and progressions
 Shullen endure by successions,
 And not eterne, withouten any lie;
 This maiest thou understand and seen at eye.
 Lo the oke, that hath so long a norishing
 Fro the time that it ginneth first to spring,
 And hath so long a lif, as ye may see,
 Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
 Considereth eke how that the harde stone
 Under our feet, on which we trede and gon,
 It wasteth as it lieth by the wey;
 The brode river sometime wexeth drey;
 The grete tounes see we wane and wende;
 Than may ye see that all thing hathe an ende.
 Of man and woman see we wel also,
 That nedes in on of the termes two,
 That is to sayn, in youthe or elles age,
 He mote be ded the king as shall a page;
 Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
 Som in the large feld, as ye may see:
 Ther helpeth nought, all goth that ilke wey;
 Than may I sayn that alle thing mote dey.
 What maketh this but Jupiter the King,
 The which is prince and cause of alle thing,
 Converting alle unto his propre wille,
 From which it is derived, soth to telle?
 And here-againes no creature on live
 Of no degree availleth for to strive.
 Than is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
 To maken vertue of necessite,
 And take it wel that we may not eschewe,
 And namely that to us all is dewe;
 And whofo grutcheth ought he doth folie,
 And rebel is to him that all may gie.
 And certainly a man hath most honour
 To dien in his excellence and flour,
 Whan he is fiker of his goode name;
 Than hath he don his frend ne him no shame;
 And glader ought his frend ben of his deth,
 Whan with honour is yolden up his breth,

Than whan his name appalled is for age,
 For all foryeten is his vassalage:
 Than is it best as for a worthy fame,
 To dein whan a man is best of name.
 The contrary of all this is wilfulnesse.
 Why grutchen we? why have we hevinesse,
 That good Arcite, of chivalry the flour,
 Departed is, with dutee and honour,
 Out of this foule prison of this lif?
 Why grutchen here his cosin and his wif
 Of his welfare, that loven him so wel?
 Can he hem thank? nay, God wot, never a del,
 That both his soule and eke hemself offend,
 And yet they mow her lustres not amend.

What may I conclude of this longe serie,
 But after sorwe I rede us to be merie,
 And thanken Jupiter of all his grace;
 And er that we departen from this place,
 I rede that we make of sorwes two
 O parfit joye lasting evermo:
 And loketh now wher most sorwe is herein,
 Ther wol I firste amenden and begin.

Sister, (quod he) this is my full assent,
 With all th' avis here of my parlement,
 That gentil Palamon, your owen knight,
 That serveth you with will, and herte, and might,
 And ever hath don sin you first him knew,
 That ye shall of your grace upon him rew,
 And taken him for husband and for lord:
 Lene me your hand, for this is oure accord.

Let see now of your womanly pitee:
 He is a kinges brothers some pardee;
 And though he were a poure bachelere,
 Sin he hath served you so many a yere,
 And had for you so gret adversite,
 It moste ben considered, leveth me,
 For gentil mercy oweth to passen right.

Than sayd he thus to Palamon the Knight;
 I trow ther nedeth litel sermoning
 To maken you assenten to this thing.
 Cometh ner, and take your lady by the hond.

Betwixen hem was made anon the bond
 That highte Matrimoine or Mariage,
 By all the conseil of the baronage;
 And thus with alle blisse and melodie
 Hath Palamon ywedded Emelie;
 And God, that all this wide world hath wrought,
 Send him his love that hath it dere ybought.
 For now is Palamon in alle wele,
 Living in blisse, in richesse, and in hele,
 And Emelie him loveth so tendrely,
 And he hire serveth all so gentilly,
 That never was ther no word hem betwene
 Of jalousie, ne of non other tene.

Thus endeth Palamon and Emelie,
 And God save all this fayre compaignie,

THE MILLERES PROLOGUE.

WHAN that the Knight had thus his Tale told,
In all the compaignie n'as ther young ne old
That he ne said it was a noble storie,
And worthy to be drawn to memorie,
And namely the gentiles everich on.
Our Hoste lough and swore, So mote I gon
This goth aright; unboked is the male;
Let see now who shall tel another Tale,
For trewely this game is wel begonne:
Now telleth ye sire Monk, if that ye conne,
Somewhat to quiten with the Knightes Tale.

The Miller, that for-dronken was all pale,
So that unnethes upon his hors he sat,
He n'old avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abiden no man for his curtesie,
But in Pilates vois he gan to crie,
And swore by armes, and by blood, and bones,
I can a noble Tale for the nones,
With which I will now quite the Knightes Tale.

Our Hoste saw that he was dronken of ale,
And sayd, abide, Robin, my leve brother,
Some better man shall tell us first another;
Abide, and let us werken thriftily.

By Goddes soule (quod he) that wol not I,
For I wol speke, or elles go my way.

Our Hoste answered, Tell on a devil way;
Thou art a fool; thy wit is overcome.

Now herkeneth, quod the Miller, all and some:
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I know it by my soun,
And therefore if that I missepeke or say
Wite it the ale of Southwerk I you pray;
For I woll tell a legend and a lif
Both of a carpenter and his wif,
How that a clerk has set the wrightes cappe.

The Reve answerd and saide, Stint thy clappe;
Let be thy lewed dronken harlotrie.
It is a sinne and eke a gret folie
To apeiren any man, or him defame,
And eke to bringen wives in swiche a name;

Thou mayst ynough of other thinges fain,
This dronken Miller spake ful sone again,
And sayde, Leve brother Ofewold,
Who hath no wif he is no cokewold;
But I say not therefore that thou art on;
Ther ben ful goode wives many on*.
Why art thou angry with my Tale now?
I have a wif parde as wel as thou,
Yet n'olde I for the oxen in my plough
Taken upon me more than ynough
As demen of myself that I am on;
I wol beleven wel that I am non.
An husbond shuld not be inquisitif
Of Goddes privite ne of his wif:
So he may finden Goddes foison there
Of the remenant nedeth not to enquire.

What shuld I more say, but this Millere
He n'olde his wordes for no man forbere,
But told his cherles Tale in his manere,
Me thinketh that I shal reherse it here;
And therefore every gentil wight I pray,
For Goddes love, as deme not that I say
Of evil entent, but that I mote reherse
Hir Tales alle, al be they better or werse,
Or elles falsen som of my matere;
And therefore who so list it not to here
Turne over the leef, and chese another Tale,
For he shal find ynow bothe grete and smale,
Of storial thing that toucheth gentilleffe,
And eke moralite and holinesse.
Blameth not me if that ye chese amis;
The Miller is a cherl, ye know well this,
So was the Reve, (and many other mo)
And harlotrie they tolden bothe two.
Aviseh you now, and put me out of blame;
And eke men shuld not make ernest of game,

* After this verse the two following are found in so many mss. that perhaps they ought to have been inserted in the text;

And ever a thousand good ageins on badde,
That knowest thou wel but if thou be madde.

THE MILLERES TALE*.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in Oxenford
 A riche gnof, that gestes helde to borde,
 And of his craft he was a carpenter.
 With him ther was dwelling a poor scoler,
 Had lerned art, but all his fantasie
 Was turned for to lerne astrologie,
 And coude a certain of conclusions
 To demen by interrogations,
 If that men asked him in certain houres
 Whan that men shulde have drought or elles
 Or if men asked him what shulde falle [houres;
 Of every thing, I may not reken alle,

This clerk was cleped Hendy Nicholas;
 Of derne love he coude and of folas;
 And therto he was slie and ful prive,
 And like a maiden meke for to fe.
 A chambre had he in that hostelrye
 Alone, withouten any compaignie,
 Ful fetilly ydight with herbes fote,
 And he himself was swete as is the rote,
 Of licoris, or any fetewale.

His almageste, and bokes gret and smale,
 His astrelabre, longing for his art,
 His augrim stones †, layen faire apart
 On shelves couched at his beddes hed,
 His presse ycovered with a falding red;
 And all above ther lay a gay sautrie,
 On which he made on nightes melodie
 So swetely, that all the chambre rong,
 And *Angelus ad Virginem* he song;
 And after that he song the kinges note:
 Ful often blessed was his mery throte,
 And thus this swete clerk his time spent
 After his frendes finding and his rent.

This carpenter had wedded new a wif
 Which that he loved more than his lif:
 Of eightene yere she was I gesse of age.
 Jalous he was, and held hire narwe in cage,
 For she was wild and yonge, and he was old,
 And demed himself belike a cokewold.
 He know not Caton, for his wit was rude,
 That bade a man shudde wedde his similitude;
 Men shulden wedden after hir estate,
 For youthe and elde is often at debate;
 But sithen he was fallen in the snare
 He most endure (as other folk) his care.

Fayre was this yongue wif, and therwithal
 As any wesel hire body gent and smal.
 A feint she wered, barred all of filk,
 A barme-cloth eke as white as morwe milk

Upon hire lendes, ful of many a gore;
 White was hire smok, and brouded all before
 And eke behind on hire colere aboute
 Of cole-black filk within and eke withoute:
 The tapes of hire white volupere
 Were of the same suit of hire colere;
 Hire fillet brode of filk, and set full hye;
 And likerly she had a likerous eye:
 Ful smal ypulled were hire browes two,
 And they were bent, and black as any flo:
 She was wel more blisful for to see
 Than is the newe perienete tree,
 And softer than the wolfe is of a wether.

And by hire girdel heng a purse of lether
 Tasseled with filk and perled with latoun.
 In all this world to seken up and down
 Ther n'is no man so wise that coude thenche
 So gay a popelot or swiche a wenche.
 Ful brighter was the shining of hire hewe
 Than in the Tour the noble yforges newe;
 But of hire song, it was as loud and yerne
 As any swalow sitting on a berne.
 Thereto she coude skip and make a game
 As any kid or calf folowing his dame.
 Hire mouth was swete as braket or the meth,
 Or hord of apples laid in hay or heth.
 Winsing she was as is a joly colt,
 Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
 A broche she bare upon hire low colere,
 As brode as is the bosse of a bokelere.
 Hire shoon were laced on hire legges hie;
 She was a primerole, a piggesnie,
 For any lord to ligen in his bedde,
 Or yet for any good yemen to wedde.

Now fire, and eft fire, so befell the cas,
 That on a day this Hendy Nicholas
 Fel with this yonge wif to rage and pleye,
 While that hire husbond was at Ofeney,
 As clerkes ben ful subtil and ful queint,
 And prively he caught hire by the queint,
 And sayde, Ywis but if I have my will
 For derne love of thee, lemman, I spill;
 And helde hire faste by the hanche bones,
 And sayde, Lemman, love me wel at ones,
 Or I wol dien, al so God me save.

And she sprong as a colt doth in the trave
 And with hire hed she writhed faste away,
 And sayde, I wol not kisse thee by my fay.
 Why, let be, (quod she) let be, Nicholas,
 Or I wol crie out Harow and Alas!
 Do way your hondes for your curtesie.

This Nicholas gan mercy for to crie,
 And spake so faire, and profered him so fast,
 That she hire love him granted at the last,
 And swore hire oth by Seint Thomas of Kent,
 That she wold ben at his commandement
 Whan that she may hire leiser wel espie.
 Myn husbond is is so ful of jalousie

* Nicholas, a scholar of Oxford, practiseth with Alison, the carpenter's wife of Ofney, to deceive her husband, but in the end is rewarded accordingly. This is one of those Tales that Lydgate (in his Prologue to The Story of the Siege of Thebes) says are of ribauldrie.

To makin laughtir in the company.
 So, reader, you know what you are to expect; read or forbear as you think fitting. Urry.

† Augrim is a corruption of *algorithm*, the Arabian term for numeration. Augrim stones therefore were the pebbles or counters which were anciently used in numeration.

That but ye waiten wel and be prive
I wot right wel I n'am but ded, quod she;
Ye mosten be ful derne as in this cas.

Nay, therof care you not, quod Nicholas:
A clerk hath litherly beset his while
But if he coude a carpenter begile.
And thus they were accorded and ysworne
To waite a time, as I have said beforne.
Whan Nicholas had don thus every del,
And thacked hire about the lendes wel,
He kissed hire swete, and taketh his sautrie,
And plaieth fast, and maketh melodie.

Than fell it thus, that to the parish cherche
(Of Cristes owen werkes for to werche)
This good wif went upon a holy day;
Hire forched shone as bright as any day,
So was it washen whan she lete hire werk.

Now was ther of that chirche a parish clerk
The which that was ycleped Absolon.
Crulle was his here, and as the gold it shon,
And strouted as a fanne large and brode;
Ful streight and even lay his joly rhode:
His rode was red, his eyen grey as goos,
With Poules windowes corven on his shoos:
In hosen red he went ful fetisly:
Yclad he was ful smal and proprely
All in a kirtel of a light waget*;
Ful faire and thicke ben the pointes fet;
And therupon he had a gay surplise,
As white as is the blosme upon the rise.

A mery childe he was, so God me save;
Wel coude he leten blod, and clippe and shave,
And make a chartre of lond and a quitance:
In twenty manere coude he trip and dance,
(After the scole of Oxenforde tho)
And with his legges casten to and fro;
And playen songes on a smal ribible;
Therto he song somtyme a loud quible:
And as wel coude he play on a giterne:
In all the toun n'as brewhous ne tavern
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther as that any gaillard tapstere was;
But soth to say he was somdel squamous
Of farting, and of speche dangerous.

This Absolon, that joly was and gay,
Goth with a censer on the holy day,
Censing the wives of the parish faste,
And many a lovely loke he on hem caste,
And namely on this carpenteres wif;
To loke on hire him thought a mery lif;
She was so propre, and swete, and likerous,
I dare wel sain if she had been a mous
And he a cat, he wolde hire hente anon.

This parish clerk, this joly Absolon,
Hath in his herte swiche a love longing,
That of no wif toke he non offering;
For curtesie, he sayd, he n'olde non.

The moone at night ful clere and brighte shon,
And Absolon his giterne hath ytake,
For paramours he thoughte for to wake;

* Or *watchet*. Skinner explains *watchet* to mean a colour, a whitish blue; but in this place it seems rather to mean some kind of cloth, denominated perhaps from the town of Watchet in Somersetshire. Instead of *light* some miss. read *fin*, and ms. *A. whit*. This last epithet would be quite inconsistent with Skinner's explanation.

And forth he goth jolif and amorous,
Til he came to the carpenteres hous,
A litel after the cockes had ycrow,
And dressed him up by a shot window
That was upon the carpenteres wal.
He singeth in his vois gentil and smal,
Now, dere Lady—if thy wille be,
I pray you that ye—wol rewe on me;
Ful wel accordant to his giterning.

This carpenter awoke, herd him sing,
And spake unto his wif, and said anon,
What, Alison! heres thou not Absolon,
That chanteth thus under our boures wal?
And she answerd hire husbond therewithal,
Yes, God wot, John, I here him every del.

This passeth forth; what wol ye bet than wel?
Fro day to day this joly Absolon
So loveth hire that him is wo-begon:
He waketh all the night, and all the day
He kembeth his lockes brode, and made him gay;
He woeth hire by menes and brocage,
And swore he wolde ben hire owen page:
He singeth brokking as a nightingale;
He sent her pinnes, methe, and spiced ale,
And wafres piping hot out of the glede;
And for she was of toun he profered mede;
For som folk wol be wonnen for richesse,
And som for strokes, and some with gentilleffe.

Sometime to shew his lightnesse and maistric
He plaieth Herode on a skaffold hie.
But what availeth him as in this cas?
So loveth she this Hendy Nicholas,
That Absolon may blow the buckes horne;
He ne had for his labour but a scorne;
And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape,
And all his earnest tourneth to a jape.
Ful soth is this proverbe, it is no lie;
Men say right thus alway, The neighe flie
Maketh of time the fer leef to be lothe:
For though that Absolon be wood or wrothe,
Because that he fer was from hire sight,
This neighe Nicholas stood in his light.

Now bere thee wel, thou Hendy Nicholas,
For Absolon may waile and sing alas.

And so befell that on a Saturday
This carpenter was gon to Ofenay,
And Hendy Nicholas and Alison
Accorded ben to this conclusion,
That Nicholas shal shapen him a wile
This fely jealous husbond to begile;
And if so were the game went aright
She shuld slepe in his armes alle night,
For this was hire desire and his also.
And right anon, withouten wordes mo,
This Nicholas no lenger wold tarie,
But doth ful soft unto his chambre carie
Both mete and drinke for a day or twey.

And to hire husbond bad her for to sey,
If that he axed after Nicholas
She shulde say she n'iste not wher he was;
Of all the day she saw him not with eye;
She trowed he was in som maladie,
For for no crie hire maiden coude him calle,
He n'olde answer for nothing that might falle.

Thus passeth forth all thilke Saturday,
That Nicholas still in his chambre lay,

And etc, and slept, and dide what him list,
Til Sonday that the sonne gothe to rest.

This fely carpenter hath gret mervaille
Of Nicholas, or what thing might him aile,
And said, I am adrad by Seint Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nicholas;
God shilde that he died sodenly;
This world is now ful tikel fikerly:
I saw to-day a corps yborne to cherche
That now on Monday last I saw him werche.

Go up (quod he unto his knave) anon,
Clepe at his dore, or knocke with a ston;
Loke how it is, and telle me boldely.

This knave got him up ful sturdely,
And at the chambre dore while that he stood
He cried and knocked as that he were wood;
What? how? what do ye, Maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepen all the longe day?
But all for nought, he herde not a word.
An hole he fond ful low upon the bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,
And at that hole he loked in ful depe,
And at the last he had of him a fight.

This Nicholas sat ever gaping upright,
As he had kyked on the newe mone.

Adoun he goth, and telleth his maister sone
In what array he saw this ilke man.

This carpenter to blissen him began,
And said, Now helpe us Seinte Fridefwide!
A man wote litel what shal him betide.
This man is fallen with his astronomie
In som woodnesse or in som agonie.
I thought ay wel how that it shulde be;
Men shulde not knowe of Goddes privetee.
Ya, blessed be alway a lewed man,
That nought but only his beleve can.
So ferd another clerk with astronomie;
He walked in the feldes for to prie
Upon the sterres, what ther shuld befall,
Til he was in a marlepit yfalle.
He saw not that. But yet by Seint Thomas
Me reweth fore of Hendy Nicholas:
He shal be rated of his studying,
If that I may, by Jesus, heven king.

Get me a staff, that I may underspore
While that thou, Robin, hevest of the dore:
He shal out of his studying as I gesse.
And to the chambre dore he gan him dresse.
His knave was a strong carl for the nones,
And by the haspe he haf it of at ones;
Into the flore the dore fell anon.

This Nicholas sat ay as stille as ston,
And ever he gaped upward into the eire.

This carpenter wond he were in despeire,
And hent him by the sholders mightily,
And shoke him hard, and cried spitoufly;
What, Nicholas? what, how man? loke adoun;
Awake, and thinke on Cristes passioun.
I crouche thee from elves and from wightes.
Therwith the nightspel said he anon rightes
On foure halves of the hous aboute
And on the threswold of the dore withoute;
Jesu Crist and Seint Benedight
Blisse this hous from every wicked wight,

Fro the nightes mare, the wite Pater-noster!
Wher wonest thou Seint Peters suster?

And at the last this Hendy Nicholas
Gan for to fiken fore, and said, alas!
Shal all the world be lost eftsones now?

This carpenter answered, What saiest thou?
What? thinke on God, as we do, men that swinke.

This Nicholas answered, Fetch me a drinke;
And after wol I speke in privetee
Of certain thing that toucheth thee and me:
I wol tell it non other man certain.

This carpenter goth doun and cometh again,
And brought of mighty ale a large quart;
And whan that eche of hem had dronken his part,
This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
And doun the carpenter by him he sette,
And saide, John, min hoste lefe and dere,
Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt my counseil wrey;
For it is Cristes counseil that I say,
And if thou tell it man thou art forlore;
For this vengeance thou shalt have therfore,
That if thou wreye me thou shalt be wood.

Nay, Crist forbede it for his holy blood,
Quod tho this fely man: I am no labbe;
Ne though I say it I n'am not lefe to gabbe.
Say what thou wolt, I shall it never telle
To child ne wif, by him that harwed helle.

Now, John, (quod Nicholas) I wol not lie,
I have yfounde in min astrologie,
As I have loked in the moone bright,
That now on Monday next, at quarter night,
Shal fal a rain, and that so wild and wood,
That half so gret was never Noes flood:
This world (he said) in lesse than in an houre
Shal all be dreint, so hidous is the shoure:
Thus shal mankinde drenche and lese hir lif.

This carpenter answerd, Alas my wif!
And shal she drenche? alas min Alisoun!
For sorwe of this he fell almost adoun,
And said, Is ther no remedy in this cas?

Why yes, for God, quod Hendy Nicholas;
If thou wolt werken after lore and rede,
Thou maist not werken after thin owen hede;
For thus saith Salomon, that was ful trewe,
Werke all by conseil, and thou shalt not rewe.
And if thou werken wolt by good conseil
I undertake, withouten mast or seyl,
Yet shall I saven hire, and thee and me.
Hast thou not herd how saved was Noe,
Whan that our Lord had warned him beforne,
That all the world with water shuld be lorne?

Yes, (quod this carpenter) ful yore ago.
Hast thou not herd (quod Nicholas) also
The sorwe of Noe with his felawship,
Or that he might get his wif to ship?
Him had be lever, I dare wel undertake,
At thilke time, than all his wethers blake,
That she had had a ship hire self alone;
And therefore wost thou what is best to done?
This axeth hast, and of an hastif thing
Men may not preche and maken taryng.
Anon go get us fast into this in
A kneding trough or elles a kemelyn

For eche of us; but loke that they ben large,
 In which we mowen swimme as in a barge;
 And have therin vitaille suffisant
 But for a day; fie on the remenant;
 The water shall aslake and gon away
 Abouten prime upon the nexte day.
 But Robin may not wete of this thy knave,
 Ne eke thy mayden Gille I may not save:
 Axe not why; for though thou axe me,
 I wol not tellen Goddes privetee.
 Sufficeth thee, but if thy wittes madde,
 To have as gret a grace as Noe hadde.
 Thy wif shal I wel saven out of doute.
 Go now thy way, and spede thee hereabout.

But whan thou hast for hire, and thee, and me,
 Ygeten us these kneding tubbes thre,
 Than shalt thou hang hem in the roofe ful hie,
 That no man of our purveyance espie:
 And whan thou hast don thus as I have said,
 And hast our vitaille faire in hem ylaide,
 And eke an axe to smite the cord a-two
 Whan that the water cometh, that we may go
 And breke an hole on high upon the gable
 Unto the gardin ward, over the stable,
 That we may frely passen forth our way,
 Whan that the grete shoure is gon away,
 Than shal thou swim as mery, I undertake,
 As doth the white doke after hire drake;
 Than wol I clepe, How, Alifon! how, John!
 Be mery, for the flood wol passe anon.
 And thou wolt sain, Haile! Maister Nicholay,
 Good morwe! I see thee wel, for it is day.
 And than shall we be lordes all our lif
 Of all the world, as Noe and his wif.
 But of o thing I warne thee ful right,
 Be wel avised on that ilke night,
 That we ben entred into shippes bord,
 That non of us ne speke not o word,
 Ne clepe ne crie, but be in his praier,
 For it is Goddes owen heste dere.

Thy wif and thou moſte hangen fer a-twinne,
 For that betwixen you shal be no sinne,
 No more in loking than ther shall in dede.
 This ordinance is said; go, God thee spede.
 To morwe at night, whan men ben all aslepe,
 Into our kneding tubbes wol we crepe,
 And sitten ther, abiding Goddes grace.
 Go now thy way, I have no lenger space
 To make of this, no lenger sermoning:
 Men ſain thus, Send the wiſe, and ſay nothing:
 Thou art ſo wiſe it nedeth thee nought teche.
 Go, ſave our lives, and that I thee beſeche.

This ſely carpenter goth forth his way,
 Ful oft he ſaid Alas! and Wala wa!
 And to his wif he told his privatee,
 And ſhe was ware, and knew it bet than he
 What all this queinte caſt was for to ſey;
 But natheles ſhe ferde as ſhe wold dey,
 And ſaid, Alas! go forth thy way anon;
 Helpe us to ſcape, or we be ded eche on:
 I am thy trewe veray wedded wif;
 Go, dere ſpouſe! and helpe to ſave our lif.

Lo, what a gret thing is affection!
 Men may die of imagination,

So depe may impreſſion be take.
 This ſely carpenter beginneth quake;
 Him thinketh veraily that he may ſee
 Noes flood comen walwing as the ſee
 To drenchen Alifon, his honey dere:
 He wepeth, waileth, maketh ſory chere;
 He ſiketh, with ful many a ſory ſwough.
 He goth and geteth him a kneding trough,
 And after a tubbe and a kemelin,
 And prively he ſent hem to his in,
 And heng hem in the roof in privatee.
 His owen hond than made he ladders three†,
 To climben by the rences and the ſtalkeſ
 Unto the tubbes honging in the balkes;
 And hem vitailed, kemelin, trough, and tubbe,
 With bred and cheſe, and good ale in a jubbe,
 Sufficing right ynow as for a day.

But er that he had made all this array
 He ſent his knave, and eke his wenche alſo,
 Upon his nede to London for to go,
 And on the Monday, whan it drew to night,
 He ſhette his dore, withouten candel light,
 And dreſſed all thing as it ſhulde bee;
 And ſhortly up they clomben alle three.
 They ſitten ſtille wel a furlong way.
 Now, *Pater-noſter*, Clum, ſaid Nicholay,
 And Clum, quod John, and Clum, ſaid Alifon:
 This carpenter ſaid his devotion,
 And ſtill he ſit, and biddeth his praier,
 Awaiting on the rain, if he it here.

The dede ſlepe, for wery beſineſſe,
 Fell on this carpenter, right as I geſſe,
 Abouten curfew time, or litel more.
 For travaille of his goſt he groneth fore,
 And eft he routeth, for his hed miſlay.
 Doun of the ladder ſtalking Nicholay,
 And Alifon ful ſoft adoun hire ſpedde.
 Withouten wordes mo they went to bedde,
 Ther as the carpenter was wont to lie;
 Ther was the revel and the melodie.
 And thus lith Alifon and Nicholas
 In beſineſſe of mirthe and in ſolas,
 Til that the bell of *laudes* gan to ring,
 And freres in the chancel gon to ſing.

This pariſh clerk, this amorous Abſolon,
 That is for love alway ſo wo-begon,
 Upon the Monday was at Oſenay
 With compaignie, him to diſport and play,
 And asked upon cas a cloiſterer
 Ful prively after John the carpenter;
 And he drew him apart out of the chirche.
 He ſaid, I no't, I ſaw him not here wirche
 Sith Saturday; I trow that he be went
 For timbre ther our abbot hath him ſent;
 For he is wont for timbre for to go,
 And dwellen at the Grange a day or two;
 Or elles he is at his hous certain:
 Wher that he be I cannot ſothly ſain.

This Abſolon ful joly was and light,
 And thoughte, now is time to wake al night,

† With his own hand. So Gower, *Conf. Amant.* fol. 76, b.
 The craſte Mynerve of wolle ſonde,
 And made cloth *her owen hande*,

For fikerly I saw him nat stiring
 About his dore sin day began to spring.
 So mote I thrive I shal at cockes crow
 Ful prively go knocke at his window,
 That stant full low upon his boures wall :
 To Alifon wol I now tellen all
 My love longing; for yet I shal not misse
 That at the leste way I shal hire kisse.
 Some maner comfort shal I have parlay,
 My mouth hath itched al this longe day;
 That is a signe of kissing at the leste :
 All night me mette eke I was at a feste :
 Therefore I wol go slepe an houre or twey,
 And all the night than wol I wake and pley.

Whan that the firste cock hath crowe, anon
 Up rist this joly lover Absolon,
 And him arayeth gay, at point devise;
 But first he cheweth grein and licorise,
 To smellen fote or he had spoke with here.
 Under his tonge a trewe love he bere,
 For therby wend he to ben gracious.
 He cometh to the carpenteres hous,
 And still he stant under the shot window;
 Unto his brest it raught, it was so low;
 And soft he cougheth with a semifoun.

What do ye, honycombe, swete Alifoun,
 My faire bird, my swete sinamome!
 Awaketh, lemman min, and speketh to me.
 Ful litel thinken ye upon my wo,
 That for your love I swete ther as I go.
 No wonder is though that I swelte and swete,
 I mourne as doth a lamb after the tete.
 Ywis, lemman, I have swiche love longing
 That like a turtel trewe is my mourning.
 I may not ete no more than a maid.

Go fro the window, jacke fool, she said :
 As helpe me God it wol not be, compame.
 I love another, or elles I were to blame,
 Wel bet than thee by Jesu, Absolon.
 Go forth thy way, or I wol cast a ston;
 And let me slepe; a twenty divel way.

Alas! (quod Absolon) and wala wa!
 That trewe love was ever so yvel besette :
 Than kisse me, sin that it may be no bette,
 For Jesus love, and for the love of me.

Wilt thou than go thy way therwith? quod she.
 Ya certes, lemman, quod this Absolon.
 Than make thee redy, (quod she) I come anon.

This Absolon down set him on his knees,
 And saide, I am a lord at all degrees :
 For after this I hope ther cometh more;
 Lemman, thy grace, and, swete bird! thyng ore.

The window she undoth, and that in haste.
 Have don, (quod she) come of, and spede thee faste,
 Lest that our neighbours thee espie.

This Absolon gan wipe his mouth ful drie.
 Derke was the night as pitch or as the cole,
 And at the window she put out hire hole,
 And Absolon him felle ne bet ne wers,
 But with his mouth he kist hire naked ers
 Ful favorly, er he was ware of this.

Abak he sterte, and thought it was amis,
 For wel he wist a woman hath no berd.
 He felt a thing all rowe, and long yherd,

And saide, Fy, alas! what have I do?

Te he, quod she, and clapt the window to;
 And Absolon goth forth a fory pas.

A berd, a berd! said Hendy Nicholas;
 By Goddes corpus this goth faire and wel.

This sely Absolon herd every del,
 And on his lippe he gan for anger bite,
 And to himself he said I shal thee quite,
 Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lippes
 With dust, with sond, with straw, with cloth, with-
 But Absolon? that faith full oft Alas! (chippes,
 My soule betake I unto Sathanas
 But me were lever than all this toun (quod he)
 Of this despit awroken for to be.
 Alas! alas! that I ne had yblent.

His hote love is cold and all yqueint;
 For fro that time that he had kist hire ers
 Of paramours ne raught he not a kers,
 For he was heled of his maladie;
 Ful often paramours he gan desie,
 And wepe as doth a child that is ybete.
 A softe pas he went him over the strete
 Until a smith man callen Dan Gerveis,
 That in his forge smithed plow-harneis;
 He sharpeth share and cultre besily.
 This Absolon knocketh all esily,
 And said, Undo, Gerveis, and that anon.

What, who art thou? It am I Absolon.
 What, Absolon? what, Cristes swete tre,
 Why rise ye so rath? ey benedicite!
 What eileth you? some gay girle, God it wote,
 Hath brought you thus upon the viretote :
 By Seint Neote ye wote wel what I mene.

This Absolon ne raughte not a bene
 Of all his play; no word again he yaf :
 He hadde more tawe on his distaf
 Than Gerveis knew, and saide, Frend so dere,
 That hote culter in the cheminee here
 As lene it me, I have therwith to don;
 I wol it bring again to thee ful sone.

Gerveis answered, Certes were it gold,
 Or in a poke nobles all untold,
 Thou shuldest it have, as I am trewe smith.
 Ey, Cristes foot, what wol ye don therwith?
 Therof, quod Absolon, be as be may,
 I shal wel tellen thee another day;
 And caught the culter by the colde stele.
 Ful soft out at the dore he gan to stele,
 And went unto the carpenteres wall;
 He coughed first, and knocked therwithall
 Upon the window, right as he did er.

This Alifon answered, Who is ther
 That knocketh so? I warrant him a thefe.

Nay, nay, (quod he) God wot, my swete lefe,
 I am thin Absolon, thy dereling.
 Of gold (quod he) I have thee brought a ring;
 My mother yave it me, so God me save,
 Ful fine it is, and therto wel ygrave;
 This wol I yeven thee if thou me kisse.

This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
 And thought he wolde amenden all the jape,
 He shulde kisse his ers er that he scape;
 And up the window did he hastily,
 And out his ers he putteth privily

Over the buttoke, to the hanche bon;
And therewith spake this clerk, this Absolon,
Speke swete bird, I n'ot not wher thou art.

This Nicholas anon let fleen a fart
As gret as it had been a thonder dint,
That with the stroke he was wel nie yblint;
And he was redy with his yren hote,
And Nicholas amid the ers he smote.

Off goth the skinne an hondbrede al aboute.
The hote culter brenned so his toute,
That for the smert he wened for to die;
As he were wood for wo he gan to crie
Helpe, water, water! help for Goddes herte!

This carpenter out of his slumber sterte,
And herd on crie Water as he were wood,
And thought, alas! now cometh Noes flood.
He set him up withouten wordes mo,
And with his axe he smote the cord atwo,
And doun goth all; he fond neyther to selle
Ne breed ne ale til he came to the selle,
Upon the flore, and ther aswoune he lay.

Up sterten Alifon and Nicholay,
And crieden, Out and harrow! in the strete.

The neighebores bothe smale and grete
In rannen for to gauren on this man,
That yet aswonne lay bothe pale and wan,

For with the fall he brosten hath his arm.
But stonden he must unto his owen harm,
For whan he spake he was anon bore doun
With Hendy Nicholas and Alifoun.
They tolden every man that he was wood,
He was agaste so of Noes flood
Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanitee
He had ybought him kneding tubbes three,
And had hem honged in the roof above,
And that he praied hem for Goddes love
To sitten in the roof *par compaignie*.

The folk gan laughen at his fantasie.
Into the roof they kyken and they gape,
And turned all his harm into a jape.
For what so that this carpenter answerd
It was for nought, no man his reson herd.
With othes gret he was so sworne adoun
That he was holden wood in all the toun,
For everich clerk anon right held with other;
They said the man was wood, my leve brother;
And every wight gan laughen at this strif.

Thus swived was the carpenteres wif
For all his keping and his jalousie,
And Absolon hath kist hire nether eye,
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute.
This Tale is don, and God save all the route.

THE REVES PROLOGUE.

WHAN folk han laughed at this nice cas
 Of Absolon and Hendy Nicholas,
 Diverse folk diversely they saide,
 But for the more part they lought and plaide;
 Ne at this Tale I saw no man greve
 But it were only Osewold the Reve:
 Because he was of carpenteres craft
 A litel ire is in his herte ylast;
 He gan to grutch and blamen it a lite.
 Se the ik, quod he, ful wel coude I him quite
 With blering of a proude milleres eye,
 If that me list to speke of ribaudrie.
 But ik am olde; me list not play for age;
 Gras time is don, my foddre is now forage:
 This white top writeth nine old yeres;
 Min herte is also moulded as min heres;
 But if I fare as doth an open ers,
 That ilke fruit is ever lenger the wers
 Til it be roten in mullok or in stre.
 We olde men, I drede, so faren we;
 Til we be roten can we not be ripe;
 We hoppe alway while that the world wol pipe;
 For in our will ther stiketh ever a nayl,
 To have an hore hed and a grene tayl,
 As hath a leke; for though our might be gon
 Our will desireth folly ever in on;
 For whan we may not don than wol we speken,
 Yet in our ashen cold is fire yreken.
 Four gledes han we which I shal devise,
 Avaunting, lying, anger, and covetise;
 These four sparkes longen unto elde;
 Our olde limes mow wel ben unwelde,
 But will ne shall not faillen that is sothe:
 And yet have I alway a coltes tothe,
 As many a yere as it passed henne
 Sin that my tappe of lif began to renne:

For fikerly whan I was horne anon
 Deth drow the tappe of lif and let it gon;
 And ever fith hath so the tappe yronne,
 Til that almost all empty is the tonne;
 The streme of lif now droppeth on the chimbe*.
 The sely tonge may wel ringe and chimbe
 Of wretchednesse that passed is ful yore:
 With olde folk save dotage is no more.

Whan that our Hoste had herd this sermoning,
 He gan to speke as lordly as a king,
 And sayde, What amounteth all this wit?
 What, shall we speke all day of holy writ?
 The devil made a Reve for to preche,
 Or of a fouter a shipman or a leche.

Say forth thy Tale, and tary not the time;
 Lo Depeford, and it is half way prime:
 Lo Grenewich, ther many a shrew is inne:
 It were al time thy Tale to beginne.

Now, fires, quod this Osewold the Reve,
 I pray you alle that ye not you greve
 Though I answere, and somdel set his howve,
 For lesul is with force force off to showve.

This dronken Miller hath ytold us here
 How that begiled was a carpentere,
 Paraventure in scorne, for I am on;
 And by your leve I shal him quite anon:
 Right in his cherles termes wol I speke;
 I pray to God his necke mote to breke.
 He can wel in min eye seen a stalk,
 But in his owen he cannot seen a balk.

* *Kime*, Teut. means the prominency of the flaves beyond the head of the barrel. The imagery is very exact and beautiful.

THE REVES TALE*.

AT Trompington, not fer fro Cantebrigge,
 Ther goth a brook, and over that a brigge,
 Upon the whiche brook ther stont a melle;
 And this is veray sothe that I you telle.
 A miller was ther dwelling many a day,
 As any peacock he was proude and gay:
 Pipen he coude, and fishe, and nettes bete,
 And turnen cuppes, and wrafflen wel and shete.
 Ay by his belt he bare a long pavade,
 And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade:
 A joly popper bare he in his pouche.
 Ther n'as no man for peril dorst him touche.
 A Shefeld thwitel bare he in his hofe:
 Round was his face, and camuse was his nose:
 As pilled as an ape was his skull:
 He was a market-beter at the full.
 Ther dorste no wight hond upon him legge,
 That he ne swore he shuld anon abegge.

A these he was forsoth of corne and mele,
 And that a flie, and usant for to stele:
 His name was hoten Deinous Simekin †.
 A wif he hadde comen of noble kin:
 The person of the toun hire father was:
 With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bras
 For that Simkin shuld in his blood allie:
 She was yfostered in a nonnerie;
 For Simkin wolde no wif, as he sayde,
 But she were wel ynourished and a mayde,
 To saven his estat of yemanrie:
 And she was proud and pert as is a pie.
 A ful faire sight was it upon hem two.
 On holy dayes beforne hire wold he go
 With his tipet ybounde about his hed,
 And she came after in a gite of red,
 And Simkin hadde hosen of the same.
 Ther dorste no wight clepen her but Dame:

* Denyse Simkin, the miller of Trompington, deceiveth two clarkes of Soller's hall in Cambridge in stealing their corn, but they so manage their matters that they revenge the wrong to the full. This Tale is imitated from Boccace, Novel the 6th, Day the 9th.---This you may pass over if you please. Urry.

† His name was Simon, of which Simekin is the diminutive; and from his disdainful insolent manners he had acquired the surname of *Deinous*, just as Nicholas, in the former tale, was cleped *Hently* from the very opposite behaviour. A great number of our surnames have been derived from qualities of the mind, and it is reasonable to suppose that at the beginning they were merely personal, like what we call nicknames. It is probable that the use of hereditary surnames was not even in Chaucer's time fully established among the lower classes of people.

Was non so hardy; that went by the way,
 That with hire dorste rage or ones play,
 But if he wolde be flain of Simikin,
 With pavade, or with knif or bodekin;
 (For jalous folk ben perilous evermo,
 Algate they wold hir wives wenden so.)
 And eke, for she was fomdel smoterlich,
 She was as digne as water in a dich,
 And al so ful of hoker and of bismare,
 Hire thoughte that a ladie shuld hire spare,
 What for hire kinrede and hire nortelrie
 That she had lerned in the nonnerie.

A doughter hadden they betwix hem two
 Of twenty yere, withouten any mo,
 Saving a child that was of half yere age;
 In cradle it lay, and was a propre page.
 This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was,
 With camuse nose and eyen grey as glas;
 With buttokes brode, and brestes round and hie;
 But right faire was hir here, I wol not lie.

The person of the toun, for she was faire,
 In purpos was to maken hire his haire
 Both of his catel and of his mesuage,
 And strange he made it of hire mariage.
 His purpos was for to bestow hire hie
 Into some worthy blood of ancestrie,
 For holy chirches good mote ben despended
 On holy chirches blood that is descended;
 Therefore he wolde his holy blood honoure
 Though that he holy chirche shuld devpoure.

Gret foken hath this miller out of doute
 With whete and malt of all the land aboute,
 And namely ther was a gret college
 Men clep the Soller hall at Cantebrege,
 Ther was hir whete and eke hir malte yground.
 And on a day it happed in a stound
 Sike lay the manciple on a maladie,
 Men wenden wisly that he shulde die;
 For which this miller stale both mele and corn
 An hundred times more than beforne,
 For ther beforne he stale but curteisly,
 But now he was a these outrageously,
 For which the wardein chidde and made fare,
 But therof set the miller not a tare;
 He craked boht, and swore it n'as not so,

Than were ther yonge poure scolores two
 That dwelten in the halle of which I say;
 Telfif they were, and lusty for to play,

And only for hir mirth and revelrie
Upon the wardein besily they crie
To yeve hem leve but a little stound
To gon to mille and seen hir corn yground;
And hardily they dorsten lay hir necke
The miller shuld not stele hem half a pecke
Of corn by sleighte, ne by force him reve.

And at the last the wardein yave hem leve.
John highte that on, and Alein highte that other;
Of a toun were they born that highte Strother,
Fer in the north, I cannot tellen where.

This Alein maketh redy all his gere,
And on a hors the sak he cast anon:
Forth goth Alein the clerk, and also John,
With good swerd and with bokeler by hir side.
John knew the way, him neded not no guide,
And at the mille the sak adoun he laith.

Alein spake first; All haile, Simond, in faith,
How fares thy faire daughter and thy wif?

Alein, welcome (quod Simkin), by my lif,
And John also. How now, what do ye here?
By God, Simond (quod John), nede has no pere;
Him behoves serve himself that has na swain,
Or elles he is a fool, as clerkes fain.
Our manciple I hope he wol be ded,
Swa werkes ay the wanges in his hed;
And therefore is I come, and eke Alein,
To grind our corn and cary it hame agein;
I pray you spede us henen that ye may.

It shal be don (quod Simkin) by my fay.
What wol ye don while that it is in hand?
By God, right by the hopper wol I stand,
(Quod John) and seen how that the corn gas in;
Yet saw I never by my fader kin
How that the hopper waggis til and fra.

Alein answered, John, and wolt thou swa?
Than wol I be benethe by my croun,
And see how that the mele falles adoun
In til the trogh; that shal be my disport;
For, John, in faith I may ben of your sort:
I is as ill a miller as is ye.

This miller smiled at hir nicetee,
And thought all this n'is don but for a wile.
They wenen that no man may hem begile,
But by my thrift yet shal I blere hir eie
For all the sleighte in hir philosophie.
The more queinte knakkes that they make,
The more wol I stele whan that I take.
In stede of flour yet wol I yeve hem bren.
The gretest clerkes ben not the wisest men,
As whilom to the wolf thus spake the mare:
Of all hir art ne count I not a tare.

Out at the dore he goth ful prively
Whan that he saw his time softely.
He loketh up and down, til he hath found
The clerkes hors ther as he stood ybound
Behind the mille under a levesell,
And to the hors he goth him faire and well,
And stripeth of the bridel right anon.

And whan the hors was laus he gan to gon
Toward the fen ther wilde mares renne,
And forth with wehee thurgh thick and thinne.
This miller goth again, no word he said,
But doth his note, and with these clerkes plaid,

Till that hir corn was faire and wel yground.
And whan the mele is sacked and ybound,
This John goth out and fint his hors away,
And gan to crie Harow and wala wa!
Our hors is lost: Alein, for Goddes banes
Step on thy feet; come of, man, al at anes:
Alas! our wardein has his palfrey lorn.

This Alein al forgat both mele and corn;
Al was out of his mind his husbandrie:
What, wilke way is he gon? he gan to crie.

The wif came leping inward at a renne;
She sayd, Alas! youre hors goth to the fenne.
With wilde mares as fast as he may go.
Unthank come on his hand that bond him so,
And he that better shuld have knit the rein.

Alas! (quod John) Alein, for Cristes peini
Lay down thy swerd, and I shal min alswa;
I is ful wight, God wate, as is a ra.
By Goddes saule he shal not scape us bathe.
Why ne had thou put the capel in the lathe?
Ill haile, Alein, by God thou is a fonne.

These sely clerkes han ful fast yronne
Toward the fen, bothe Alein and eke John;
And whan the miller saw that they were gon
He half a bushel of hir flour hath take,
And bad his wif go knede it in a cake.
He sayd, I trow the clerkes were aferde:
Yet can a miller make a clerkes berde
For all his art. Ye, let hem gon hir way.
Lo wher they gon. Ye, let the children play:
They get him not so lightly by my croun.
These sely clerkes rennen up and down
With Kepe, kepe; Stand, stand; joffa, warderere.
Ga whistle thou, and I shal kepe him here.
But shortly, till that it was veray night
They coude not, though they did all hir might,
Hir capel catch, he ran alway so fast,
Til in a dicke they caught him at the last.

Wery and wet, as bestes in the rain,
Cometh sely John, and with him cometh Alein.
Alas (quod John) the day that I was borne!
Now are we driven til hething and til scorne.
Our corn is stolne, men wol us founes calle,
Both the wardein and eke our felawes alle,
And namely the miller, wala wa!

Thus plaineth John as he goth by the way
Toward the mille, and Bayard in his hond.
The miller sitting by the fire he fond,
For it was night, and forther might they nought,
But for the love of God they him besought
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.

The miller saide agen, If ther be any,
Swiche as it is yet shal ye have your part.
Myn house is streit, but ye have lerned art;
Ye can by arguments maken a place
A mile brode of twenty foot of space.
Let see now if this place may suffice,
Or make it roume with speche, as is your gife.
Now, Simond (said this John), by Seint Cuthberd
Ay is thou mery, and that is faire answerd.
I have herd say man shal take of twa thinges,
Slike as he findes, or flike as he bringes.
But specially I pray thee, hoste dere,
Gar us have mete and drinke, and make us chere,

And we sal païen trewely at the full :
With empty hand men may na haukes tull.
Lo here our silver redy for to spend.

This miller to the toun his doughter fend.
For ale and bred, and rosted hem a goos,
And bond hir hors he shuld no more go loos,
And in his owen chambre hem made a bedde,
With shetes and with chalons faire yspredde,
Nat from his owen bed ten foot or twelve :
His doughter had a bed all by hire selve,
Right in the same chambre by and by :
It mighte be no bet, and cause why,
Ther was no roumer herberwe in the place.
They soupen, and they speken of solace,
And drinken ever strong ale at the best.
Abouten midnight wente they to rest.

Wel hath this miller vernished his hed,
Ful pale he was, for-dronken, and nought red.
He yoxeth, and he speketh thurgh the nose,
As he were on the quakke or on the pose.
To bed he goth, and with him goth his wif;
As any jay she light was and jolif;
So was hire joly whistle wel ywette.
The cradel at hire beddes feet was sette
To rocken, and to yeve the child to souke.
And whan that dronken was all in the crouke
To bedde went the doughter right anon,
To bedde goth Alein and also John.
Ther n'as no more; nedeth hem no dwale.
This miller hath so wisly bibbed ale,
That as an hors he snorteth in his slepe,
Ne of his tail behind he toke no kepe.
His wif bare him a burdon a ful strong,
Men might hir routing heren a furlong.
The wenche routeth eke *par compaignie*.

Alein the clerk, that herd this melodie,
He poketh John, and sayde, Slepest thou?
Herdest thou ever slike a song er now?
Lo whilke a complin is ymell hem alle;
A wilde fire upon hir bodies falle,
Wha herkned ever slike a ferly thing?
Ye, they shall have the flour of yvel ending.
This lange night ther tides me no reste;
But yet na force, all shal be for the beste.
For, John (sayd he), as ever mote I thrive,
If that I may yon wenche wol I swive.
Som esement has lawe yshapen us;
For, John, ther is a lawe that saieth thus,
That if a man in o point be agreved
That in another she shal be releved.
Our corn is stolne, sothly it is na nay,
And we han had an yvel fit to-day;
And sin I shal have nan amendement
Again my losse I wol have an esement :
By Goddes faule it shal nan other be.

This John answered, Alein, avise thee;
The miller is a perilous man, he sayde,
And if that he out of his slepe abraide,
He mighte don us bathe a vilanie.
Alein answered, I count him nat a flie.
And up he rist, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche lay upright, and faste slept,
Til he so nigh was, er she might espie,
That it had ben so late for to crie :

And shortly for to say, they were at on.
Now play Alein, for I wol speke of John.

This John lith still a furlong way or two,
And to himself he maketh routh and wo.
Alas! (quod he) this is a wicked jape;
Now may I say that I is but an ape.
Yet has my felaw somwhat for his harme;
He has the millers doughter in his arme :
He auntred him, and hath his nedes spedde,
And I lie as a draf sak in my bedde;
And whan this jape is tald another day
I shal be halden a daffe or a cokenay :
I wol arise and auntre it by my fay :
Unhardy is unsely, thus men say.

And up he rose, and softely he went
Unto the cradel, and in his hand it hent,
And bare it soft unto his beddes fete.
Sone after this the wif hire routing lete,
And gan awake, and went hire out to pisse,
And came again, and gan the cradel misse,
And groped here and ther, but she fond non.
Alas (quod she)! I had almost misgon;
I had almost gon to the clerkes bedde :
Ey *benedicite*! than had I foule yspedde.
And forth she goth til she the cradel fond.
She gropeth alway forther with hire hond,
And fond the bed, and thoughte nat but good,
Because that the cradel by it stood,
And n'iste wher she was, for it was derk,
But faire and wel she crept in by the clerk,
And lith ful still, and wold han caught a slepe.
Within a while this John the clerk up lepe,
And on this goode wif he laieth on fore;
So mery a fit ne had she nat ful yore :
He priket hard and depe as he were mad.

This joly lif han these two clerkes lad
Til that the thridde cok began to sing.
Alein wex werie in the morwening,
For he had swonken all the longe night,
And sayd, Farewel, Malkin, my swete wight :
The day is come, I may no longer bide,
But evermo wher so I go or ride
I is thin awen clerk, so have I hele.
Now, dere lemman, quod she, go, farewele;
But or thou go, o thing I wol thee tell.
Whan that thou wendest homeward by the mell,
Right at the entree of the dore behind
Thou shalt a cake of half a bushel find
That was ymaked of thin owen mele,
Which that I halpe my fader for to stele :
And, goode lemman, God thee save and kepe.
And with that word she gan almost to wepe.

Alein uprist, and thought er that it daw,
I wol go crepen in by my felaw;
And fond the cradel at his hand anon.
By God, thought he, all wrang I have misgon :
My hed is tottic of my swink to night,
That maketh me that I go nat aright.
I wot wel by the cradel I have misgo;
Here lith the miller and his wif also.
And forth he goth a twenty divel way
Unto the bed, ther as the miller lay.
He wend have copen by his felaw John,
And by the miller in he crept anon,

And caught him by the nekke, and gan him shake,
 And sayd, Thou John, thou swineshed, awake
 For Cristes faule, and here a noble game;
 For by that lord that called is Seint Jame,
 As I have thries as in this short night
 Swived the millers doughter bolt upright
 While thou hast as a coward ben agast.

Ye, false harlot, quod the miller, hast?
 A, false traitour, false clerk (quod he),
 Thou shalt be ded by Goddes dignitee,
 Who dorste be so bold to disparage
 My doughter, that is come of swiche linage.
 And by the throte-bolle he caught Alein,
 And he him hent despitously again,
 And on the nose he smote him with his fist;
 Doun ran the bloody streame upon his brest:
 And in the fore with nose and mouth to-broke
 They walwe, as don two pigges in a poke.
 And up they gon, and doun again anon,
 Til that the miller sporned at a ston,
 And doun he fell backward upon his wif,
 That wiste nothing of this nice strif:
 For she was fall aslepe a litel wight
 With John the clerk, that waked had all night,
 And with the fall out of hire slepe she braide.
 Helpe, holy crofs of Bromeholme! (she sayde)
In manus tuas, Lord, to thee I call.
 Awake, Simond, the fend is on me fall;
 Myn herte is broken; helpe; I n'am but ded;
 Ther lith on up my wombe and up myn hed:
 Helpe, Simkin, for the false clerkes fight.
 This John stert up as fast as ever he might,

And graspeth by the walles to and fro
 To find a staf, and she stert up also,
 And knew the estres bet than did this John,
 And by the wall she toke a staf anon,
 And saw a litel shemering of a light,
 For at an hole in shone the mone bright,
 And by that light she saw hem bothe two,
 But likerly she n'iste who was who,
 But as she saw a white thing in hire eye;
 And whan she gan this white thing espie
 She wend the clerk had wered a volupere,
 And with the staf she drow ay nere and nere,
 And wend han hit this Alein atte full,
 And smote the miller on the pilled skull,
 That doun he goth, and cried, Harrow! I die.
 Thise clerkes bete him wel, and let him lie,
 And greithen hem, and take hir hors anon,
 And eke hir mele, and on hir way they gon;
 And at the mille dore eke they toke hir cake
 Of half a bushel flour ful wel ybake.

Thus is the proude miller wel ybette,
 And hath ylost the grinding of the whete,
 And paid for the souter every del
 Of Alein and of John that bete him wel;
 His wif is swived and his doughter als;
 Lo, swiche it is a miller to be fals:
 And therefore this proverb is sayd ful soth,
 Him thar not winnen wel that evil doth;
 A gilour shal himself begiled be;
 And God, that siteth hic in magestee,
 Save all this compaignie gret and smale.
 Thus have I quit the miller in my Tale.

THE COKES PROLOGUE.

THE Coke of London, while the Reve spake,
 For joye (him thought) he clawed him on the bak :
 A ha (quod he) for Cristes passion,
 This miller had a sharpe conclusion
 Upon this argument of herbergage.
 Wel sayde Salomon in his langage
 Ne bring not every man into thin hous,
 For herberwing by night is perilous.
 Wel ought a man avised for to be
 Whom that he brought into his privetee.
 I pray to God so yeve me sorwe and care
 If ever, sithen I highte Hodge of Ware,
 Herd I a miller bet yfette a-werk ;
 He had a jape of malice in the derk.

But God forbede that we stinten here,
 And therefore if ye vouchen sauf to here
 A Tale of me that am a poure man,
 I wol you tell as wel as ever I can
 A litel jape that fell in our citee.

Our Hoste answerd and sayde, I grant it thee :

Now tell on, Roger, and loke that it be good,
 For many a pastee hast thou letten blood,
 And many a Jacke of Dover hast thou sold
 That hath been twies hot and twies cold :
 Of many a pilgrim hast thou Cristes curse,
 For of thy perseele yet fare they the werse,
 That they han eten in thy stoble goos,
 For in thy shop goth many a flie loos.
 Now tell on, gentil Roger by thy name,
 But yet I pray thee be not wroth for game ;
 A man may say ful soth in game and play.

Thou sayst ful soth, quod Roger, by my fay ;
 But soth play *quade spel*, as the Fleming saith,
 And therefore, Herry Bailly, by thy faith
 Be thou not wroth, or we departen here,
 Though that my Tale be of an hofselere :
 But natheles, I wol not telle it yet,
 But er we part ywis thou shalt be quit.
 And therewithal he lough and made chere
 And sayd his Tale, as ye shal after here.

THE COKES TALE*.

A PRENTIS whilom dwelt in our citee,
 And of a craft of vitailers was he :
 Gaillard he was as goldfinch in the shawe,
 Bronne as a bery, a propre short felawe,
 With lokkes blake kembed ful fetisly :
 Dancen he coude so wel and jolily,
 That he was cleped Perkin Revelour :
 He was as ful of love and paramour
 As is the hive ful of honey swete ;
 Wel was the wenche with him mighte mete.

* The description of an unthrifty prentice given to dice, women, and wine, waiting thereby his master's goods, and purchasing to himself Newgate. The most part of this Tale is lost, or never finished by the Author.

At every bridale would he sing and hoppe ;
 He loved bet the tavernne than the shoppe ;
 For whan ther any riding was in Chepe
 Out of the shoppe thider wold he lepe,
 And til that he had all the sight ysein,
 And danced wel, he wold not come agein ;
 And gadred him a meinie of his sort
 To hoppe and sing, and maken swiche disport ;
 And ther they setten steven for to mete
 To plain at the dice in swiche a strete ;
 For in the Toun ne was ther no prentis
 That fairer coude caste a pair of dis
 Than Perkin coude, and thereto he was fre
 Of his dispence, in place of privetee ;

That fond his maister wel in his chaffere,
 For often time he fond his box ful bare.
 For sothly a prentis, a revelour,
 That haunteth dis, riot and paramour,
 His maister shal it in his shoppe abie,
 Al have he no part of the minstralcie;
 For theft and riot they ben convertible,
 Al can they play on giterne or ribible.
 Revel and trouth, as in a low degree,
 They ben ful wroth all day, as men may see.
 This joly prentis with his maister abode,
 Til he was neigh out of his prentishode,
 Al were he snibbed bothe erly and late,
 And somtime lad with revel to Newgate;
 But at the last his maister him bethought,
 Upon a day when he his paper sought,
 Of a proverbe that faith this same word,
 Wel bet is roten appel out of hord

Than that it rote alle the remenant:
 So fareth it by a riotous servant;
 It is wel lasse harm to let him pace
 Than he shende all the servants in the place:
 Therfore his maister yaf him a quittance,
 And bad him go, with sorwe and with meschance.
 And thus this joly prentis had his leve:
 Now let him riot all the night or leve.
 And for ther n'is no these without a louke
 That helpeth him to wasten and to souke
 Of that he briben can or borwe may,
 Anon he sent his bed and his array
 Unto a compere of his owen fort
 That loved dis, and riot, and disport,
 And had a wif that held for countenance
 A shoppe, and fwived for hire sustenance.

THE MAN OF LAWES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste saw wel that the brighte sonne
 The ark of his artificial day had ronne
 The fourthe part and half an houre and more;
 And though he were not depe expert in lore,
 He wiste it was the eighte-and-twenty day
 Of April, that is messager to May,
 And saw wel that the shadow of every tree
 Was as in lengthe of the same quantitee
 That was the body erect that caused it,
 And therefore by the shadow he toke his wit
 That Phebus, which that shone so clere and bright,
 Degrees was five-and-forty clombe on hight;
 And for that day, as in that latitude,
 It was ten of the klok he gan conclude,
 And sodenly he plight his hors aboute.

Lordings, quod he, I warne you all this route
 The fourthe partie of this day is gon:
 Now for the love of God and of Seint John
 Lefeth no time, as ferforth as ye may.
 Lordings, the time it wasteth night and day,
 And steleth from us, what prively sleping,
 And what thurgh negligence in our waking,
 As doth the streame, that turneth never again,
 Descending fro the montagne into a plain.
 Wel can Senek and many a philosophre
 Bewailen time more than gold in coffre;
 For losse of catel may recovered be,
 But losse of time shendeth us, quod he.
 It wol not come again withouten drede,
 No more than wol Malkins maidenhede
 When she hath lost it in hire wantonnesse:
 Let us not moulen thus in idlenesse.

Sire Man of Lawe, quod he, so have ye blis,
 Tel us a Tale anon, as forword is.
 Ye ben submitted thurgh your free assent
 To stonde in this cas at my judgement.
 Acquitteth you now, and holdeth your behest;
 Than have ye don your devoir at the lest.

Hoste, quod he, *de par dieux jeo assente*,
 To breken forword is not min entente.
 Behest is dette, and I wold hold it fayn
 All my behest, I can no better sayn.
 For swiche lawe as man yeveth another wight
 He shuld himselven usen it by right.
 Thus wol our text; but natheles certain
 I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
 But Chaucer (though he can but lewdely
 On metres and on riming craftily)
 Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
 Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;

And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
 In o book, he hath sayd hem in another:
 For he hath told of lovers up and doun
 Mo than Ovide made of mentioun
 In his *Epistolis*, that ben ful olde.
 What shuld I tellen hem sin they ben tolde?
 In youthe he made of Ceyes and Alcyon,
 And sithen hath he spoke of everich on
 Thise noble wives, and thise lovers eke,
 Who so that wol his large volume seke
 Cleped The Seintes Legende of Cupide:
 Ther may he se the large woundes wide
 Of Lucrece, and of Babylon Thisbe;
 The swerd of Dido for the false Enee;
 The tree of Phillis for hire Demophon;
 The plaint of Deianire and Hermion,
 Of Adriane and Ysiphilee;
 The barrene ile stonding in the see;
 The dreint Leandre for his fayre Hero;
 The teres of Heleine, and eke the wo
 Of Briseide and of Ladmia;
 The crueltee of thee, Queene Medea,
 Thy litel children hanging by the hals
 For thy Jason, that was of love so fals:
 O Hipermeestra, Penelope, Alceste!
 Your wif hood he commendeth with the beste.

But certainly no word ne writeth he
 Of thilke wicke ensample of Canace,
 That loved hire owen brother sinfully;
 (Of all swiche cursed stories I say Fy)
 Or elles of Tyrius Appolonious,
 How that the cursed king Antiochus
 Berafte his doughter of hire maidenhede,
 That is so horrible a tale for to rede,
 Whan he hire threw upon the pavement.
 And therefore he of ful avisement
 N'old never write in non of his sermons
 Of swiche unkinde abominations:
 Ne I wol non reherse, if that I may,
 But of my Tale how shal I don this day?
 Me were loth to be likened douteles
 To Muses that men clepe Pierides,
 (*Metamorphoseos* wrote what I mene)
 But natheles I recche not a bene
 Though I come after him with hawebake;
 I speke in prose, and let him rimes make.
 And with that word he with a sobre chere
 Began his Tale, and sayde as ye shull here.

THE MAN OF LAWES TALE.

O SCATHFUL harm, condition of poverté,
With thirst, with cold, with hunger, so confounded,
To asken helpe thee shameth in thine herte,
If thou non ask, so sore art thou ywounded,
That veray nede unwrappeth al thy wound hid.
Maugre thin hed thou most for indigence
Or stele or begge, or borwe thy dispenche.

Thou blamest Crist, and sayst ful bitterly,
He misdeparteth richesse temporal;
Thy neighebour thou witest sinfully,
And sayst thou hast to litel and he hath all:
Parfay (sayst thou) sometime he reken shall,
Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the glede,
For he nought helpeth needful in hir nede.

Herken what is the sentence of the wise,
Bet is to dien than have indigence,
Thy selve neighebour wol thee despise;
If thou be poure farewel thy reverence.
Yet of the wise man take this sentence,
Alle the dayes of poure men ben wicke;
Beware therefore or thou come to that pricke.

If thou be poure, thy brother hateth thee,
And all thy frendes fleen fro thee, alas!
O riche marchants! ful of wele ben ye,
O noble, o prudent folk! as in this cas,
Your bagges ben not filled with ambes as,
But with fis sink, that renneth for your chance;
At Cristenmasse mery may ye dance.

Ye seken lond and see for your winninges;
As wise folk ye knowen all th' estat
Of regnes; ye ben fathers of tidinges
And tales both of pees and of debat:
I were right now of tales desolat,
N'ere that a marchant, gon is many a yere,
Me taught a Tale which that ye shull here.

In Surrie whilom dwelt a compaignie
Of chapmen rich, and therto sad and trewe,
That wide were senten hir spicerie,
Clothes of gold, and satins riche of hewe:
Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe,
That every wight hath deintee to chaffare
With hem, and eke to sellen hem hir ware.

Now sell it that the maisters of that sort
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende,
Were it for chapmanhood or for disport,
Non other message wolde they thider sende,
But comen hemself to Rome, this is the ende;
And in swiche place as thought hem advantage
For hir entente they taken hir herbergage,

Sojourned han these marchants in that toun
A certain time, as fell to hir plesance:
And so befell that the excellent renoun
Of the emperoures doughter, Dame Custance,
Reported was with every circumstance
Unto these Surrien marchants in swiche wise
Fro day to day as I shall you devise.

This was the commun vois of every man:
Our emperour of Rome, God him se,
A doughter hath that fin the world began,
To reckon as wel hire goodnesse as Beaute,
N'as never swiche another as is she;
I pray to God in honour hire sustene,
And wold she were of all Europe the quene,

In hire is high Beaute withouten pride,
Youthe withouten grenched or folie:
To all hire werkes vertue is hire guide;
Humbleesse hath slaen in hire tyrannie:
She is mirrour of alle curtesie,
Hire herte is veray chambre of holinesse,
Hire hond ministrer of fredom for almesse.

And al this vois was soth, as God is trewe;
But now to purpos let us turne agein.
These marchants han don fraught hir shippes newe,
And whan they han this blisful maiden sein
Home to Surrie ben they went ful fayn,
And don hir nedes, as they han don yore,
And liven in wele; I can say you no more.

Now sell it that these marchants stood in grace
Of him that was the Soudan of Surrie;
For whan they came from any strange place
He wold of his benigne curtesie
Make hem good chere, and besily espie
Tidings of sundry regnes, for to lere
The wonders that they mighte seen or here.

Amonges other thinges specially
These marchants han him told of Dame Custance
So gret noblese, in earnest seriously,
That this Soudan hath caught so gret plesance
To han hire figure in his remembrance,
That all his lust and all his besy cure
Was for to love hire while his lif may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book
Which that men clepe the Heven ywritten was
With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
That he for love shuld han his deth, alas!
For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,
Is writen, God wot, who so coud it rede,
The deth of every man withouten drede.

In sterres many a winter therbeforn
Was writ the deth of Hector, Achilles,
Of Pompey, Julius, or they were born;
The strif of Thebes, and of Hercules,
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deth; but mennes wittes ben so dull
That no wight can wel rede it at the full.

This Soudan for his prive councel sent,
And shortly of this matere for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entent,
And sayd hem certain, but he might have grace
To have Custance, within a litel space
He n'as but ded, and charged hem in hie
To shapen for his lif som remedie.

Diverse men diverse things saiden;
They argumentes casten up and doun;
Many a subtil reson forth they laiden;
They speken of magike and abusoun;
But finally, as in conclusion,
They cannot seen in that non advantage,
Ne in non other way save mariage.

Than saw they therein swiche difficultee
By way of reson, for to speke all plain,
Because ther was swiche diversitee
Betwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn
They trowen that no Cristen prince wold sayn
Wedden his childe under our law swete,
That us was yeven by Mahound our prophete.

And he answered, Rather than I lese
Custance I wol be cristened doubteles:
I mote ben hires, I may non other chese,
I pray you hold your arguments in pees;
Saveth my lif, and beth not reccheles
To geten hire that hath my life in cure,
For in this wo I may not long endure.

What nedeth greter dilatation?
I say by tretise and ambassatric,
And by the Popes mediatioun,
And all the chirche, and all the chevalrie,
That in destruction of Maumetrie,
And in encrese of Cristes lawe dere,
They ben accorded so as ye may here:
How that the Soudan and his baronage,
And all his lieges, shuld ycristened be,
And he shal han Custance in mariage,
And certain gold, I n'ot what quantitee,
And hereto finden suffisant suretee.
The same accord is sworne on eyther side;
Now, fair Custance, almighty God thee gide.

Now wolden som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I shuld tellen all the purveiance
The which that the Emperour of his noblesse
Hath shapen for his doughter Dame Custance.
Wel may men know that so gret ordinance
May no man tellen in a litel clause
As was arraied for so high a cause.

Bishopes ben shapen with hire for to wende,
Lordes, ladies, and knightes of renoun,
And other folk ynow; this is the end:
And notified is thurghout all the toun
That every wight with gret devotioun
Should prayen Crist that he this mariage
Receive in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hire departing,
I say the woful day fatal is come
That ther may be no longer tarying,
But forward they hem dresen all and some.
Custance, that was with sorwe all overcome,
Ful pale arif, and dreseth hire to wende,
For wel she seth ther n'is non other ende.

Alas! what wonder is it though she wept,
That shal be sent to strange nation
Fro frendes that so tendrely hire kept,
And to be bounde under subjection
Of on she knoweth not his condition?
Housbondes ben all good, and han ben yore,
That knowen wives, I dare say no more.

Fader, (she said) thy wretched child Custance,
Thy yonge doughter, fostered up so soft,
And ye, my moder, my souveraine plesance
Over all thing, (out taken Crist on loft)
Custance your child hire recommendeth oft
Unto your grace, for I shal to Surrie,
Ne shal I never seen you more with eye.

Alas! unto the Barbare nation
I muste gon, sin that it is your will;
But Crist, that starfe for our redemption,
So yeve me grace his hestes to fulfill,
I wretched woman no force though I spill:
Women are borne to thraldom and penance,
And to ben under mannes governance.

I trow at Troye whan Pirrus brake the wall
Or Ilion brent, or Thebes the citee,
Ne at Rome for the harm thurgh Hanniball,
That Romans hath venqueshed times three,
N'as herd swiche tendre weping for pitee
As in the chambre was for hire parting;
But forth she mote wheder she wepe or sing.

O firste moving cruel firmament!
With thy diurnal swegh that croudest ay,
And hurtlest all from est til occident,
That naturally wold hold another way,
Thy crouding set the heven in swiche array
At the beginning of this fierce viage
That cruel Mars hath slain this marriage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helpeles fall, alas!
Out of his angle into the derkest hous,
O Mars, o Atyzar! as in this cas;
O feble Mone! unhappy ben thy pas,
Thou knittest thee ther thou art not received,
Ther thou were wel fro thennes art thou weived.

Imprudent Emperour of Rome, alas!
Was ther no philosophre in al thy toun?
Is no time bet than other in swiche cas?
Of viage is ther non electioun,
Namely to folk of high condition,
Nat whan a rote is of a birth yknowe?
Alas! we ben to lewed or to flow.

To ship is brought this woful faire maid
Solempnely, with every circumstance:
Now Jesu Crist be with you all, she said.
Ther n'is no more, but Farewel, fair Custance.
She peineth hire to make good countenance;
And forth I let hire sayle in this manere,
And turne I wol againe to my matere.

The mother of Soudan, well of vices,
Espied hath hire sones pleine entente,
How he wol lete his old sacrifices;
And right anon she for her conseil sente,
And they ben comen to know what she mente;
And whan assembled was this folk in fere,
She set hire down, and sayd as ye shul here:

Lordes, (she sayd) ye known everich on
How that my sone in point is for to lete.
The holy lawes of our Alkaron,
Yeven by Goddes Messager Mahomete;
But on avow to grete God I hete,
The lif shal rather out of my body sterte
Than Mahometes lawe out of myn herte.

What shuld us tiden of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies and penance,
And afterward in helle to ben drawe,
For we reneied Mahound our creance?
But, Lordes, wol ye maken assurance,
As I shal say, assenting to my lore?
And I shal make us sauf for evermore.

They sworn and assented every man
To live with hire and die, and by hire stond;
And everich on, in the best wise he can,
To strengthen hire shal all his frendes fond.
And she hath this emprise ytaken in hond
Which ye shull heren that I shal devise,
And to hem all she spake right in this wise.

We shul first fein us Cristendom to take;
Cold water shal not greve us but a lite;
And I shal swiche a feste and revel make
That, as I trow, I shal the Soudan quite:
For tho his wif be cristened never so white
She shal have nede to wash away the rede
Though she a font of water with hire lede.

O Soudanne! rote of iniquitee,
Virago thou Semyramee the second,
O serpent under femininitee,
Like to the serpent depe in helle ybound,
O feined woman! all that may confound
Vertue and innocence, thurgh thy malice
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vice.

O Sathan envious! sin thilke day
That thou were chased from our heritage,
Wel knowest thou to woman the olde way:
Thou madest Eva bring us in servage,
Thou wolt fordon this Cristen mariage:
Thin instrument so (wala wa the while!)
Makest thou of women whan thou wolt begile.

X This Soudanne, whom I thus blame and warrie,
Let prively hire conseil gon hir way:
What shuld I in this Tale longer tarie?
She rideth to the Soudan on a day,
And sayd him that she wold reinie hire lay,
And Cristendom of prestes hondes fong,
Repenting hire she Hethen was so long;

Beseching him to don hire that honour
That she might han the Cristen folk to fest;
To plesen hem I wol do my labour.
The Soudan saith, I wol don at your hest,
And kneeling thanked hire of that request;
So glad he was ne n'iste not what to say,
She kist hire sone, and home she goth hire way.

X Arrived ben these Cristen folk to lond
In Surrie, with a gret solempne route,
And hastily this Soudan sent his fond
First to his mother and all the regne aboute,
And sayd his wif was comen out of doute,
And praide hem for to riden again the quene,
The honour of his regne to sustene.

Gret was the presse, and riche was th' array
Of Surriens and Romanes met in fere.
The mother of the Soudan riche and gay
Received hire with all so glad a chere
As any mother might hire doughter dere;
And to the nexte citee ther beside
A softe pas solempnely they ride.

Nought trow I the triumph of Julius,
Of which that Lucan maketh swiche a boft,
Was realler or more curious
Than was th' assemblee of this blisful host;
Butte this scorpion, this wicked goft,
The Soudanne, for all hire flattering
Cast under this ful mortally to sting.

X The Soudan cometh himself sone after this
So really, that wonder is to tell,
And welcometh hire with alle joy and blis.
And thus in mirth and joye I let hem dwell;
The fruit of this matere is that I tell.
Whan time came, men thought it for the best
That revel stint, and men go to hir rest.

The time come is this olde Soudanne
Ordeined hath the feste of which I tolde,
And to the feste Cristen folk him dresse
In general, ya, bothe yonge and olde.
Ther may men fest and realtee beholde,
And deintees mo than I can you devise;
But all to dere they bought it or they rise.

O soden wo, that ever art successour
To worldly blis! spreint is with bitternesse
Th' ende of the joye of our worldly labour:
Wo occuپیeth the fyn of our gladnesse.
Herken this conseil for thy sikernesse,
Upon thy glade day have in thy minde
The unware wo of harme that cometh behinde.

For shortly for to tellen at a word,
The Soudan and the Cristen everich on
Ben all to-hewe and stiked at the bord
But it were only Dame Custance alone.
This old Soudanne, this cursed crone,
Hath with hire frendes don this cursed dede,
For she hireself wold all the contree lede.

Ne ther was Surrien non that was converted,
That of the conseil of the Soudan wot,
That he n'as all to-hewe er he asterted;
And Custance han they taken anon fote-hot,
And in a ship all steeles (God wot)
They han hire set, and bidden hire lerne sayle
Out of Surrie againward to Itaille.

A certain tresor that she thither ladde,
And soth to sayn vitaille gret plentee,
They han hire yeven, and clothes eke she hadde,
And forth she sayleth in the salte see.
O my Custance! ful of benignitee,
O Emperoures yonge doughter dere!
He that is Lord of fortune be thy sterc.

She bleffeth hire, and with ful pitious vois
Unto the crois of Crist thus sayde she :
O clere, o weleful auter, holy crois !
Red of the Lambes blood ful of pitee,
That wesh the world fro the old iniquitee,
Me fro the fende and fro his clawes kepe
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, protection of trewe,
That only worthy were for to bere
The King of heven with his woundes newe,
The white Lamb, that hurt was with a spere ;
Flemer of fendes out of him and here
On which thy limmes faithfully extenden,
Me kepe, and yeve me might my lif to amenden.

Yeres and dayes fleet this creature
Thurghout the see of Grece, unto the Straite
Of Maroc, as it was hire aventure :
On many a sory mele now may she baite ;
After hire deth ful often may she waite,
Or that the wilde waves wol hire drive
Unto the place ther as she shal arive.

Men mighten asken why she was not slain ?
Eke at the feste who might hire body save ?
And I answer to that demand again,
Who saved Daniel in the horrible cave,
Ther every wight save he, master or knave,
Was with the leon fette or he asterte ?
No wight but God, that he bare in his herte.

God list to shew his wonderful miracle
In hire, for we shuld seen his mighty werkes :
Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
By certain menes oft, as knewen clerkes,
Doth thing for certain ende that ful derke is
To mannes wit, that for our ignorance
Ne can nat know his prudent purveiance.

Now sith she was not at the feste yslawe,
Who kepte hire fro the drenching in the see ?
Who kept Jonas in the fishes mawe,
Til he was spouted up at Ninevee ?
Wel may men know it was no wight but he
That kept the peple Ebraike fro drenching,
With drye feet thurghout the see passing.

Who bade the foure spirits of tempest,
That power han to anoyen lond and see,
Both north and south, and also west and est,
Anoyen nether see, ne lond, ne tree ?
Sothly the commander of that was he
That fro the tempest ay this woman kepte
As wel whan she awoke as whan she slepte.

Wher might this woman mete and drinke have ?
Three yere and more how lasteth hire vitaille ?
Who fed the Egyptian Mary in the cave
Or in desert ? no wight but Crist *sans faille*.
Five thousand folk it was a gret marvaille
With loves five and fishes two to fede :
God sent his foyson at hire grete nede.

She driveth forth into our ocean
Thurghout our wide see, til at the last
Under an hold, that nempnen I ne can,
Fer in Northumberlond, the wave hire cast,
And in the sand hire ship stiked so fast
That thennes wolde it not in all a tide :
The wille of Crist was that she shulde abide.

The Constable of the castle doun is fare
To seen this wrecke, and al the ship he fought,
And fond this very woman ful of care ;
He fond also the tresour that she brought :
In hire langage mercy she besought,
The lif out of hire body for to twinne,
Hire to deliver of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latin corrupt was hire speche,
But algate therby was she understond.
The Constable, whan him list no longer seche,
This woful woman brought he to the lond.
She kneleth doun, and thanketh Goddes fond ;
But what she was she wolde no man seye
For soule ne faire, though that ye shulde deye.

She said she was so mased in the see
That she forgate hire minde, by hire trouth.
The Constable hath of hire so gret pitee,
And eke his wif, that they wepen for routh :
She was so diligent withouten slouth
To serve and plesen everich in that place,
That all hire love that loken in hire face.

The Constable and Dame Hermegild his wif
Were Payenes, and that contree every wher ;
But Hermegild loved Custance as hire lif ;
And Custance hath so long sojourned ther
In orisons, with many a bitter tere,
Til Jesu hath converted thurgh his grace
Dame Hermegild, Constablese of that place.

In all that lond no Cristen dorste route ;
All Cristen folk ben fled fro that contree
Thurgh Payenes, that conquereden all aboute
The plages of the north by lond and see.
To Wales fled the Christianitee
Of olde Bretons dwelling in this ile ;
Ther was hir refuge fer the mene while.

But yet n'ere Cristen Bretons so exiled
That ther n'ere som which in hir privitee
Honoured Crist, and Hethen folk begiled,
And neigh the castle swiche ther dwelten three :
That on of hem was blind, and might not see,
But it were with thilke eyen of his minde,
With which men mowen see whan they ben blinde.

Bright was the sonne as in that sommers day,
For which the Constable and his wif also,
And Custance, han ytake the righte way
Toward the see a furlong way or two,
To plaien and to romen to and fro,
And in hir walk this blinde man they mette,
Croked and olde, with eyen fast yshette.

In the name of Crist, (cried this blinde Breton)
Dame Hermegild, yeve me my sight again.
This lady waxe afraied of that soun,
Lest that hire hufbond, shortly for to sain,
Wold hire for Jesu Cristes love have slain,
Till Custance made hire bold, and bad hire werche
The will of Crist, as doughter of holy cherche.

The Constable waxe abashed of that sight,
And sayde, What amounteth all this fare ?
Custance answered, Sire, it is Cristes might,
That helpeth folk out of the fendes snare :
And so ferforth she gan our lay declare,
That she the Constable, er that it were eve,
Converted, and on Crist made him beleve.

This Constable was not lord of the place
Of which I speke, ther as he Custance fond,
But kept it strongly many a winter space
Under Alla King of Northumberlond,
That was ful wise, and worthy of his hond
Againe the Scottes, as men may wel here;
But tourne I wol againe to my matere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to begile,
Saw of Custance all hire perfectioun,
And cast anon how he might quite hire while,
And made a yonge knight, that dwelt in that toun,
Love hire so hote of foule affectioun,
That veraily him thought that he shuld spille
But he of hire might ones han his wille.

He woeth hire, but it availeth nought;
She wolde do no sinne by no wey;
And for despit he compassed his thought
To maken hire on shameful deth to dey:
He waiteth whan the Constable is away,
And privily upon a night he crepte
In Hermegildes chambre while she slepte.

Wery, forwaked in hire orisons,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermegilde also.
This knight, thurgh Sathanes temptations,
All softly is to the bed ygo,
And cut the throte of Hermegilde atwo,
And layd the bloody knif by Dame Custance,
And went his way, ther God yeve him mischance.

Sone after cometh this Constable home again,
And eke Alla, that king was of that lond,
And saw his wife despitously yslain,
For which ful oft he wept and wrong his hond;
And in the bed the bloody knif he fond
By Dame Custance. Alas! what might she say!
For veray wo hire wit was all away.

To King Alla was told all this mischance,
And eke the time, and wher, and in what wise,
That in a ship was fonden this Custance,
As here before ye han herd me devise:
The kinges herte of pitee gan agrife
Whan he saw so benigne a creature
Fall in disese and in misaventure.

For as the lamb toward his deth is brought,
So stant this innocent befor the king:
This false knight, that hath this trefon wrought,
Bereth hire in hond that she hath don this thing:
But natheles there was gret murmuring
Among the peple, and sayn they cannot gesse
That she had don so great a wickednesse;

For they han seen hire ever so vertuous,
And loving Hermegild right as hire lif.
Of this bare witness everich in that hous,
Save he that Hermegild slow with his knif.
This gentil king hath caught a gret motif
Of this witness, and thought he wold enquire
Deper in this cas, trouthe for to lere.

Alas! Custance, thou hast no champion,
Ne fighten canst thou not, so wala wa!
But he that starf for our redemption,
And bond Sathan, and yet lith ther he lay,
So be thy stronge champion this day:
For but if Crist on thee miracle kithe,
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slain as swithe.

She set hire down on knees, and thus she sayde;

Immortal God! that savedst Susanne
Fro false bleme, and thou mercifull mayde,
Mary I mene, doughter to Seint Anne,
Beforn whos child angels singen Ofanne.
If I be gilteles of this felonie
My socour be, or elles shal I die.

Have ye not seen somtime a pale face
(Among a prees) of him that hath ben lad
Toward his deth, where as he getteth no grace,
And swiche a colour in his face hath had,
Men mighten know him that was so bestad
Amonges all the faces in that route,
So stant Custance, and loketh hire aboute.

O quenes living in prosperitee,
Duchesses, and ye ladies everich on!
Haveth som routhe on hire adversitee,
An emperoures doughter stant alone;
She hath no wight to whom to make hire mone.
O blood real, that stondest in this drede,
Fer ben the frendes in thy grete nede!

This Alla king hath swiche compassioun,
As gentil herte is ful filled of pitee,
That fro his eyen ran the water doun.
Now hastily do secche a book, quod he,
And if this knight wol sweren how that she
This woman slow, yet wol we us avise,
Whom that we wol that shal ben our justice.

A Breton book, written with Evangiles,
Was fet, and on this book he swore anon
She giltif was, and in the mene whiles
An hond him smote upon the nekke bone,
That doun he fell at ones as a stone,
And both his eyen brost out of his face
In sight of every body in that place.

A voice was herd, in general audience,
That sayd, Thou hast desclandered gilteles
The doughter of holy chirche in high presence
Thus hast thou don, and yet hold I my pees.
Of this mervaille agast was all the prees;
As mased folk they stonden everich on
For drede of wreche, save Custance alone.

Gret was the drede and eke the repentance
Of hem that hadden wronge suspicion
Upon this sely innocent Custance:
And for this miracle, in conclusion,
And by Custances mediation,
The king, and many another in that place,
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.

This false knight was slain for his untrouthe
By jugement of Alla hastily;
And yet Custance had of his deth gret routhe;
And after this Jesus of his mercy
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
This holy woman, that is so bright and shene;
And thus hath Crist ymade Custance a quene.

But who was woful (if I shal not lie)
Of this wedding but Donegild, and no mo,
The kinges mother, full of tyrannie?
Hire thoughte hire cursed herte braut atwo;
She wolde net that hire sone had do so:
Hire thoughte a despit that he shulde take
So strange a creature unto his make.

Me list not of the chaf ne of the stre
Maken so long a tale as of the corn,
What shuld I tellen of the realtee

Of this marriage, or which cours goth befor,
Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horn?
The fruit of every tale is for to say;
They ete and drink, and dance, and sing, and play.

They gon to bed, as it was skill and right,
For though that wives ben ful holy thinges,
They mosten take in patience a night
Swiche maner necessaries, as ben plesinges
To folk that han ywedded hem with ringes.
And lay a lite hir holiness aside
As for the time, it may no bet betide.

On hire he gat a knave childe anon,
And to a bishop, and his Constable eke,
He toke his wif to kepe, when he is gon
To Scotland ward, his fomen for to seke.
Now faire Custance, that is so humble and meke,
So long is gen with childe til that still
She halt hire chambre, abiding Cristes will.

The time is come, a knave child she bere;
Mauricius at the fontstone they him calle.
This Constable doth forth come a messager,
And wrote unto his king that cleped was Alle,
How that this blisful tiding is befall,
And other tidings spedeful for to say.
He hath the lettre, and forth he goth his way.

This messager, to don his advantage,
Unto the kinges mother rideth swithe,
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage.
Madame, quod he, ye may be glad and blithe,
And thanken God an hundred thousand lithe;
My lady quene hath child, withouten doute,
To joy and blisse of all this regne aboute.

Lo here the lettre seled of this thing,
That I most bere in all the hast I may:
If ye wol ought unto your sone the king,
I am your servant bothe night and day.
Donegilde answerd, As now at this time nay;
But here I wol all night thou take thy rest,
To-morwe wol I say thee what me lest.

This messager drank sadly ale and wine,
And stolen were his lettres prively
Out of his box, while he slept as a swine;
And contrefeted was ful subtilly
Another lettre, wrought ful sinfully,
Unto the king directe of this matere
Fro his Constable, as ye shal after here.

This lettre spake, the quene delivered was
Of so horrible a fendliche creature,
That in the castle non so hardy was
That any while dorst therein endure:
The mother was an elf by aventure
Ycome, by charmes or by forcerie,
And everich man hateth hire compaignie.

Wo was this king when he this lettre had sein.
But to no wight he told his sorwes sore,
But of his owen hand he wrote again;
Welcome the sonde of Crist for evermore
To me, that am now lerned in his lore:
Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy plesance;
My lust I put all in thyn ordinance.

Kepe this child, al be it foule or faire,
And eke my wif, unto min home coming:
Crist whan him list may senden me an heire
More agreable than this to my liking.
This lettre he seled, prively weping,

Which to the messager was taken sone,
And forth he goth, there is no more to done.

O messager fulfilled of dronkenesse!
Strong is thy breth, thy limmes faitren ay,
And thou bewreiest alle secresesse;
Thy mind is lorne, thou janglest as a jay;
Thy face is tourned in a new array:
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route
Ther is no conseil hid withouten doute.

O Donegild! I ne have non English digne
Unto thy malice and thy tyrannie,
And therefore to the sende I thee resign.
Let him enditen of thy traitorie.
Fy, mannish, fy! o nay, by God I lie;
Fy, fendliche spirit! for I dare well telle,
Though thou here walke, thy spirit is in helle.

This messager cometh fro the king again,
And at the kinges modres court he light,
And she was of this messager ful fayn,
And plesed him in all that ever she might.
He dranke and wel his girdel underpight;
He slepeth and he snoreth in his gise
All night until the sonne gan arise.

Eft were his lettres stolen everich on,
And contrefeted lettres in this wise.
The king commanded his Constable anon,
Up peine of hanging and of high jewise,
That he ne shulde soffran in no wise
Custance within his regne for to abide
Three daies and a quarter of a tide;

But in the same ship as he hire fond
Hire and hire yonge sone, and all hire gere,
He shulde put, and crowde hire fro the lond,
And charge hire that she never eft come there.
O my Custance! wel may thy ghost have fere,
And sleping in thy dreame ben in penance,
Whan Donegild cast all this ordinance.

This messager on morwe whan he awoke
Unto the castel halt the nexte way,
And to the Constable he the lettre toke;
And whan that he this pitous lettre sey
Ful oft he sayd Alas, and wala wa!
Lord Christ, quod he, how may this world endure,
So ful of sinne is many a creature?

O mighty God! if that it be thy will,
Sin thou art rightful juge, how may it be
That thou wolt soffren innocence to spill,
And wicked folk regne in prosperitee?
A! good Custance, alas! so wo is me,
That I mote be thy turmentour, or dey
On shames deth, ther is non other wey.

Wepen both yonge and olde in all that place
Whan that the king this cursed lettre sent:
And Custance with a dedly pale face
The fourthe day toward the ship she went;
But natheless she taketh in good entent
The will of Crist, and kneeling on the strond
She sayde, Lord, ay welcome be thy sond.

He that me kepte fro the false blame,
While I was in the lond amonges you,
He can me kepe fro harme and eke fro shame.
In the salt see, although I se not how:
As strong as ever he was he is yet now;
In him trust I, and in his mother dere,
That is to me my fail and eke my sterc.

Hire litel child lay weping in hire arm,
And kneling pitoufly to him she said,
Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee no harm :
With that hire couverchief of hire hed she braid,
And over his litel eyen she it laid,
And in hire arme she lulleth it ful fast,
And into the heven hire eyen up she cast.

Mother, quod she, and mayden, bright Marie !
Soth is that thurgh womanes eggement
Mankind was lorne, and damned ay to die,
For which thy child was on a crois yrent :
Thy blisful eyen saw all his turment,
Than is ther no comparison betwene
Thy wo and any woman may sustene.

Thou saw thy child yslain before thin eyen,
And yet now liveth my litel child parfay :
Now, Lady bright ! to whom all woful crien,
Thou glory of womanhed, thou faire May !
Thou haven of refute, bright sterre of day !
Rew on my child, that of thy gentilleffe
Rewest on every rewful in distresse.

O litel child, alas ! what is thy gilt,
That never wroughtest sinne as yet parde ?
Why wol thin harde father have thee spilt ?
O mercy, dere Constable ! (quod she)
As let my litel child dwell here with thee ;
And if thou darst not saven him fro blame,
So kisse him ones in his fadres name.

Therwith she loketh backward to the lond,
And faide, Farewel, housbond routheles !
And up she rist, and walketh down the strond
Toward the ship ; hire foloweth all the pees :
And ever she praieth hire child to hold his pees,
And taketh hire leve, and with an holy entent
She blessed hire, and into the ship she went.

Vitailed was the ship, it is no drede,
Habundantly for hire a ful long space ;
And other necessities that shuld nede
She had ynow, heried be Goddes grace :
For wind and wether, almighty God purchace,
And bring hire home, I can no better say,
But in the see she driveth forth hire way.

Alla the king cometh home sone after this
Unto his castel, of the which I told,
And asketh wher his wif and his child is ;
The Constable gan about his herte cold,
And plainly all the matere he him told
As ye han herd, I can tell it no better,
And shewed the king his sele and his letter ;

And faide, Lord, as ye commanded me
Up peine of deth, so have I don certain.
This messager turmented was til he
Moste beknowe, and tellen plat and plain
Fro night to night in what place he had lain :
And thus by wit and subtil enquering
Imagined was by whom this harm gan spring.

The hand was knowen that the lettre wrote,
And all the venime of this cursed dede,
But in what wise certainly I n'ot.

The effect is this, that Alla out of drede
His moder slew, that moun men plainly rede,
For that she traitour was to hire ligeance.

Thus ended this old Donegild with meschance.

The forwe that this Alla night and day

Maketh for his wif and for his child also,
Ther is no tonge that it tellen may.
But now wol I agen to Custance go,
That fleteth in the see in peine and wo
Five yere and more, as liked Cristes sonde,
Or that hire ship approched to the londe.

Under an Hethen castel at the last,
(Of which the name in my text I not find)
Custance and eke hire child the see up cast.
Almighty God, that saved all mankind,
Have on Custance and on hire child som mind
That fallen is in Hethen hond eftsonne
In point to spill, as I shal tell you sone.

Doun fro the castel cometh ther many a wight
To gauren on this ship and on Custance :
But shortly fro the castel on a night,
The lordes steward, (God yeve him meschance)
A thief that had reneyed our creance,
Came into the ship alone, and said he wolde
Hire lemman be whether she wolde or n'olde.

Wo was this wretched woman tho begon ;
Hire child cried, and she cried pitoufly ;
But blisful Mary halpe hire right anon,
For with hire strogling wel and mightily
The thief fell over bord all sodenly,
And in the see he drenched for vengeance ;
And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept Custance.

O foule lust of luxurie ! lo thin ende,
Not only that thou faintest mannes mind,
But veraily thou wolt his body shende.
Th' ende of thy werk, or of thy lustes blind,
Is complaining : how many may men find
That not for werk sometime, but for th' entent
To don this sinne, ben eyther slain or shent ?

How may this weke woman han the strength
Hire to defend again this renegade ?
O Goliath ! unmesurable of length,
How mighte David maken thee so mate ?
So yonge, and of armure so desolate,
How dorst he loke upon thy dredful face ?
Wel may men seen it was but Goddes grace.

Who yaf Judith corage or hardinesse
To sleen him Holofernes in his tent,
And to deliver out of wretchednesse
The peple of God ? I say for this entent,
That right as God spirit of vigour sent
To hem, and saved hem out of meschance,
So sent he might and vigour to Custance.

Forth goth hire ship thurghout the narwe mouth
Of Jubaltre and Septe, driving alway,
Sometime west, and sometime north and south,
And sometime est, ful many a very day,
Til Cristes moder (blessed be she ay)
Hath shapen thurgh hire endeles goodnesse
To make an end of all hire hevinesse.

Now let us stint of Custance but a throw,
And speke we of the Romane emperour,
That out of Surrie hath by lettres knowe
The slaughter of Cristen folk, and dishonour
Don to his doughter by a false traitour,
I mene the cursed wicked Soudannesse,
That at the fest let sleen both more and lesse.

For which this emperour hath sent anon
His senatour, with real ordinance,

And other lordes, God wote, many on,
On Surriens to taken high vengeance :
They brennen, fleen, and bring hem to meschance,
Ful many a day : but shortly this is th' ende,
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome ward, sayling ful really,
And met the ship driving, as faith the storie,
In which Custance sitteth ful pitously :
Nothing ne knew he what she was, ne why
She was in swiche array, ne she wil sey
Of hire estat, though that she shulde dey.

He bringeth hire to Rome, and to his wif
He yaf hire, and hire yonge sonne also,
And with the senatour she lad hire lif.

Thus can our Lady bringen out of wo
Woful Custance, and many another mo :
And longe time dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes ever, as was hire grace.

The senatoures wif hire aunte was,
But for all that she knew hire never the more :
I wol no longer tarien in this cas,
But to King Alla, which I spake of yore,
That for his wif wipeth and siketh sore,
I wol returne, and let I wol Custance
Under the senatoures governance.

King Alla, which that had his moder slain,
Upon a day fell in swiche repentance,
That if I shortly tellen shal and plain,
To Rome he cometh to receive his penance,
And putte him in the Popes ordinance
In high and low, and Jesu Crist besought
Foryeve his wicked werkes that he had wrought.

The same anon thurghout the toun is born,
How Alla king shal come on pilgrimage,
By herbergeours that wenten him beforne,
For which the senatour, as was usage,
Rode him againe, and many of his linage,
As wel to shewn his high magnificence
As to don any king a reverence.

Gret chere doth this noble senatour
To King Alla, and he to him also :
Everich of hem doth other gret honour ;
And so befell that in a day or two
This senatour is to King Alla go
To fest, and shortly, if I shal not lie,
Custances sone went in his compaignie.

Som men wold fain at requeste of Custance
This senatour hath lad this childe to feste :
I may not tellen every circumstance ;
Be as be may ther was he at the leste :
But soth is this, that at his mothers heste
Beforn Alla, during the metes space,
The child stood, loking in the kinges face.

This Alla king hath of this child gret wonder,
And to the senatour he said anon,
Whos is that faire child that stondeth yonder ?
I n'ot, quod he, by God, and by Seint John ;
A moder he hath, but fader hath he non
That I of wote : but shortly in a stound
He told Alla how that this child was found.

But God wot, quod this senatour also,
So vertuous a liver in all my lif
Ne saw I never as she, ne herd of mo

Vol. I.

Of worldly woman, maiden, widewe or wif :
I dare wel sayn hire hadde lever a knif
Thurghout hire brest than ben a woman wikke ;
Ther is no man coude bring hire to that prikke.

Now was this child as like unto Custance
As possible is a creature to be :

This Alla hath the face in remembrance
Of Dame Custance, and theron mused he,
If that the chilles moder were aught she
That is his wif, and prively he sighte,
And sped him fro the table that he mighte.

Parfay, thought he, fantome is in min hed ;
I ought to deme of skilful jugement
That in the salte see my wif is ded.
And afterward he made his argument ;
What wot I if that Crist have hider sent
My wif by see, as wel as he hire lent
To my contree, fro thennes that she went ?

And after noon home with the senatour
Goth Alla, for to see this wonder chance.
This senatour doth Alla gret honour,
And hastily he sent after Custance ;
But trusteth wel hire luste not to dance :
Whan that she wiste wherfore was that sonde
Unnethe upon hire feet she mighte stonde.

Whan Alla saw his wif faire he hire grette,
And wept that it was routhe for to see ;
For at the firste look he on hire sette
He knew wel veraily that it was she ;
And she for sorwe as domb stant as a tree :
So was hire herte shette in hire distresse
Whan she remembered his unkindenesse.

Twies she swouneth in his owen sight ;
He wepeth and him excuseth pitously :
Now God, quod he, and all his halwes bright,
So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
That of your harme as gilteles am I
As is Maurice my sone, so like your face,
Elles the fend me fetche out of this place.

Long was the sobbing and the bitter peine
Or that hir woful hertes mighten cese ;
Gret was the pitee for to here hem pleine,
Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo encrese.
I pray you all my labour to relese,
I may not tell hir wo until to-morwe,
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the soth is wist,
That Alla gilteles was of hire wo,
I trow an hundred times han they kist,
And swiche a blisse is ther betwix hem two,
That, save the joye that lasteth evermo,
Ther is non like that any creature
Hath seen or shal while that the world may dure.

Tho praied she hire husbond mekely.
In releef of hire longe pitous pine,
That he wold pray hire fader specially
That of his magestee he wolde encline
To vouchesauf som day with him to dine ;
She praied him eke he shulde by no way
Unto hire fader no word of hire say.

Som men wold sayn how that the child Maurice
Doth this message until this emperour ;
But as I gesse Alla was not so nice,
To him that is so soveraine of honour,

D

As he that is of Cristen folk the flour,
Send any child, but it is bet to deme
He went himself, and so it may wel seme.

This emperour hath granted gentilly
To come to dinner as he him befoughte;
And wel rede I he loked besily
Upon this child, and on his doughter thought.
Alla goth to his inne, and as him ought
Arraied for this feste in every wise
As ferforth as his conning may suffice.

The morwe came, and Alla gain him dresse,
And eke his wif, this emperour to mete;
And forth they ride in joye and in gladnesse;
And whan she saw hire fader in the strete,
She light adoun and falleth him to fete.
Fader, quod she, your yonge child Custance
Is now ful clene out of your remembrance.

I am your doughter, your Custance, quod she,
That whilom ye han sent into Surrie;
It am I, fader, that in the salte see
Was put alone, and dampned for to die:
Now, goode fader, I you mercie crie;
Send me no more into non Hethenesse,
But thanketh my lord here of his kindnesse.

Who can the pitous joye tellen all
Betwix hem thre sin they ben thus ymette?
But of my Tale make an ende I shal,
The day goth faste, I wol no longer lette.
Thise glade folk to dinner ben yfette;
In joye and blisse at mete I let hem dwell,
A thousand fold wel more than I can tell.

This child Maurice was sithen Emperour
Made by the Popè, and lived Christenly;
To Cristes chirche did he gret honour:
But I let all his storie passen by;
Of Custance is my Tale specially;

In the olde Romane gestes men may find
Maurices lif, I bere it not in mind.

This King Alla, when he his time sey,
With his Custance, his holy wif so swete,
To Englonde ben they come the righte wey,
Ther as they live in joye and in quiete:
But litel while it lasteth I you hete;
Joye of this world for time wol not abide,
Fro day to night it changeth as the tide.

Who lived ever in swiche delite o day
That him ne meved eyther conscience,
Or ire, or talent, or som kin affray,
Envie, or pride, or passion, or offence?
I ne say but for this end this sentence,
That litel while in joye or in plesance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For Deth, that taketh of hie and lowe his rente,
Whan passed was a yere, even as I gesse,
Out of this world this King Alla he hente,
For whom Custance hath ful gret hevenesse;
Now let us praien God his soule bleffe:
And Dame Custance, finally to say,
Toward the toun of Rome goth hire way.

To Rome is come this holy creature,
And findeth ther hire frendes hole and found;
Now is she scaped all hire aventure:
And whan that she hire fader hath yfound,
Doun on hire knees falleth she to ground,
Weping for tenderneffe in herte blithe,
She herieth God an hundred thousand sithe.

In vertue and in holy almesse dede
They liven alle, and never asonder wende;
Till deth departeth hem this lif they lede:
And fareth now wel, my Tale is at an ende.
Now Jesu Crist, that of his might may fende
Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us alle that ben in this place.

THE WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE*.

EXPERIENCE, though non actoritee
Were in this world, is right ynough for me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, Lordings, sin I twelf yere was of age
(Thanked be God that is eterne on live)
Husbondes at chirche dore have I had five,
(If I so often might han wedded be)
And all were worthy men in hir degree.

But me was told, not longe time agon is,
That fithen Crist ne went never but onis
To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
That by that ilke ensample taught he me
That I ne shulde wedded be but ones.
Lo, herke eke, which a sharp word for the nones,
Beside a welle Jesu God and man
Spake in represe of the Samaritan;
Thou hast yhadde five husbonds, sayde he,
And thilke man that now hath wedded thee
Is not thyn husband. Thus said he certain;
What that he ment therby I can not sain;
But that I aske why that the fifthe man
Was non husbond to the Samaritan?
How many might she have in mariage?
Yet herd I never tellen in min age
Upon this noumbre diffinitoun;
Men may devine and glosen up and down.

But wel I wot expresse withouten lie,
God bad us for to wex and multiplie;
That gentil text can I wel understond:
Eke wel I wot he sayd that min husbond

* The want of a few verses to connect this Prologue with the preceding Tale was perceived long ago, and the defect was attempted to be supplied by the author of the following lines, which in ms. B. are prefixed to the common Prologue;

Oure Oost gan tho to loke up anon.
Gode men, quod he, herkeneth everich one,
As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale
This Marchant hath itold a mery Tale,
Howe Januarie hadde a lither jape,
His wyf put in his hood an ape.
But hereof I wil leve off as now.
Dame Wyf of Bathe, quod he, I pray you
Telle us a Tale now nexte after this.
Sir Oost, quod she, so God my soule blis
As I, fully thereto wil consente,
And also it is myn hole entente
To done yow alle disporte as that I can.
But holde me excused; I am a woman:
I can not reherse as these cleskes kune.
And riht anon she hath hir Tale bygunne.
Experience, &c.

These lines are printed here as a justification for not inserting them in the text.

Shuld leve fader and moder and take to me;
But of no noumbre mention made he
Of bigamie or of octogamie;
Why shuld men than speke of it vilanie?

Lo here the wise King, Dan Salomon,
I trowe he hadde wives mo than on,
(As wolde God it leful were to me
To be refreshed half so oft as he)
Which a gift of God had he for alle his wives?
No man hath swiche that in this world on live is.
God wot this noble king, as to my witte,
The firste night had many a mery fitte
With eche of hem, so wel was him on live.
Blessed be God that I have wedded five;
Welcome the sixthe whan that ever he shall;
For fith I wol not kepe me chaste in all,
Whan min husband is fro the world ygone
Som Cristen man shal wedden me anon;
For than the apostle saith that I am fre
To wedde a' Goddes half wher it liketh me;
He saith that to be wedded is no sinne;
Better is to be wedded than to brinne.

What rekketh me though folk say vilanie
Of shrewed Lamech and his bigamie?
I wot wel Abraham was an holy man,
And Jacob eke, as fer as ever I can,
And eche of hem had wives mo than two,
And many another holy man also.
Wher can ye seen in any maner age
That highe God defended mariage
By expresse word? I pray you telleth me,
Or wher commanded he virginitee?

I wot as wel as ye, it is no drede,
The apostle, whan he spake of maidenhede,
He said that precept thereof had he non;
Men may conseille a woman to ben on,
But conseilling is no commandement;
He put it in our own jugement.

For hadde God commanded maidenhede,
Than had he dampned wedding out of drede;
And certes if ther were no fede yfowe
Virginitee than whereof shuld it growe?

Poule dorste not commanden at the lest
A thing of which his maister yaf non hest.
The dart is sette up for virginitee,
Catch who so may, who renneth best let see.

But this word is not take of every wight,
But ther as God wol yeve it of his might,
I wot wel that the apostle was a maid,
But natheles, though that he wrote and said
He wold that every wight were swiche as he,
All n'is but conseil to virginitee.

And for to ben a wif he yaf me leve,
Of indulgence, so n'is it non repreve
To wedden me, if that my make die,
Without exception of bigamie;
All were it good no woman for to touche,
(He ment as in his bed or in his couche)
For peril is both fire and tow to assemble;
Ye know what this ensample may resemble.

This is all and som, he held virginitee
More parfit than wedding in freeltee:
(Freeltee clepe I, but if that he and she
Wold lede hir lives all in chastitee)
I graunt it wel, I have of non envie
Who maidenhed preferre to bigamie;
It liketh hem to be clene in body and gost:
Of min estat I wol not maken boft.

For wel ye know a lord in his houshold
No hath nat every vessell all of gold:
Som ben of tree, and don hir lord service.
God clepeth folk to him in sondry wise,
And everich hath of God a propre gift,
Som this, som that, as that him liketh shift.
Virginitee is gret perfection,
And continence eke with devotion;
But Crist, that of perfection is welle,
Ne bade not every wight he shuld go selle
All that he had and yeve it to the poure,
And in swiche wise follow him and his lore:
He spake to hem that wold live parfitly,
And, Lordings, (by your leve) that are nat I:
I wol bestow the flour of all myn age
In th' aetes and the fruit of mariage.

Tell me also to what conclusion
Were membres made of generation,
And of so parfit wise a wight ywrought?
Trusteth me wel they were nat made for nought.
Glose who so wol, and say bothe up and down,
That they were made for purgatioun
Of urine, and of other thinges smalle,
And eke to know a female from a male:
And for non other cause? say ye no?
The experience wot wel it is not so.
So that the clerkes be not with me wroth;
I say this, that they maked ben for both;
This is to sayn, for office and for ese
Of engendrure, ther we not God displese.
Why shuld men elles in hir bookes sette
That man shal yelden to his wif hire dette?
Now wherwith shuld he make his payement
If he ne used his fely instrument?

Than were they made upon a creature
To purge urine, and eke for engendrure.

But I say not that every wight is hold,
That hath swiche harneis as I to you told,
To gon and usen hem in engendrure;
Than shuld men take of chastitee no cure.
Crist was a maide, and shapen as a man,
And many a feint, fith that this world began,

Yet lived they ever in parfit chastitee;
I n'ill envie with no virginitee.
Let hem with bred of pure whete be fed,
And let us wives eten barly bred:
And yet with barly bred, Mark tellen can,
Our Lord Jesu refreshed many a man.
In swiche estat as God hath cleped us
I wol persever, I n'am not precious.
In wifhode wol I use min instrument
As frely as my Maker hath it sent.
If I be dangerous, God yeve me forwe,
Min husband shal it have both even and morwe,
Whan that him list come forth and pay his dette.
An husbond wol I have, I wol not lette,
Which shal be both my detour and my thrall,
And have his tribulation withall
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wif.
I have the power during all my lif
Upon his propre body, and nat he;
Right thus the apostle told it unto me,
And bad our husbonds for to love us wel:
All this sentence me liketh every del.

Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon;
Now, Dame, quod he, by God and by Seint John
Ye ben a noble prechour in this cas:
I was about to wed a wif, alas!
What? shuld I bie it on my flesh so dere?
Yet had I lever wed no wif to-yere.

Abide, quod she, my Tale is not begonne;
Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne,
Er that I go, shall favor worse than ale:
And whan that I have told thee forth my Tale
Of tribulation in mariage,
Of which I am expert in al min age,
(This is to sayn myself hath ben the whippe)
Than maiest thou chesen wheder thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche:
Beware of it er thou to neigh approche,
For I shal tel ensamples mo than ten.
Who so that n'ill beware by other men
By him shal other men corrected be:
Thise same wordes writeth Ptholomee,
Rede in his Almajestie, and take it there.

Dame, I wold pray you, if your will it were,
Sayde this Pardoner, as ye began
Tell forth your Tale, and spareth for no man,
And techeth us yonge men of your practike.

Gladly, quod she, sin that it may you like,
But that I pray to all this compaignie,
If that I speke after my fantasie,
As taketh not a greefe of that I say,
For min entente is non but for to play.

Now, Sires, than wol I tell you forth my Tale.
As ever mote I drinken win or ale
I shal say soth, the husbondes that I had
As three of hem were good and two were bad.
The three were goode men and riche and olde;
Unnethes mighten they the statute holde
In which that they were bounden unto me;
Ye wot wel what I mene of this parde.
As God me helpe I laugh whan that I thinke
How pitously a-night I made hem swinke,
But by my say I tolde of it no fore:
They had me yeven hir lond and hir tresore;

Me neded not do lenger diligence
 To win hir love or don hem reverence.
 They loved me so wel, by God above,
 That I ne tolde no deintee of hir love.
 A wise woman wol besie hire ever in on
 To geten hir love ther as she hath non.
 But sith I had hem holly in min hond,
 And that they hadde yeven me all hir lond,
 What shuld I taken kepe hem for to plesse,
 But it were for my profit or min ese?
 I set hem so a-werke by my say,
 That many a night they songen Wala wa!
 The bacon was not fet for hem I trow
 That som men have in Essex at Donmow.
 I governed hem so wel after my lawe
 That eche of hem ful blisful was and fawe
 To bringen me gay thinges fro the feyre:
 They were ful glade whan I spake him fayre;
 For God it wot I chidde hem spitoufly.
 Now herkeneth how I bare me proprely.

Ye wise wives, that can understond,
 Thus shul ye speke, and bere hem wrong on hond,
 For half so boldely can ther no man
 Sweren and lien as a woman can.

(I say not this by wives that ben wise,
 But if it be whan they hem misavise.)
 A wise wif, if that she can hire good,
 Shal beren hem on hond the cow is wood,
 And taken witnesse of hire owen mayd
 Of hir assent; but herkeneth how I sayd.

Sire olde Kaynard, is this thin aray?
 Why is my neighebores wif so gay?
 She is honoured over al wher she goth;
 I sit at home, I have no thrifty cloth.
 What dost thou at my neighebores hous?
 Is she so faire? art thou so amorous?
 What, rownest thou with our maide? *benedicite!*
 Sire olde Lechour, let thy japes be.

And if I have a gossib or a frend,
 (Withouten gilt) thou chidest as a fend
 If that I walke or play unto his hous.

Thou comest hom as dronken as a mous,
 And precheest on thy benche with evil prefe:
 Thou sayst to me, It is a gret meschiese
 To wed a poure woman for costage;
 And if that she be riche of high parage,
 Than sayst thou that it is a tourmentrie
 To soffre hire pride and hire melancolie:
 And if that she be faire, thou veray knave,
 Thou sayst that every holour wol hire have;
 She may no while in chastitee abide
 That is assailed upon every side.

Thou sayst som folk desire us for richeffe,
 Som for our shape, and som for our fairnesse,
 And som for she can eyther sing or dance,
 And som for gentilleffe and daliance,
 Som for hire hondes and hire armes smale:
 Thus goth all to the devil by thy tale.
 Thou sayst men may not kepe a castel wal,
 It may so long assailed be over al.
 And if that she be foul, thou sayst that she
 Coveteth every man that she may see;
 For as a spanile she wol on him lepe
 Til she may finden som man hire to chepe.

Ne non so grey goos goth ther in the lake
 (As sayst thou) that wol ben without a make:
 And sayst it is an hard thing for to welde
 A thing that no man wol his thanks helde.

Thus sayst thou, lorel, whan thou gost to bed,
 And that no wise man nedeth for to wed,
 Ne no man that entendeth unto heaven.
 With wilde thonder dint and firy leven
 Mote thy welked nekke be to-broke.

Thou sayst that dropping houfes and eke smoke,
 And chiding wives, maken men to flee
 Out of hir owen hous. *A, benedicite!*
 What aileth swiche an old man for to chide?

Thou sayst we wives wol our vices hide
 Til we be fast, and than we wol hem shewe.
 Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe.

Thou sayst that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
 They ben assailed at diverse stoundes,
 Bafines, lavoures, or that men hem bie,
 Spones, stooles, and all swiche husbondrie,
 And so ben pottes, clothes, and aray,
 But folk of wives maken non assay
 Til they ben wedded, olde dotard shrewe,
 And than, sayst thou, we wol our vices shewe.

Thou sayst also that it displeseth me
 But if that thou wolt preisen my beautee,
 And but thou pore alway upon my face,
 And clepe me Faire Dame in every place;
 And but thou make a feste on thilke day
 That I was borne, and make me fresh and gay;
 And but thou do to my norice honour,
 And to my chamberere within my bour,
 And to my faders folk and myn allies:
 Thus sayst thou, olde barel ful of lies.

And yet also of our prentis Jankin,
 For his crispe here, shining as gold so fin,
 And for he squiereth me both up and down,
 Yet hast thou caught a false suspicion:
 I wol him nat, though thou were ded to-morwe.

But tell me this, Why hidest thou with sorwe
 The keies of thy chest away fro me?
 It is my good as well as thin parde.
 What, wenest thou make an idiot of our Dame?
 Now by that Lord that cleped is Saint Jame,
 Thou shalt nat bothe, though that thou were wodd,
 Be maister of my body and of my good;
 That on thou shalt forgo maugre thin eyen.
 What helpeth it of me to enquire and spien?
 I trow thou woldest locke me in thy chesse.
 Thou shuldest say, Fayr wif, go where thee leste;
 Take your disport; I wol nat leve no tales;
 I know you for a trewe wif, Dame Ales.

We love no man that taketh kepe or charge
 Wher that we gon; we wol be at our large.
 Of alle men ybleffed mote he be
 The wise astrologien Dan Ptholomee,
 That sayth this proverbe in his Almageste,
 Of alle men his wisdom is higheste
 That rekketh not who hath the world in hond.

By this proverbe thou shalt wel understond,
 Have thou ynough, what thar thee rekke or care
 How merily that other folkes fare?
 For certes, olde dotard, by your leve,
 Ye shullen have queint right ynough at eve.

THE WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

He is to gret a nigard that wol werne
A man to light a candel at his lanterne;
He shal have never the lesse light parde:
Have thou ynough thee thar not plainen thee.

Thou sayst also if that we make us gay
With clothing and with precious aray,
That it is peril of our chastitee:
And yet with forwe thou enforcest thee,
And sayst thise wordes in the apostles name;
In habit made with chastitee and shame
Ye women shul appareile you, (quod he)
And nat in tressed here and gay perrie,
As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.

After thy text ne after thy rubriche
I wol not work as mochel as a gnat.
Thou sayst also I walke out like a cat;
For who so wolde senge the cattes skin
Than wol the cat wel dwellen in hire in;
And if the cattes skin be fleke and gay,
She wol nat dwellen in hous half a day,
But forth she wol, or any day be dawed,
To shew hire skin and gon a caterwawed.
This is to say, if I be gay, sire shrewe,
I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.
Sire olde fool, what helpeth thee to spien?
Though thou pray Argus with his hundred eyen
To be my wardecorps, as he can best,
In faith he shal not kepe me but me lest:
Yet coude I make his berd, so mote I the.

Thou sayest eke that ther ben thinges three,
Which thinges gretly troublen all this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe:
O lese sire shrewe, Jesu short thy lif.

Yet prechest thou, an sayst, an hateful wif
Yrekened is for on of thise mischances.
Be ther non other maner resemblances
That ye may liken your parables to
But if a fely wif be on of tho?

Thou likenest eke womans love to helle,
To barrein lond ther water may not dwelle.

Thou likenest it also to wilde fire;
The mor it brenneth, the more it hath desire
To consume every thing that brent would be.

Thou sayest right as wormes shende a tre
Right so a wif destroieth hire husbond;
This knowen they that ben to wives bond.
Lordings, right thus, as ye han understond,
Bare I stifly min old husbondes on hond,
That thus they saiden in hir dronkenesse;
And all was false but as I toke witnesse
On Jankin, and upon my nece also.
O Lord! the peine I did hem and the wo,
Ful giltelefs, by Goddes swete pine,
For as an hors I coude bite and whine;
I coude plain, and I was in the gilt,
Or elles oftentime I had ben spilt.
Who so first cometh to the mill first grint;
I plained first, so was our werre ystint.
They were ful glad to excusen hem full blive
Of thing the which they never agilt hir live.
Of wenches wold I beren hem on hond
Whan that for sike unnethes might they stond,
Yet tikeled I his herte for that he
Wend that I had of him so gret chiertee:

I swore that all my walking out by night
Was for to espien wenches that he dight:
Under that colour had I many a mirth;
For all swiche wit is yeven us in our birth;
Deceite, weping, spinning, God hath yeven
To women kindly while that they may liven.
And thus of o thing I may avaunten me,
At th' ende I had the beter in eche degree,
By sleight or force, or by som maner thing,
As by continual murmur or grutching,
Namely a-bed; ther hadden they melchance;
Ther wold I chide, and don hem no plesance:
I wold no lenger in the bed abide
If that I felt his arme over my side,
Till he had made his raunson unto me,
Than wold I soffre him do his nicetee:
And therefore every man this Tale I tell,
Winne who so may, for all is for to sell.
With empty hond men may no haukes lure;
For winning wold I all his lust endure,
And maken me a feined appetit,
And yet in bacon had I never delit,
That maked me that ever I wold him chide;
For though the Pope had sitten hem beside,
I wold not spare hem at hir owen bord,
For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
As helpe me veray God omnipotent,
Tho I right now should make my testament,
I ne owe him not a word that it n'is quit;
I brought it so abouten by my wit
That they must yeve it up as for the best,
Or elles had we never been in rest;
For though he loked as a wood leon
Yet shuld he faille of his conclusion.

Than wold I say, Now, goode lese, take kepe;
How mekely loketh Wilkin oure shepe!
Come ner my spouse, and let me ba thy cheke;
Ye shulden be al patient and meke,
And han a swete spiced conscience,
Sith ye so preche of Jobes patience.
Suffreth alway sin ye so wel can preche,
And but ye do, certain we shall you teche
That it is faire to han a wif in pees.
On of us two most howen doutelees;
And sith a man is more resonable
Than woman is, ye mosten ben suffrable.
What aileth you to grutchen thus and grone?
Is it for ye wold have my queint alone?
Why take it all; lo, have it every del;
Peter, I shrew you but you love it wel:
For if I wolde sell my *bella chose*,
I coude walke as freshe as is a rose,
But I wol kepe it for your owen toth.
Ye be to blame, by God I say you soth.

Swiche maner wordes hadden we on hond.
Now wol I speken of my of fourthe husbond.

My fourthe husbonde was a revellour,
This is to sayn, he had a paramour,
And I was yonge and ful of ragerie,
Stibborne and strong, and joly as a pie;
Though coude I dancen to an harpe smale,
And sing ywis as any nightingale,
When I had dronke a draught of swete wine.
Mettellius, the foul cherle, the swine,

That with a staf beraft his wif hire lif
 For ſhe drank wine, though I had been his wif
 Ne ſhuld he not have daunted me fro drinke;
 And after wine of Venus moſt I thinke;
 For al ſo fiker as cold engendreth hayl
 A likerous mouth moſt han a likerous tayl.
 In woman vinolent is no defence,
 This knowen lechours by experience.

But, Lord Criſt! whan that it remembreth me
 Upon my youth, and on my jolitee,
 It tikeleth me about myn herte rote:
 Unto this day it doth myn herte bote,
 That I have had my world as in my time.
 But age, alas! that all wol envenime,
 Hath me beraft my beautee and my pith;
 Let go, farewel, the devil go therewith!
 The flour is gon, ther n'is no more to tell;
 The bren as I beſt may now moſte I ſell.
 But yet to be right mery wol I fond,
 Now forth to tellen of my fourthe huſbond.

I ſay I had in herte gret deſpit
 That he of any other had delit:
 But he was quit by God and by Seint Jocce:
 I made him of the ſame wood a croce,
 Not of my body in no foule manere,
 But certainly I made folk ſwicke chere,
 That in his owen greſe I made him frie,
 For anger and for veray jalouſie.
 By God, in erth I was his Purgatorie,
 For which I hope his ſoule be in glorie:
 For, God it wote, he ſate ful oft and ſonge
 Whan that his ſho ful bitterly him wronge:
 Ther was no wight, ſave God and he, that wiſte
 In many a wiſe how fore that I him twiſte.
 He died whan I came fro Jeruſalem,
 And lith ygrave under the rode-beem;
 All is his tombe not ſo curious
 As was the ſepulcre of him Darius,
 Which that Appelles wrought ſo ſotelly:
 It is but waſt to bury hem preciously.
 Let him farewel, God give his ſoule reſt,
 He is now in his grave and in his cheſt.

Now of my fiſthe huſbonde wol I telle:
 God let his ſoule never come in helle:
 And yet was he to me the moſte ſhrew;
 That ſele I on my ribbes all by rew,
 And ever ſhal unto min ending day:
 But in our bed he was ſo freſh and gay,
 And therwithall he coude ſo well me gloſe,
 Whan that he wolde han my *belle cheſe*,
 That though he had be bet on every bon
 He coude win agen my love anon.
 I trow I loved him the bet, for he
 Was of his love ſo dangerous to me.
 We wimmen han, if that I ſhal not lie,
 In this matere a queinte fantaſie.
 Waite, what thing we may nat lightly have,
 Therafter wol we cry all day and crave.
 Forbede us thing and that deſiren we;
 Preſe on us faſt and thanne wol we flee.
 With danger uttren we all our chaffare;
 Gret prees at market maketh dere ware,
 And to gret chepe is holden at litel priſe;
 This knoweth every woman that is wiſe.

My fiſthe huſbonde, God his ſoule bleſſe,
 Which that I toke for love and no richeſſe,
 He ſomtime was a clerk of Oxenforde,
 And had left ſcole, and went at home at borde
 With my goſſib, dwelling in oure toun,
 God have hire ſoule! hire name was Alifoun.
 She knew my herte and all my privtee
 Bet than our pariſh preeſt, ſo mote I the:
 To hire bewried I my counſeil all,
 For had my huſbond piſſed on a wall,
 Or don a thing that ſhuld have coſt his lif,
 To hire, and to another worthy wif,
 And to my nece, which that I loved wel,
 I wold have told his counſeil every del:
 And ſo I did ful often, God it wote,
 That made his face full often red and hote
 For veray ſhame, and blamed himſelf, for he
 Had told to me ſo gret a privatee.

And ſo beſell that ones in a Lent
 (So often times I to my goſſib went,
 For ever yet I loved to be gay,
 And for to walke in March, April, and May,
 From hous to hous, to heren ſundry tales)
 That Jankin clerk, and my goſſib Dame Ales,
 And I myſelf, into the felde went.
 Myn huſbond was at London all that Lent:
 I had the better leiſer for to pleie,
 And for to ſee, and eke for to be ſeie
 Of luſty folk. What wiſt I wher my grace
 Was ſhaper for to be, or in what place?
 Therefore made I my viſitations
 To vigilies and to proceſſions,
 To prechings eke, and to thiſe pilgrimages,
 To playes of miracles, and mariages,
 And wered upon my gay ſkarlet gites.
 Thiſe wormes, ne thiſe mothes, ne thiſe mites,
 Upon my paraille frett hem never a del;
 And woſt thou why? for they were uſed wel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happed me.
 I ſay that in the felde walked we
 Till trewely we had ſwicke daliance,
 Thiſ clerk and I, that of my purveance
 I ſpake to him, and ſaid him how that he,
 If I were widewe, ſhulde wedden me.
 For certainly, I ſay for no bobance,
 Yet was I never without purveance
 Of mariage, ne of other thinges eke:
 I hold a mouſes wit not worth a leke
 That hath but on hole for to ſterten to,
 And if that faille, than is all ydo.

I bare him on hond he had enchanted me;
 (My dame taughte me that ſubtiltee)
 And eke I ſayd I mette of him all night,
 He wold han ſlain me as I lay upright,
 And all my bed was ful of veray blood;
 But yet I hope that ye ſhuln do me good,
 For blood betokeneth gold, as me was taught,
 And al was falſe, I dreamed of him right naught,
 But as I folwed ay my dames lore,
 As wel of that as of other thinges more.

But now, Sire, let me ſee, what ſhall I ſain?
 A ha! by God I have my Tale again.
 Whan that my fourthe huſbonde was on bere,
 I wept algate and made a ſory chere,

As wives moten, for it is the usage,
 And with my coverchefe covered my visage;
 But for that I was purveyed of a make,
 I wept but smal, and that I undertake.
 To chirche was myn husbond born a-morwe
 With neigheboures that for him maden sorowe,
 And Jankin oure clerk was on of tho:
 As helpe me God, whan that I saw him go
 After the bere, me thought he had a paire
 Of legges and of feet so clene and faire
 That all my herte I yave unto his hold.
 He was, I trow, a twenty winter old,
 And I was fourty, if I shal say soth,
 But yet I had alway a coltes toth.
 Gat-tothed I was, and that became me wele;
 I had the print of Seint Venus sele.
 As helpe me God, I was a lusty on,
 And faire, and riche, and yonge, and wel begon;
 And trewely, as min husbondes tolden me,
 I had the beste queint that mighte be,
 For certes I am all Venerian
 In feling, and my herte is Martian:
 Venus me yave my lust and likerousnesse,
 And Mars yave me my sturdy hardinesse.
 Min ascendent was Taure, and Mars therinne:
 Alas, alas! that ever love was sinne!
 I folwed ay min inclination
 By vertue of my constellation;
 That made me that I coude nat withdraw
 My chambre of Venus from a good felaw;
 Yet have I Martes merke upon my face,
 And also in another privee place:
 For God so willy be my salvation,
 I loved never by no discretion,
 But eyer folwed min appetit,
 All were he shorte, longe, blacke, or white:
 I toke no kepe, so that he liked me,
 How poure he was, ne eke of what degree.

What shulde I say? but at the monthes ende
 This joly clerk Jankin, that was so hende,
 Hath wedded me with gret solempnitee,
 And to him yave I all the lond and fee
 That ever was me yeven therbefore,
 But afterward repented me ful fore.
 He n'olde suffre nothing of my list:
 By God he smote me ones with his fist,
 For that I rent out of his book a lefe,
 That of the stroke myn ere wex all defe.
 Stibborne I was as is a leonesse,
 And of my tonge a veray jangleresse;
 And walke I wold, as I had don befor,
 Fro hous to hous, although he had it sworn,
 For which he oftentimes wold preche,
 And me of olde Romaine gestes teche.

How he Sulpitius Gallus left his wif,
 And hire forsoke for terme of all his lif,
 Not but for open-heded he hire say
 Loking out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romaine told he me by name,
 That for his wif was at a sommer game
 Without his weting he forsoke hire eke.

And than wold he upon his Bible seke
 That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
 Wher he commandeth, and forbedeth faste,

Man shal not suffer his wif go roule aboute.

Than wold he say right thus withouten doute,
 Who so that bildeth his hous all of falwes,
 And priketh his blind hors over the falwes,
 And suffereth his wif to go seken halwes,
 Is worthy to be honged on the galwes.

But all for nought; I sette not an hawe
 Of his proverbes ne of his olde sawe;
 Ne I wold not of him corrected be.
 I hate hem that my vices tellen me,
 And so do mo of us (God wote) than I.
 This made him wood with me all utterly;
 I n'olde not forbere him in no cas.

Now wol I say you soth, by Seint Thomas,
 Why that I rent out of his book a lefe,
 For which he smote me so that I was defe.

He had a book that gladly night and day
 For his disport he wolde it rede alway;
 He cleped it Valerie and Theophrast,
 And with that book he lough away ful fast.
 And eke ther was a clerk somtime at Rome,
 A cardinal, that highte Seint Jerome,
 That made a book again Jovinian,
 Which book was ther, and eke Tertullian,
 Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis,
 That was abbess not fer fro Paris,
 And eke the Paraboles of Salomon,
 Ovides Art, and bourdes many on;
 And alle thise were bonden in o volume.
 And every night and day was his custume
 (Whan he had leiser and vacation
 From other worldly occupation)
 To reden in this book of wikked wives:
 He knew of hem mo legendes and mo lives
 Than ben of goode wives in the Bible.

For trusteth wel it is an impossible
 That any clerk wol speken good of wives,
 (But if it be of holy seintes lives)
 Ne of non other woman never the mo.
 Who peinted the leon, telleth me who?
 By God if wimmen hadden written stories,
 As clerkes han, within hir oratories,
 They wold have writ of men more wikkednesse
 Than all the merke of Adam may redresse.
 The children of Mercury and of Venus
 Ben in hir werking ful contrarious.
 Mercury loveth wisdom and science,
 And Venus loveth riot and dispence;
 And for hir divers disposition
 Eche falleth in others exaltation:
 As thus; God wote Mercury is desolat
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat,
 And Venus falleth wher Mercury is reised,
 Therefore no woman of no clerk is preised.
 The clerk whan he is old, and may naught do
 Of Venus werkes not worth his old sho,
 Than siteth he down and writeth in his dotage
 That wimmen cannot kepe hir mariage.
 But now to purpos why I tolde thee
 That I was beten for a book parde.

Upon a night Jankin, that was our fire,
 Red on his book as he fate by the fire,
 Of Eva first, that for hire wickednesse,
 Was all mankind brought to wretchednesse

For which that Jesu Crist himself was slain,
That bought us with his herte blood again.

Lo here expresse of wimmen may ye find
That woman was the losse of all mankind.

Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heres,
Sleping his lemman kitte hem with hire sheres,
Thurgh whiche treson lost he both his eyen.

Tho redde he me, if that I shall not lien,
Of Hercules, and of his Deianire,
That caused him to set himself a-fire.

Nothing forgot he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wives two;

How Xantippa cast pisse upon his hed.
This fely man sat still as he were ded;
He wiped his hed; no more dorst he fain
But, Er the thonder stint ther cometh rain.

Of Pasiphae, that was the Quene of Crete,
For shrewednesse him thought the tale swete.
Fie! speke no more (it is a grisely thing)
Of hire horrible lust and hire liking.

Of Clitemnestra, for hire lecherie
That falsely made hire husbond for to die,
He redde it with ful good devotion.

He told me eke for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lif:
My husbond had a legend of his wif
Eriphile, that for an ouche of gold
Hath prively unto the Grekes told
Wher that hire husbond hidde him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes fory grace.

Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie;
They bothe made hir husbondes for to die,
That on for love, that other was for hate.
Lima hir husbond on an even late
Enpoysoned hath, for that she was his fo:
Lucia likerous loved hire husbond so,
That for he shuld alway upon hire thinke,
She yave him swiche a maner love-drinke,
That he was ded er it were by the morwe:
And thus algates husbondes hadden forwe.

Than told he me how on Latumeus
Complained to his felaw Arius,
That in his gardin growed swiche a tree,
On which he said how that his wives three
Honged hemself for hertes despitous.
O leve brother! quod this Arius,
Yeve me a plant of thilke blessed tree,
And in my gardin planted shal it be.

Of later date, of wives hath he redde,
That som han slain hir husbondes in hir bedde,
And let hir lechour dight hem all the night,
While that the corps lay in the flore upright;
And som han driven nailes in hir brain,
While that they slepe, and thus they han hem slain;
Som han hem yeven poyson in hir drink.
He spake more harm than herte may bethinke.

And therwithall he knew of mo proverbes
Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.

Bet is (quod he) thin habitation
Be with a leon or a foule dragon

Than with a woman using for to chide.

Bet is (quod he) high in the roof abide
Than with an angry woman down in the hous,
They len so wikked and contrarious:

They haten that hir husbondes loven ay.

He sayd a woman cast hire shame away
Whan she cast of hire smock; and forther mo,
A faire woman, but she be chaste also,
Is like a gold ring in a fowes nose.

Who coude wene or who coude suppose
The wo that in min herte was and the pine?
And whan I saw he n'olde never fine
To reden on this cursed book all night,
Al sodenly three leves have I plight
Out of his book, right as he redde, and eke
I with my fist so toke him on the cheke

That in oure fire he fell backward adoun;
And he up sterte as doth a wood leoun,
And with his fist he smote me on the hed,
That in the flore I lay as I were ded.
And whan he saw how stille that I lay
He was agast, and wold have fled away,
Til at the last out of my swough I brayde.
O! hast thou slain me, false thief? I sayde,
And for my lond thus hast thou mordred me?
Er I be ded yet wol I kissen thee.

And nere he came, and kneled faire adoun,
And sayde, Dere suster Alifoun!
As helpe me God I shal thee never smite:
That I have don it is thyself to wite;
Foryeve it me, and that I thee beseke.
And yet eftsones I hitte him on the cheke,
And sayde, Theef, thus much am I awreke.
Now wol I die, I may no longer speke.

But at the last, with mochel care and wo,
We fell accorded by ourselven two.
He yaf me all the bridel in min hond
To han the governance of hous and lond,
And of his tonge and of his hond also,
And made him brenne his book anon right the

And whan that I had gotten unto me
By maistrie all the soverainetee,
And that he sayd, Min owen trewe wif,
Do as thee list the terme of all thy lif;
Kepe thin honour, and kepe eke min estat;
After that day we never had debat.
God helpe me so, I was to him as kinde
As any wif fro Denmark unto Inde,
And al so trewe, and so was he to me:
I pray to God that sit in majestee
So blisse his soule, for his mercy dere.
Now wol I say my Tale if ye wol here.

The Frere lough whan he had herd all this:
Now, Dame, quod he, so have I joye and blifs,
This is a long preamble of a Tale.

And whan the Sompnour herd the Frere gale,
Lo (quod this Sompnour) Goddes armes two,
A Frere wol entermete him evermo:
Lo, goode men, a flie and eke a Frere
Wol fall in every dish and eke matere.
What spekest thou of preambulation?
What? amble or trot, or pees, or go sit down:
Thou lettest our disport in this matere.

Ye, wolt thou so, Sire Sompnour? quod the Frere;
Now by my faith I shal, er that I go,
Tell of a Sompnour swiche a Tale or two,
That all the folk shal laughen in this place.

Now elles, Frere, I will beshrew thy face,

(Quod this Sompnour) and I beshrewe me
But if I telle Tales two or three
Of Freres, or I come to Sidenborne,
That I shal make thin herte for to morne,
For wel I wot thy patience is gone.

Our Hoste cried, Pees, and that anon;

And sayde, Let the woman tell hire Tale;
Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.
Do, Dame, tell forth your Tale, and that is best.
Al redy, Sire, quod she, right as you lest,
If I have licence of this worthy Frere.
Yes, Dame, quod he, tell forth, and I wol here.

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE*.

IN olde dayes of the King Artour,
Of which that Bretons speken gret honour,
All was this lond fulfilled of Faerie;
The Elf quene with hire joly compaignie
Danced ful oft in many a grene mede,
This was the old opinion as I rede;
I speke of many hundred yeres ago,
But now can no man see non elves mo;
For now the grete charitee and prayeres
Of limitoures and other holy freres,
That serchen every land and every streme,
As thikke as motes in the sonne beme,
Blissing halles, chambres, kichens, and boures,
Citees and burghes, castles highe and toures,
Thropes and bernies, shepenes and daires,
This maketh that therben no Faeries:
For ther as wont to waken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limatour himself
In undermeles and in morweninges,
And sayth his matines and his holy thinges
As he goth in his limitatioun.
Women may now go safely up and down,
In every bush, and under every tree,
Ther is non other Incubes but he,
And he ne will don hem no dishonour.

An so befell it that this King Artour
Had in his hous a lusty bachelor,
That on a day came riding fro river:
And happed that, alone as she was borne,
He saw a maiden walking him beforne,
Of which maid he anon, maugre hire hed,
By veray force beraft hire maidenhed:
For which oppression was swiche clamour,
And swiche pursuite unto the King Artour,
That damned was this knight for to be ded,
By cours of lawe, and shuld have lost his hed,
(Paraventure swiche was the statute tho)
But that the quene and other ladies mo

So longe praieden the king of grace,
Til he his lif him granted in the place,
And yaf him to the quene, all at hire will
To chese whether she wold him save or spill.
The quene thanketh the king with all hire might;
And after this thus spake she to the knight,
Whan that she saw hire time upon a day.

Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche array,
That of thy lif yet hast thou not seuretee;
I grant thee lif if thou canst tellen me
What thing is it that women most desiren:
Beware, and keppe thy nekke bone from yren.
And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelvemonth and a day to seke and lere
And answer sufficient in this matere;
And seuretee wol I have, or that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.

Wo was the knight, and forwefully he fiketh:
But what? he may not don all as him liketh.
And at the last he chese him for to wende,
And come agen right at the yeres ende
With swiche answer as God wold him purvay,
And taketh his leve, and wendeth for his way.

He seketh every hous and every place.
Wher as he hopeth for to finden grace,
To lernen what thing women loven moste;
But hene conde ariven in no coste
Wher as he mighte find in this matere
Two creatures according in fere.
Som saiden women loven best richesse,
Som saiden honour, som saiden jolineffe,
Som riche array, som saiden lust a-bedde,
And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde.

Some saiden that we ben in herte most esed
Whan that we ben yflatered and ypreisid.
He goth ful nigh the soth, I wol not lie;
A man shal winne us best with flaterie;
And with attendance and with besinesse
Ben we ylimed bothe more and lesse.

And som men saiden that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,

* A bachelor of King Arthur's court is enjoined by the Queen, upon pain of death, to tell what thing it is that women do most desire. At length he is taught it by an old woman, whom he is enforced to marry. Urry.

And that no man reprove us of our vice,
But say that we ben wise and nothing nice :
For trewely ther n'is non of us all,
If any wight wol claw us on the gall,
That we n'ill kike for that he faith us soth ;
Assay, and he shal find it that so doth :
For be we never so vicious withinne
We wol be holden wise and clene of sinne.

And som saiden that gret delit han we
For to be holden stable and eke secre,
And in o purpos stedfastly to dwell,
And not bewreyen thing that men us tell ;
Bot that tale is not worth a rake-stele.
Parde we women connen nothing hele,
Witnesse on Mida ; wol ye here the Tale ?

Ovide, amonges other thinges smale,
Said Mida had under his longe heres
Growing upon his hed two asses eres,
The whiche vice he hid, as he beste might,
Ful subtilly from every mannes sight,
That save his wif ther wist of it no mo ;
He loved hire most, and trusted hire also ;
He praied hire that to no creature
She n'olde tellen of his disfigure.

She swore him Ney, for all the world to winne
She nolde do that vilanie ne sinne,
To make hire husbond han so foule a name :
She n'olde not tell it for hire owen shame.
But natheles hire thoughte that she dide
That she so longe shuld a conseil hide ;
Hire thought it swal so sore about hire herte,
That nedely som word hire must asterte ;
And sith she dorst nat telle it to no man,
Doun to a mareis faste by she ran ;
Til she came ther hire herte was a-fire :
And as a bitore bumbleth in the mire,
She laid hire mouth unto the water doun.
Bewrey me not, thou water, with thy foun,
Quod she ; to thee I tell it, and no mo,
Min husbond hath long asses eres two.
Now is min berte all hole, now is it out,
I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it moste ; we can no conseil hide.
The remenant of the Tale, if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovide, and ther ye may it lere.

This knight, of which my Tale is specially,
Whan that he saw he might not come therby,
(This is to sayn, what women loven most)
Within his brest ful forweful was his goft.
But home he goth, he mighte not sojourne ;
The day was come that homward must he turne.
And in his way it happed him to ride,
In all his care, under a forest side,
Wheras he saw upon a dance go
Of ladies foure-and-twenty, and yet mo.
Toward this ilke dance he drow ful yerne,
In hop that he som wisdom shulde lerne ;
But certainly er he came fully there
Yvanished was this dance he n'iste not wher ;
No creature saw he that bare lif,
Save on the grene he saw sitting a wif,
A fouler wight ther may no man devise.
Againe this knight this olde wif gan arise,

And saide Sire Knight, here forth ne lith no way.
Tell me what that ye seken by your fay,
Paraventure it may the better be :
Thise olde folk con mochel thing, quod she.

My leve mother, quod this knight, certain
I n'am but ded but if that I can fain
What thing it is that women most desire :
Coude ye me wisse I wold quite wel your hire.
Plight me thy trouthe here in myn hond, quod she,
The nexte thing that I requere of thee
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
And I wol tell it you or it be night.

Have here my trouthe, quod the knight, I
graunte.

Thanne, quod she, I dare me wel avaunte
Thy lif is sauf, for I wol stond therby,
Upon my lif the quene wol say as I.
Let see which is the proudest of hem alle,
That wereth on a kerchief or a calle,
That dare sayn nay of that I shal you teche.
Let us go forth withouten lenger speche.

Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.

Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight
Said he had hold his day as he had hight,
And redy was his answer, as he saide.
Ful many a noble wif, and many a maide,
And many a widewe, for that they ben wise,
(The quene hireself sitting as a justice)
Asssembled ben his answer for to here,
And afterward this knight was bode appere.

To every wight commanded was silence,
And that the knight shuld tell in audience
What thing that worldly women loven best.
This knight ne stood not still as doth a best,
But to this question anon answerd
With manly vois, that all the court it herd.

My liege Lady, generally, quod he,
Women desiren to han soveraintee,
As well over hir husbond as hir love,
And for to ben in maistrie him above.
This your most desire, though ye me kille ;
Doth as you list, I am here at your wille.

In all the court ne was ther wif ne maide,
Ne widewe, that contraried that he saide,
But said he was worthy to han his lif.

And with that word up stert this olde wif
Which that the knight saw sitting on the grene.
Mercy, quod she, my soveraine lady Quene,
Er that your court depart, as doth me right.
I taughte this answer unto this knight,
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thing I wold of him requere,
He wold it do, if it lay in his might.
Before this court than pray I thee, Sire, Knight,
Quod she, that thou me take unto thy wif.
For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lif :
If I say false, say nay upon thy fay.

This knight answered, Alas and wala wa !
I wot right wel that swiche was my behest.
For Goddes love as chese a new request :
Take all my good, and let my body go.

Nay than, quod she, I shrewe us bothe two :

For though that I be olde, foule, and pore,
I n'olde for all the metal ne the ore
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wif I were and eke thy love.

My love! quod he; nay, my dampnation.

Alas! that any of my nation

Shuld ever so foule disparaged be.

But all for nought; the end is this, that he
Constrained was he nedes must hire wed,
And taketh this olde wif, and goth to bed.

Now wolden som men sayn paraventure,
That for my negligence I do no cure
To tellen you the joye and all the array
That at the feste was that ilke day.

To which thing shortly answeren I shal:
I say ther was no joye ne feste at al;
Ther n'as but hevynesse and mochel sorwe;
For prively he wedded hire on the morwe,
And all day after hid him as an oule,
So wo was him his wif lokyd so foule.

Gret was the wo the knight had in his thought
Whan he was with his wif a-bed ybrought;
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.

This olde wif lay smiling evermo,
And said, O dere hufbond, *benedicite*!
Fareth ever knight thus with wif as ye?
Is this the lawe of King Artoures hous?
Is every knight of his thus dangerous?
I am your owen love, and eke your wif,
I am she which that saved hath your lif,
And certes yet did I you never unright;
Why fare ye thus with me this firste night?
Ye faren like a man had lost his wit.

What is my gilt? for Goddes love tell it,
And it shal ben amended if I may.

Amended! quod this knight, alas! nay, nay,
It wol not ben amended never mo;
Thou art so lothly, and so olde also,
And therto comen of so low a kind,
That littel wonder is though I walwe and wind;
So wolde God min herte wolde brest.

Is this, quod she, the cause of your unrest?

Ye certainly, quod he, no wonder is.

Now Sire, quod she, I coude amend all this,
If that me list, er it were dayes three,
So wel ye mighten bere you unto me.

But for ye speken of swiche gentilleffe
As is descended out of old richesse;
That therefore shullen ye be gentilmen;
Swiche arrogance n'is not worth an hen.

Loke who that is most vertuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And take him for the gretest gentilman.
Crist wol we claime of him our gentilleffe,
Not of our elders for hir old richesse;
For though they yeve us all hir heritage,
For which we claime to ben of high parage,
Yet may they not bequethen for no thing
To non of us hir vertuous living,
That made hem gentilmen called to be,
And bade us folwen hem in swiche degree

Wel can the wise poet of Florence,
That highte Dant, speken of this sentence:

Lo in swiche maner rime is Dantes tale.

Ful selde up riseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Wol that we claime of him our gentilleffe;
For of our elders may we nothing claime
But temporel thing, that man may hurt and
Eke every wight wot this as wel as I, [maime-
If gentilleffe were planted naturelly
Unto a certain linage down the line,
Prive and apert, than wold they never fine
To don of gentilleffe the faire office;
They mighten do no vilanie or vice.

Take fire, and bere it into the derkest hous
Betwix this and the Mount of Cacasus,
And let men shette the doers, and go thenne,
Yet wol the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;
His office naturel ay wol it hold,
Up peril of my lif, til that it die.

Here may ye see wel how that genterie
Is not annexed to possession,

Sith folk ne don hir operation
Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind:
For God it wot men moun ful often find
A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.

And he that wol han pris of his genterie,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And had his elders noble and vertuous,
And n'ill himselven do no gentil dedes,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie that ded is,
He n'is not gentil, be he duk or erl,
For vilains sinful dedes make a cherl:

For gentilleffe n'is but the renomee
Of thin auncestres for hir high bountee,
Which is a strange thing to thy persone:
Thy gentilleffe cometh fro God alone;
Than cometh our veray gentilleffe of grace;
It was no thing bequethed us with our place.

Thinketh how noble, as faith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of poverte rose to high noblesse.
Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece,
Ther shull ye seen expresse that it no dred is
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis:
And therefore, leve hufbond, I thus conclude,
Al be it that min auncestres weren rude,
Yet may the highe God, and so hope I,
Granten me grace to liven vertuously;
Than am I gentil whan that I beginne
To liven vertuously and weiven sinne.

And ther as ye of poverte me repreve,
The highe God, on whom that we beleve,
In wilful poverte chese to lede his lif;
And certes every man, maiden, or wif,
May understond that Jesus heven king
Ne wold not chese a vicious living.

Glad poverte is an honest thing certain,
This wol Senek and other clerkes sain.
Who so that halt him paid of his poverte,
I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte.
He that coveiteth is a poure wight,
For he wold han that is not in his might;
But he that nought hath, ne coveiteth to have,
Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave.

Veray povertie is sinne proprely.

Juvenal faith of povertie merily,
The poure man whan he goth by the way,
Beforn the theves he may sing and play.
Povertie is hateful good; and, as I gesse,
A ful gret bringer out of besinesse;
A gret amender eke of sapience
To him that taketh it in patience.
Povertie is this, although it some elenge,
Possession that no wight wol challenge.
Povertie ful often, whan a man is low,
Maketh his God and eke himself to know.
Povertie a spectakel is, as thinketh me,
Thurgh which he may his veray frendes see.
And therefore, Sire, sin that I you not greve,
Of my povertie no more me repreve.

Now, Sire, of elde that ye repreven me:
And certes, Sire, though non auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentiles of honour
Sain that men shuld an olde wight honour,
And clepe him Fader, for your gentillese;
And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.

Now ther ye sain that I am foule and old,
Than drede ye not to ben a cokewold;
For filthe, and elde also, so mote I the,
Ben grete wardeins upon chastitee.
But natheles, sin I know your delit,
I shal fulfill your wordly appetit.

Chese now (quod she) on of thise thinges twey,
To han me foule and old til that I dey,
And be to you a trewe humble wif,
And never you displese in all my lif;
Or elles wol ye han me yonge and faire,
And take your aventure of the repaire
That shal be to your hous because of me,
Or in som other place it may wel be?
Now chese yourselven whether that you liketh.

This knight aviseth him, and fore siketh,

But at the last he said in this manere:

My lady and my love, and wif so dere,
I put me in your wise governance,
Cheseeth yourself which may be most plesance
And most honour to you and me also,
I do no force the whether of the two,
For as you liketh it sufficeth me.

Than have I got the maistere, quod she,
Sin I may chese and governe as me lest.
Ye certes, wif, quod he, I hold it best.

Kisse me, quod she, we be no lenger wrothe,
For by my trowth I wol be to you bothe,
This to sayn, ye bothe faire and good.
I pray to God that I mote sterven wood
But I to you be al so good and trewe
As ever was wif sin that the world was newe,
And but I be to-morwe as faire to seen
As any lady, emperice, or quene,
That is betwix the est and eke the west,
Doth with my lif and deth right as you lest.
Cast up the curtein, loke how that it is.

And whan the knight saw veraily all this,
That she so faire was, and so yonge therto,
For joye he hent hire in his armes two:
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse,
A thousand time a-row he gan hire kisse:
And she obeyed him in every thing
That mighte don him plesance or liking.
And thus they live unto hir lives ende
In parfit joye; and Jesu Crist us sende
Husbondes meke and yonge, and fresch a-bed,
And grace to overlive hem that we wed.
And eke I pray Jesus to short hir lives
That wol not be governed by hir wives;
And old and angry nigards of dispence
God send hem sone a veray pestilence.

THE FRERES PROLOGUE.

THIS worthy limitour, this noble Frere,
He made alway a maner louring chere
Upon the Sompnour, but for honestee
No vilains word as yet to him spake he;
But at the last he said unto the Wif,
Dame, (quod he) God yeve you right good lif,
Ye have here touched, all so mote I the,
In scole matere a ful gret difficultie;
Ye han said mochel thing right wel I say:
But, Dame, here as we riden by the way
Us nedeth not to speken but of game,
And let auctoritees, in Goddes name,
To preching and to scole eke of clergie.

But if it like unto this compaignie
I wol you of a Sompnour tell a game;
Parde ye may wel knownen by the name
That of a Sompnour may no good be said;
I pray that non of you be evil apaid;

A Sompnour is a renner up and doun
With mandements for fornicatioun,
And is ybete at every tounes ende.

Tho spake our Hoste, A, Sire, ye shuld ben
And curteis, as a man of your estat, [hende
In compaignie we wiln have no debat:
Tellethe your Tale, and let the Sompnour be.
Nay, quod the Sompnour, let him say by me
What so him list; whan it cometh to my lot,
By God I shal him quiten every grot;
I shal him tellen which a gret honour
It is to be a flatering limitour,
And eke of many another maner crime,
Which nedeth not reherfen at this time,
And his office I shal him tell ywis.
Our Hoste answered, Pees, no more of this.
And afterward he said unto the Frere
Tel forth your Tale min owen maister dere.

THE FRERES TALE†.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in my contree
An archedeken, a man of high degree,
That boldely did execution
In punishing of fornication,
Of witchecraft, and eke of bauderie,
Of defamation, and avouterie,
Of chirche-reves, and of testaments,
Of contracts, and of lack of sacraments,
Of usure, and of simonie also,
But certes lechours did he gretest wo;
They shulden singen if that they were hent,
And smale titheres weren foule yshent;

† A Sompnour and the devil meeting on the way, after conference become sworn brethren, and to hell they go together. A covert invective against the bribery and corruption of the spiritual courts in those days. Urry.

If any persone wold upon hem plaine
Ther might astert hem no pecunial peine.
For smale tithes and smale offering
He made the peple pitously to sing,
For er the bishop hent hem with his crook
They weren in the archedekens book;
Than had he thurgh his jurisdiction
Power to don on hem correction.

He had a Sompnour redy to his hond,
A slier boy was non in Englelond;
For subtilly he had his espaille,
That taught him wel wher it might ought availle
He coude spare of lechours on or two
To techen hem to foure-and-twenty mo:
For though this Sompnour wood be as an hare,
To tell his harlotrie I wol not spare,

For we ben out of hir correction,
They han of us no jurisdiction,
Ne never shul have, terme of all hir lives.

Peter, so ben the women of the stives,
Quod this Sompnour, yput out of our cure?

Pees, with mischance and with misaventure,
Our Hoste said, and let him tell his Tale.
Now telleth forth, and let the Sompnour gale,
Ne spaireth not, min owen maister dere.

This false thief, this Sompnour, quod the Frere,
Had alway haudes redy to his hond,
As any hauke to lure in Englelond,
That told him all the secree that they knewe,
For hir acquaintance was not come of newe;
They weren his approvers prively:

He tooke himself a gret profit therby,
His maister knew not alway what he wan.

Withouten mandement a lewed man
He coude sompne up peine of Cristes curse,
And they were inly glad to fille his purse,
And maken him gret festes at the nale.

And right as Judas hadde purfes finale,
And was a thief, right swiche a thief was he;
His master hadde but half his duetee.

He was (if I shal yeven him his laud)
A thief, and eke a Sompnour, and a baud.

He had eke wenches at his retenue,
That whether that Sire Robert or Sire Hue,
Or Jakke or Rauf, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they told it in his ere.

Thus was the wenche and he of on assent;
And he wold secche a feined mandement,
And sompne hem to the chapitre bothe two,
And pill the man and let the wenche go:

Than wold he say, Frend, I shal for thy sake
Do strike thee out of oure lettres blake;
Thee thar no more as in this cas travaille;
I am thy frend ther I may thee availle.

Certain he knew of briboures many mo
Than possible is to tell in yeres two;
For in this world n'is dogge for the bowe
That can an hurt dere from an hole yknowe
Bet than this Sompnour knew a flie lechour,
Or an avouter or a paramour;
And for that was the fruit of all his rent,
Therefore on it he set all his entent,

And so befell that ones on a day
This Sompnour, waiting ever on his praye,
Rode forth to sompne a widewe, an old ribibe,
Feining a cause, for he wold han a bribe;

And happed that he saw befor him ride
A gay yeman under a forest side;
A bow he bare, and arwes bright and kene,
He had upon a courtepy of grene.

An hat upon his hed with frenges blake.

Sire, quod the Sompnour, haile, and wel atake.

Welcome, quod he, and every good felaw.
Whider ridest thou under this grene shaw?
(Saide this yeman) wolt thou fer to-day?

This Sompnour him answerd, and saide Nay.
Here faste by (quod he) is min entent
To riden, for to reisen up a rent
That longeth to my lordes duetee.

A! art thou than a baillif? Ye, quod he,

(He dorste not for veray filth and shame
Say that he was a Sompnour, for the name.)

De par dieux, quod this yeman, leve brother,
Thou art a baillif, and I am another.

I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thin acquaintance I wol prayen thee,
And eke of brotherhed, if that thee list.

I have gold and silver lying in my chist;
If that thee hap to come in to our shire
Al shal be thin right as thou wolt desire.

Grand mercy, quod this Sompnour, by my faith.
Everich in others hond his trouthe laith
For to be fworne brethren til they dey.
In daliaunce they riden forth and pley.

This Sompnour, which that was as ful of jangles
As ful of venime ben thise wariangles,
And ever enquering upon every thing,
Brother, quod he, wher is now your dwelling,
Another day if that I shuld you seche?

This yeman him answerd in softe speche,
Brother, quod he, fer in the north contree,
Wher as I hope sometime I shal thee see.
Or we depart I shal thee so wel wisse,
That of min hous ne shalt thou never misse.

Now brother, quod this Sompnour, I you pray
Teche me, while that we riden by the way,
(Sith that ye ben a baillif as am I)
Som subtiltee, and tell me faithfully
In min office how I may moste winne;
And spareth not for conscience or for sinne,
But as my brother tell me how do ye.

Now by my trouthe, brother min, said he,
As I shal tellen thee a faithful Tale.
My wages ben ful streit and eke ful smale;
My lord is hard to me and dangerous,
And min office is ful laborious,
And therefore by extortion I leve;
Forsoth I take all that men wol me yeve:
Algates by sleighte or by violence
Fro yere to yere I win all my dispence:
I can no better tellen faithfully.

Now certes (quod this Sompnour) so fare I;
I spare not to taken, God it wote,
But if it be to hevy or to hote.

What I may gete in conseil prively
No maner conscience of that have I.
N'ere min extortion I might not liven,
Ne of swiche japes wol I not be shriven.

Stomak ne conscience know I non;
I shrew thise shrifte faders everich on:
Wel be we met by God and by Seint Jame.

But, leve brother, tell me than thy name,
Quod this Sompnour. Right in this mene while
This yeman gan a litel for to smile.

Brother, quod he, wolt thou that I thee tell?
I am a fend, my dwelling is in hell,
And here I ride about my pourchasing
To wote wher men wol give me any thing;
My pourchas is th' effect of all my rent,
Loke how thou ridest for the same entent;
To winnen good thou rekest never how:
Right so fare I, for riden wol I now
Unto the worldes ende for a praye.

A, quod this Sompnour, *benedicite*! what say ye?

I wend ye were a yeman trewely,
Ye have a mannes shape as wel as I:
Have ye then a figure determinat
In helle, ther ye ben in your estat?

Nay certainly, quod he, ther have we non,
But whan us liketh we can take us on,
Or elles make you wene that we ben shape
Somtime like a man, or like an ape,
Or like an angel can I ride or go;
It is no wonder thing though it be so;
A lousy jogelour can deceiven thee,
And parde yet can I more craft than he.

Why, quod the Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In sondry shape, and not alway in on?

For we, quod he, wol us swiche forme make
As most is able our preye for to take.

What maketh you to han al this labour?

Ful many a cause, leve Sire Sompnour,
Saide this fend. But alle thing hath time;
The day is short, and it is passed prime,
And yet ne wan I nothing in this day;
I wol entend to winning if I may,
And not entend our thinges to declare;
For, brother min, thy wit is al to bare
To understand, although I told hem thee.

But for thou axest why labouren we?

For somtime we be Goddes instruments,
And menes to don his commandements,
Whan that him list, upon his creatures,
In divers actes and in divers figures:
Withouten him we have no might certain,
If that him list to stonden theragain.

And somtime at our praiere han we leve
Only the body and not the soul to greve;
Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo,
And somtime han we might on bothe two,
This is to sain, on soule and body eke:

And somtime be we suffered for to seke
Upon a man, and don his soule unreste
And not his body, and all is for the beste.

Whan he withstandeth our temptation
It is a cause of his salvation,

Al be it that it was not our entente
He shuld be fauf, but that we wold him hente.
And somtime be we servants unto man,
As to the Archebishop Seint Dunstan,
And to the apostle servant eke was I.

Yet tell me, quod this Sompnour, faithfully,
Make ye you newe bodies this alway
Of elements? The fend answered Nay,
Somtime we feine, and somtime we arise
With ded bodies, in ful sondry wise,
And speke as renably, and faire, and wel,
As to the Phitonesse did Samuel;
And yet wol som men say it was not he:

I do no force of your divinitee.
But o thing warne I thee, I wol not jape,
Thou wolt algates wete how we be shape:
Thou shalt hereafterward, my brother dere,
Come wher thee nedeth not of me to lere,
For thou shalt by thin owen experience
Conne in a chaiere rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgile, while he was on live,
Or Dant also. Now let us riden blive,

For I wol holden compaignie with thee
Til it be so that thou forsake me.

Nay, quod this Sompnour, that shal never betide.
I am yeman knowen is ful wide;
My trouthe wol I hold, as in this cas;
For though thou were the devil Sathanas
My trouthe wol I hold to thee, my brother,
As I have sworne, and eche of us to other,
For to be trewe brethren in this cas,
And bothe we gon abouten our pourchas.
Take thou thy part, what that men wol thee yeve,
And I shal min, thus may we both leve;
And if that any of us have more than other
Let him be trewe, and part it with his brother.

I graunte, quod the devil, by my fay;
And with that word they riden forth her way,
And right at entring of the tounes ende
To which this Sompnour shope him for to wende,
They saw a cart that charged was with hay,
Which that a carter drove forth on his way.
Depe was the way, for which the carte stood;
The carter smote, and cried as he were wood,
Heit Scot, heit Brok; what, spare ye for the stones?
The fend (quod he) you fecche body and bones,
As ferforthly as ever ye were soled,
So mochel wo as I have with you tholed.
The devil have al, bothe hors, and cart, and hay.

The Sompnour sayde, Here shal we have a praye;
And nere the fend he drow, as nought ne were,
Ful prively, and rouned in his ere,
Herken my brother, herken, by thy faith;
Hereft thou not how that the carter faith?
Hent it anon, for he nath yeve it thee,
Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.

Nay, quod the devil, God wot never a del!
It is not his entente, trust thou me wel:
Axe him thyself, if thou not trowest me,
Or elles stint a while and thou shalt see.

This carter thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
And they begonne to drawen and to stoupe.
Heit now, quod he; ther, Jesu Crist you blesse,
And all his hondes werk bothe more and lesse!
That was wel twight, min owen Liard boy,
I pray God save thy body and Seint Eloy.
Now is my cart out of the slough parde.

Lo, brother, quod the fend, what told I thee?
Here may ye seen, min owen dere brother,
The cherl spake o thing but he thought another,
Let us go forth abouten our viage;
Here win I nothing upon this cariage.

Whan that they comen somewhat out of toun
This Sompnour to his brother gan to roun;
Brother, quod he, here woneth an old rebekke
That had almost as lefe to lefe hire nekke
As for to yeve a peny of hire good.
I wol have twelf pens though that she be wood,
Or I wol somone hire to our office,
And yet, God wot, of hire know I no vice;
But for thou canst not as in this contree
Winnen thy cost, take here ensample of me.

This Sompnour clappeth at the widewes gate;
Come out, he sayd, thou olde very trate;
I trow thou, hast som frere or preest with thee.

Who clappeth? said this wif, benedicite!

God save you, Sire, what is your swete will?

I have, quod he, of somons here a bill :
Up peine of cursing loke that thou be
To-morwe before the archedekenes knee,
To answere to the court of certain thinges.

Now Lord, quod she, Christ Jesu, King of kinges,
So wisely helpe me as I ne may :

I have been like, and that full many a day :
I may not go so fer (quod she) ne ride
But I be ded, so priketh it in my side.
May I not axe a libel, Sire Sompnour,
And answere ther by my procuratour
To swiche thing as men wold apposen me?

Yes, quod this Sompnour, pay anon, let see;
Twelf pens to me, and I will thee acquite :

I shall no profit han therby but lite;

My maister hath the profit and not I.

Come of, and let me riden hastily :

Yeve me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie.

Twelf pens! quod she; now Lady Seint Marie

So wisely helpe me out of care and sinne,

This wide world though that I shuld it winne,

Ne have I not twelf pens within my hold,

Ye knowen wel that I am poure and old;

Kithe your almesse upon me poure wretche.

Nay than, quod he, the soule fend me fetche

If I thee excule, though thou shuldest be spilt.

Alas! quod she, God wot I have no guilt.

Pay me, quod he, or by the swete Seinte Anne

As I wol bere away thy newe panne

For dette which thou owest me of old,

Whan that thou madest thyn husbond cokewold,

I paid at home for thy correction.

Thou liest, quod she, by my salvation;

Ne was I never or now, widew ne wif,

Sompned unto your court in all my lif,

Ne never I n'as but of my body trewe.

Unto the devil rough and blake of hewe

Yeve I thy body and my panne also.

And whan the devil herd hire cursen so

Upon hire knees he sayd in this manere;

Now Mabily, min moder dere,

Is this your will in earnest that ye say?

The devil, quod she, so fetche him or he dey,

And panne and all, but he wol him repent.

Nay, olde stot, that is not min entent,

Quod this Sompnour, for to repenten me

For any thing that I have had of thee :

I wold I had thy smok and every cloth.

Now brother, quod the devil, be not wroth;

Thy body and this panne ben min by right :

Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,

Wher thou shalt known of our privetee

More than a maister of divinitee.

And with that word the soule fend him hent

Body and soule : he with the devil went

Wher as thise Sompnours han her heritage :

And God, that maketh after his image

Mankinde, save and gide us all and some,

And lene this Sompnour good man to become.

Lordings, I coude have told you (quod this Frere)

Had I had leiser for this Sompnour here,

After the text of Crist, and Poule, and John,

And of oure other doctours many on,

Swiche peines that your hertes might agrise,

Al be it so that no tonge may devise,

Though that I might a thousand winter tell,

The peines of thilke cursed hous of hell :

But for to kepe us fro that cursed place

Waketh and prayeth Jesu of his grace

So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.

Herkneth this word, beware as in this cas;

The leon sit in his awaite alway

To sle the innocent if that he may.

Disposeth aye your hertes to withstond

The fend, that you wold maken thral and bond :

He may not tempten you over your might,

For Crist wol be your champion and your knight ;

And prayeth that this Sompnour him repent

Of his misdeds, or that the fend him hent.

THE SOMPNOURES PROLOGUE.

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THIS Sompnour in his stirops high he stood;
Upon this Frere his hearte was so wood,
That like an aspen leef he quoke for ire.
Lordings, quod he, but o thing I desire;
I you beseeche that of your curtesie,
Sin ye han herd this false Frere lie,
As suffereth me I may my tale telle.

This Frere boasteth that he knoweth helle,
And God it wot that is but litel wonder;
Freres and fendes ben but litel asonder.

For parde ye han often time herd telle
How that a frere ravished was to helle
In spirit ones by a visoun,
And as an angel lad him up and down,
To shewen him the paines that ther were,
In all the place saw he not a frere:
Of other folk he saw ynow in wo.

Unto this angel spake the frere tho;
Now Sire, quod he, han freres swich a grace,
That non of hem shall comen in this place?

Yes, quod this angel, many a millioun;
And unto Sathanas he lad him down.

(And now hath Sathanas, faith he, a tayl
Broder than of a carrike is the sayl)
Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas, quod he,
Shew forth thin ers, and let the frere see
Wher is the nest of freres in this place.
And ere than half a furlong way of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen of an hive,
Out of the devils ers ther gonnen drive
A twenty thousand freres on a route.
And thurghout hell they swarmed al aboute,
And com agen, as fast as they may gon,
And in his ers they crepen everich on:
He clapt his tayl again, and lay ful still.

This frere, whan he loked, had his fill
Upon this turments of this sory place;
His spirit God restored of his grace
Into his body agen, and he awoke;
But nathlefs for fere yet he quoke,
So was the devils ers ay in his mind,
That is his heretage of veray kind.

God save you alle save this cursed Frere;
My Prologue wol I end in this manere.

THE SOMPNOURES TALE*.

LORDINGS, there is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,
A mersh contree ycalled Holdernesse,
In which ther went a limitour aboute,
To preach and eke to beg it is no doubte.

* A begging friar coming to a farmer's house who lay sick, obtaineth of the sick man a certain legacy which must be equally divided among his convent. A requital to the friar, shewing their cozenage, loitering, impudent begging, and hypocritical praying.

And so befell that on a day this frere
Had preached at a chirche in his manere,
And specially aboven every thing
Excited he the peple in his preching
To trentals, and to yeve, for Goddes sake,
Wherwith men mighten holy houses make,
Ther as divine service is honoured,
Not ther as it is wasted and devoured,

Ne ther it nedeth not for to be yeven,
 As to possessioners, that mowen leven
 (Thanked be God) in wele end abundance.
 Trentalt, sayd he, deliveren fro penance
 Hir frendes soules as well old as yonge,
 Ye, whan that they ben hastily ysonge,
 Not for to hold a preest jolif and gay,
 He singeth not but o masse on a day.
 Delivereth out (quod he) anon the soules.
 Ful hard it is with fleshhook or with oules
 To ben yclawed, or to bren or bake.
 Now spede you hastily for Cristes sake.

And whan this frere bad said all his entent,
 With *qui cum patri* forth his way he went.
 Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem lest
 He went his way, no lenger wold he rest.
 With scrippe and tipped staf, ytucked hie,
 In every hous he gan to pore and prie,
 And begged mele and chese, or elles corn.
 His felaw had a staf tipped with horn,
 A pair of tables all of ivory,
 And a pointel ypolished fetisly,
 And wrote alway the names, as he stood,
 Of alle folk that yave hem any good,
 Askaunce that he woulde for hem preye.
 Yeve us a bushel whete, or malt or reye,
 A Goddes kichel, or a trippe of chese,
 Or elles what you list, we may not chese;
 A Goddes halfpenny, or a masse peny,
 Or yeve us of your braun, if ye have any,
 A dagon of your blanket, leve Dame,
 Our suster dere, (lo, here I write your name)
 Bacon or beef, or swiche thing as ye find.

A sturdy harlot went hem ay behind,
 That was her hostes man, and bare a fakke,
 And what men yave hem laid it on his bakke.
 And whan that he was out at dore, anon
 He planed away the names everich on
 That he before had written in his tables;
 He served hem with nifles and with fables.

Nay ther thou liest, thou Sompnour, quod the
 Frere.

Pees, quod our Hoste, for Cristes moder dere
 Tell forth thy Tale, and spare it not at all.

So thrive I, quod this Sompnour, so I shall.

So long he went fro hous to hous til he
 Came to an hous ther he was wont to be
 Refreshed more than in a hundred places.
 Sike lay the husbond man whos that the place
 is;

Bedred upon a couche low he lay.

Deus bic, quod he; O Thomas! frend, good day,
 Sayde this frere all curtisly and soft.

Thomas, quod he, God yelde it you, ful oft
 Have I upon this benche faren ful wele,
 Here have I eten many a mery mele.

And fro the benche he drove away the cat,
 And laied adoun his potent and his hat,
 And eke his scrip, and set himself adoun;
 His felaw was ywalked into toun,
 Forth with his knave, into that hostelrie
 Wher as he shope him thilke night to lie.

O dere maister! quod this filke man,
 How have ye faren sin that March began?

I saw you not this fourtene night and more.

God wot, quod he, laboured have I full fore,
 And specially for thy falvation

Have I sayd many a precious orison,
 And for our other frendes God hem blese.
 I have this day ben at your chirche at messe,
 And said a sermon to my simple wit;
 Not all after the text of holy writ;

For it is hard to you as I suppose,
 And therefore wol I teche you ay the glose.

Glosing is a ful glorious thing certain;
 For letter sleth, so as we clerkes fain;

There have I taught hem to be charitable,
 And spend hir good ther it is reasonable;

And ther I saw our dame; a! wher is she?

Yonder, I trow that in the yard she be,
 Sayde this man, and she wol come anon.

Ey maister, welcome be ye by Seint John,
 Sayde this wif; how fare ye hertily?

This frere ariseth up ful curtisly;
 And hire embraceth in her armes narwe;

And kisseth hire swete, and chirketh as a sparwe
 With his lippes. Dame, quod he, right wel,

As he that is your servant every deli.
 Thanked be God that you yaf soule and lif

Yet saw I not this day so faire a wif

In all the chirche, God to save me.

Ye God amende defantes, Sire, quod she,
 Algates welcome be ye, by my fay.

Grand mercy, Dame, that have I found alway.
 But of your grete goodnesse, be your leve,

I wolde pray you that ye not you greve,

I wol with Thomas speke a litel throw;

Thise curates ben so negligent and slow

To gropen tenderly a conscience.

In shrift, in preching, is my diligence

And study, in Peters wordes and in Poules;

I walke and fishe Cristen menne's soules,

To yield our Lord Jesu his propre rent;

To spred his word is set all mine entent.

Now by your faith, o dere Sire! quod she;

Chideth him wel for Seinte Charitee;

He is ay angry as is a pisse-mire;

Though that he have all that he can desire:

Though I him wrie a-night, and make him warm;

And over him lay my leg and eke mine arm,

He groneth as our bore lith in our stie;

Other disport of him right non have I;

I may not please him in no maner cas.

O Thomas, *jeo vous die*, Thomas, Thomas!

This maketh the fend, this muste ben amended.

Ire is a thing that high God hath defended,

And therof wol I speke a word or two.

Now maister, quod the wif, er that I go;

What wol ye dine? I wol go therabout.

Now Dame, quod he, *jeo vous die sanz doute*,

Have I not of a capon but the liver,

And of your white bred nat but a shiver,

And after that a roasted pigges hed,

(But I ne wolde for me no beest were ded)

I han had I with you homly fuffisance;

I am a man of little sustenance;

My spirit hath his fostering in the Bible;

My body is ay so ready and so penible

'To waken, that my stomak is destroyed.
I pray you, Dame, that ye be nought annoied,
Though I so frendly you my conseil shewe;
By God I n'old have told it but a few.

Now Sire, quod she, but o word er I go.
My child is ded within these wekes two,
Sone after that ye went out of this toun.

His deth saw I by revelatioun,
Sayde this frere, at home in our dortour.
I dare wel fain that er than half an hour
After his deth I saw him borne to blisse
In mine avision, so God me wisse;
So did our sextein and our fermerere,
'That han ben trewe freres fifty yere*;
They may now, God be thanked of his lone,
Maken hir jubilee, and walke alone.
And up I arose, and all our covent eke,
With many a tere trilling on our cheke,
Withouten noise, or clattering of belles,
'*Te deum* was our song, and nothing elles,
Save that to Crist I bade an orison,
'Thanking him of my revelation.
For, Sire and Dame, trusteth me right wel
Our orisons ben more effectuel,
And more we seen of Cristes secret thinges,
'Than borel folk, although that they be kinges.
We live in poverté and in abstinence,
And borel folk in richesse and dispence
Of mete and drinke, and in her foule delit:
We han this worldes lust all in despit.

Lazar and Dives lividen diversely,
And divers guerdon hadden they therby.
Who so wol pray, he must fast and be clene,
And fat his foule and make his body lene.
We fare as sayth the apostle; cloth and food
Sufficeth us, though they be not ful good.
The clenenesse and the fasting of us freres
Maketh that Crist accepteth our praieres.

Lo, Moises forty daies and forty night
Fasted er that the high God ful of might
Spake with him in the mountagne of Sinay:
With empty wombe of fasting many a day
Received he the lawe that was writen
With Goddes finger; and Eli, wel ye witen,
In Mount Oreb, er he had any speche
With highe God, that is our lives leche,
He fasted long, and was in contemplance.

Aaron, that had the temple in governance,
And eke the other preestes everich on,
Into the temple whan they shulden gon
'To praien for the peple, and do servise,
'They n'olden drinken in no maner wise
No drinke which that might hem drunken make,
But ther in abstinence pray and wake
Lest that they deiden. Take heed what I say—
But they be sobre that for the peple pray—
Ware that I say—No more; for it sufficeth.
Our Lord Jesu, as holy writ deviseth,
Yave us ensample of fasting and praieres;
Therefore we mendiaunts, we sely freres,

Ben wedded to poverté and continence,
To charitee, humbleesse, and abstinence,
To persecution for rightwisnesse,
To weping, misericorde, and to clenenesse;
And therefore may ye see that our praieres
(I speke of us, we mendiaunts, we freres)
Ben to the highe God more acceptable
Than youres, with your festes at your table.

Fro Paradis first, if I shal not lie,
Was man outchased for his glotonie;
And chaste was man in Paradis certain.
But herken now, Thomas, what I shal fain:
I have no text of it as I suppose,
But I shal find it in a maner glose;
That specially our swete Lord Jesu
Spake this by freres whan he sayde thus,
Blessed be they that poure in spirit ben;
And so forth all the gospel may ye sen,
Whether it be liker our profession
Or hirs that swimmen in possession.
Fie on hir pompe, and on hir glotonie,
And on hir lewednesse! I hem desie.
Me thinketh they ben like Jovinian,
Fat as a whale, and walken as a swan;
Al vinolent as botel in the spence;
Hir praier is of ful gret reverence:
Whan they for foules say the Psalm of Davit,
Lo, but they say, *Cor meum cruciavit*.

Who foloweth Cristes gospel and his lore
But we, that humble ben, and chaste and pore,
Workers of Goddes word, not auditors?
Therefore right as an hauke upon a sours
Up springeth into the aire, right so praieres
Of charitable and chaste besy freres
Maken hir sours to Goddes eres two.
Thomas, Thomas! so mote I ride or go,
And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive,
N'ere thou our broder shuldest thou not thrive.
In our chapitre pray we day and night
To Crist, that he thee sende hele and might
Thy body for to welden hastily.

God wot, quod he, nothing thereof fel I.
As help me Crist, as I in fewe yeres
Have spended upon divers maner freres
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet;
Certain my good have I almost beset:
Farewel my good, for it is al ago.

The frere answered, O Thomas! dost thou so?
What nedeth you diverse freres to seche?
What nedeth him that hath a parfit leche
To sechen other leches in the toun?
Your inconstance is your confusion.
Hold ye than me, or elles our covent,
To pray for you ben insufficient?
Thomas, that jape n'is not worth a mite;
Your maladie is for we han to lite.
A! yeve that covent half a quarter otes,
And yeve that covent four-and-twenty grotes,
And yeve that frere a peny and let him go:
Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thing be so.
What is a ferthing worth parted on twelve?
Lo, eche thing that is oned in himselve
Is more strong than whan it is yscatered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt not be yflatered,

* See *Du Cange*, in v. *Sempetææ*. Peculiar honours and immunities were granted by the rule of St. Benedict to those monks "qui quinquaginta annos in ordine exegerant," "quos annum jubileum exegisse vulgo dicimus." It is probable that some similar regulation obtained in the other orders.

Thou woldest han our labour al for nought,
The highe God, that all this world hath wrought,
Saith that the workman worthy is his hire.
Thomas, nought of your tresor I desire
As for myself, but that all our covent
To pray for you is ay so diligent,
And for to bidden Cristes owen chirche.
Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche,
Of bilding up of chirches may ye finde
If it be good in Thomas lif of Inde.

Ye ligen here ful of anger and of ire,
With which the devil set your herte on fire,
And chiden here this holy innocent,
Your wif, that is so good and patient;
And therefore trow me, Thomas, if thou lest,
Ne strive not with thy wif, as for the best.
And bere this word away now by thy faith,
Touching swiche thing, lo, what the wise saith:

Within thy hous ne be thou no leon,
To thy suggets do non oppressioun,
Ne make thou not thin acquaintance to flee.

And yet, Thomas, eftsones charge I thee,
Beware from ire that in thy bosom slepeth;
Ware fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth
Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly:
Beware, my sone, and herken patiently,
That twenty thousand men han lost hir lives
For striving with hir lemmanis and her wives.
Now sith ye han so holy and meek a wif,
What nedeth you, Thomas, to maken strif?
Ther n'is ywis no serpent so cruel,
Whan man tredeth on his tail, ne half so fel,
As woman is whan she hath caught an ire;
Veray vengeance is than all hire desire.

Ire is a sinne on of the grete seven,
Abhominable unto the God of heven,
And to himself it is destruction:
This every lewed vicar and person
Can say how ire engendreth homicide:
Ire is in soth executour of pride.

I coud of ire say so mochel sorwe
My Tale shulde lasten til to-morwe;
And therefore pray I God both day and night
An irous man God send him litel might.
It is gret harm, and certes gret pitee,
To sette an irous man in high degree.

Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
As saith Senek, that during his estat
Upon a day outriden knightes two;
And, as Fortune wold that it were so,
That on of hem came home, that other nought.
Anon the knight before the judge is brought,
That saide thus; Thou hast thy felaw slain,
For which I deme thee to the deth certain.
And to another knight commanded he,
Go, lede him to the deth, I charge thee.
And happed as they wenten by the wey
Toward the place ther as he shulde dey,
The knight came which men wenden had be ded:
Than thoughten they it was the beste rede
To lede hem both to the jage again.
They saiden, Lord, the knight ne hath not slain
His felaw, here he stondeth hol alive.

Ye shull be ded, quod he, so mot I thrive,

That is to say, both on, and two, and three.
And to the firste knight right thus spake he.

I damned thee, thou must algate be ded;
And thou also must nedes lese thyn hed,
For thou art cause why thy felaw deyeth;
And to the thridde knight right thus he seyeth,
Thou hast not don that I commanded thee.
And thus he did do slen hem alle three.

Irous Cambyses was eke dronkelew,
And ay delighted him to ben a shrew:
And so befell a lord of his meinie,
That loved vertuous moralitee,
Sayd on a day betwix hem two right thus;
A lord is lost if he be vicious;
And dronkenesse is eke a foule record
Of any man, and namely of a lord.
Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
Awaiting on a lord, and he n'ot wher.
For Goddes love drink more attemprely:
Win maketh man to lesen wretchedly
His mind, and eke his limmes everich on.
The revers shalt thou see, quod he, anon,
And preve it by thyn owen experience
Than win ne doth to folk no swiche offence.
Ther is no win bereveth me my might
Of hond, ne foot, ne of myn eyen sight.
And for despit he dranke mochel more
An hundred part than he had don before,
And right anon this cursed irous wretche
This knightes sone let before him fetchen,
Commanding him he shuld before him stond;
And sodenly he took his bow in hond,
And up the string he pulled to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right ther.

Now whether have I a siker hond or non?
Quod he; is al my might and mind agon?
Hath win bereved me min eyen sight?

What shuld I tell the answer of the knight?
His son was slain, ther is no more to say.
Beth ware therfore with lordes for to play,
Singeth Placebo, and I shal if I can,
But if it be unto a poure man:
To a poure man men shuld his vices telle,
But not to a lord, though he shuld go to helle.

Lo, irous Cirus, thilke Persien,
How he destroyed the river of Gisen,
For that an hors of his was dreint therin,
Whan that he wente Babilon to win:
He made that the river was so smal,
That wimmen might it waden over al.
Lo, what said he, that so wel techen can?
Ne be no felaw to non irous man,
Ne with no wood man walke by the way,
Lest thee repent: I wol no further say.

Now Thomas, leve brother, leve thin ire,
Thou shalt me find as just as is a squire:
Hold not the devils knif ay to thin herte,
Thin anger doth thee all to fore smerte;
But shew to me all thy confession.

Nay, quod the sick man, by Seint Simon
I have ben shriven this day of my curat;
I have him told al holly min estat.
Nedeth no mo to speke of it, sayth he,
But if me list of min humilitee.

Yeve me than of thy gold to make our cloistre,
 Quod he, for many a muscle and many an oistre,
 Whan other men han ben ful wel at ese,
 Hath ben our food, our cloistre for to rese;
 And yet, God wot, unneth the fundament
 Parfourmed is, ne of our pavement
 N'is not a tile yet within our wones:
 By God we owen fourty pound for stones.
 Now help, Thomas, for him that harwed helle,
 For elles mote we our bokes felle,
 And if ye lack our predication,
 Than goth this world all to destruction;
 For who so fro this world wold us bereve,
 So God me save, Thomas, by your leve
 He wold bereve out of this world the sonne;
 For who can teche and worken as we conne?
 And that is not of litel time (quod he)
 But sithen Elie was and Elisee
 Han freres ben, that find I of record,
 In charitee, ythanked be our Lord.
 Now Thomas, help for Seinte Charitee.

And down anon he sette him on his knee.
 This like man woxe wel neigh wood for ire;
 He wolde that the frere had ben a-fire
 With his false dissimulation.

Swiche thing as is in my possession,
 Quod he, that may I yeve you, and non other.
 Ye fain me thus, how that I am your brother.
 Ye certes, quod this frere, ye trusteth wel;
 I took our dame the letter of our fele.

Now wel, quod he, and somewhat shal I yeve
 Unto your holy covent while I live;
 And in thin hond thou shalt it have anon,
 On this condition, and other non,
 That thou depart it so, my dere brother,
 That every frere have as moche as other;
 This shalt thou swere on thy profession
 Withouten fraud or cavilation.

I swere it, quod the frere, upon my faith;
 And therewithal his hond in his he layth.
 Lo here my faith; in me shal be no lak.
 Than put thin hond adoun right by my bak,
 Saide this man, and grope wel behind
 Benethe my buttok, ther thou shalte find
 A thing that I have hid in privetee.
 A! thought this frere, that shal go with me;
 And down his hond he launcheth to the clifte,
 In hope for to finden ther a gifte.

And whan this like man felt this frere
 About his towel gropen ther and here,
 Amid his hond he let the frere a fart:
 Ther n'is no capel drawing in a eart
 That might han let a fart of swiche a soun.
 The frere up flette as doth a wood leoun:
 A! false cherl, quod he, for Goddes bones,
 This hast thou in despit don for the nones:
 Thou shalt abie this fart if that I may.

His meinie, which that herden this affray,
 Came leping in, and chased out the frere,
 And forth he goth with a ful angry chere,
 And set his felaw ther as lay his flore:
 He looked as it were a wilde bore,
 And grinte with his teeth, so was he wroth.
 A sturdy pas down to the court he goth,

Wher as ther woned a man of gret honour,
 To whom that he was alway confessor:
 This worthy man was lord of that village,
 This frere came, as he were in a rage.
 Wher as this lord sat eting at his bord:
 Unnethes might the frere speke a word,
 Til atte laste he saide, God you see!

This lord gan loke, and said, *Benedicite!*
 What? Frere John, what maner world is this?
 I see wel that som thing ther is amis;
 Ye loken as the wood were ful of theves.
 Sit down anon, and tell me what your greve is,
 And it shal ben amended if I may.

I have, quod he, had a despit to day,
 God yelde you, adoun in your village,
 That in this world ther n'is so poure a page,
 That he n'olde have abhominatioun
 Of that I have received in youre toun;
 And yet ne greveth me nothing so fore
 As that the olde cherl with lokkes bore
 Blasphemed hath oure holy covent eke.

Now master, quod this lord, I you beseeke.

No maister, Sire, quod he, but servitour,
 Though I have had in scole that honour.
 God liketh not that man us Rabi call
 Neither in market ne in your large hall.

No force, quod he, but tell me all your grefe.

Sire, quod this frere, an odious mischefe
 This day betid is to min ordre and me,
 And so *per consequens* to eche degree
 Of holy chirche, God amende it sone.

Sire, quod the lord, ye wot what is to don:
 Distempere you not, ye ben my confessor;
 Ye ben the salt of the erthe and the savour:
 For Goddes love your patience now hold;
 Telle me your grete. And he anon him told
 As ye han herd before, ye wot wel what.

The lady of the hous ay stille sat
 Til she had herde what the frere seid.

Ey, Goddes moder, quod she, blisful maid!
 Is ther ought elles? tell me faithfully.
 Madame, quod he, how thinketh you therby?
 How that me thinketh? quod she; so God me spede,
 I say a cherle had don a cherles dede.
 What shuld I say? God let him never the;
 His like hed is ful of vanitee;
 I hold him in a maner frenesie.

Madame, quod he, by God I shal not lie,
 But I in other wise may ben awreke;
 I shal diffame him over all ther I speke;
 This false blasphemour, that charged me
 To parten that wol not departed be
 To every man ylike, with meschance.

The lord sat stille as he were in a trance,
 And in his herte he rolled up and down
 How had this cherl imaginatioun
 To shewen swiche a probleme to the frere.
 Never erst or now ne herd I swiche matere;
 I trow the devil put it in his mind.
 In all arismetrike shal ther no man find
 Beforn this day of swiche a question.
 Who shulde make a demonstration
 That every man shuld han ylike his part
 As of a soun or savour of a fart?

On ice proude cherl! I shrewe his face.

Lo, Sires, quod the lord, with harde grace,
Who ever herd of swiche a thing or now?
To every man ylike! tell me how.

It is an impossible, it may not be:

Ey, nice cherl! God let him never the.

The rombling of a fart, and every soun,

N'is but of aire reverberatioun,

And ever it wasteth lite and lite away;

Ther n'is no man can demen, by my fay,

If that it were departed equally.

What? lo my cherl, lo yet how shrewedly

Unto my confessor to-day he spake!

I hold him certain a demoniake.

Now ete your mete, and let the cherl go play;

Let him go honge himself a devil way.

Now stood the lordes squier atte bord

That carf his mete, and herde word by word

Of all this thing of which I have you sayd.

My Lord, quod he, be ye not evil apaid;

I coude telle for a goun-cloth

To you, Sire Frere, so that ye be not wroth,

How that this fart shuld even ydeled be

Amonge your covent, if it liked thee.

Tell, quod the lord, and thou shalt have anon

A goun-cloth, by God and by Seint John.

My Lord, quod he, whan that the weder is

Withouten winde or pertourbing of aire, [faire,

Let bring a cart-whele here into this hall,

But loke that it have his spokes all;

Twelf spokes hath a cart-whele comunly;

And bring me than twelf freres, wete ye why?

For threttene is a covent as I gesse:

Your confessor here for his warthinesse

Shal parfourme up the noumbre of his covent.

Than shull they knele adoun by on assent,

And to every spokes end in this manere

Ful sadly lay his nose shal a frere;

Your noble confessor, ther God him save,

Shal hold his nose upright under the nave,

Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and tought

As any tabour, hider ben ybrought;

And set him on the whele right of this cart

Upon the nave, and make him let a fart,

And ye shull seen, up peril of my lif,

By veray preef that is demonstratif,

That equally the soun of it wol wende,

And eke the stinke, unto the spokes ende,

Save that this worthy man, your confessor,

(Because he is a man of gret honour)

Shal han the firste fruit, as reson is.

The noble usage of freres yet it is

The worthy men of hem shul first be served,

And certainly he hath it wel deserved;

He hath to-day taught us so mochel good,

With preching in the pulpit ther he stood,

That I may vouchesaf, I say for me,

He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,

And so wold all his brethren hardely,

He bereth him so faire and holyly.

The lord, the lady, and eche man, save the

Sayden that Jankin spake in this matere [frere,

As wel as Euclide or elles Ptholomee.

Touching the cherl they saydan, Subtiltee

And highe wit made him speken as he spake;

He n'is no fool ne no demoniake.

And Jankin hath ywonne a new goun.

My Tale is don; we ben almost at toun.

E iij

THE CLERKES PROLOGUE.

SIRE Clerk of Oxenforde, our Hoste said,
Ye ride as stille and coy as doth a maid
Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord;
This day ne herd I of your tonge a word.
I trow ye studie abouten som sophime;
But Salomon saith that every thing hath time,
For Goddes sake as beth of better chere,
It is no time for to studein here.
Tell us som mery Tale by your fay;
For what man that is entred in a play
He nedes most unto the play assent.
But precheth not, as freres don in Lentr,
To make us for our olde sinnes wepe,
Ne that thy Tale make us not to slepe.

Tell us som mery thing of adventures;
Your termes, your coloures, and your figures,
Kepe hem in store til so be ye endite
Hie stile, as whan that men to kinges write.
Speketh so plain at this time, I you pray,
That we may understonden what ye say.

This worthy Clerk benignely answerde;
Hoste, quod he, I am under your yerde,
Ye have of us now the governance,
And therefore wolde I do you obeyfance,
As fer as reson asketh hardely;
I wol you tell a Tale which that I
Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
As preved by his wordes and his werk;
He is now ded and nailed in his cheste,
I pray to God so yeve his soule reste.

Fraunceis Petrark, the Laureat poete,
Highte this clerk, whos rethorike swete
Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie,
As Lynyan § did of philosophie
Or law, or other art particulere;
But Deth that wol not suffre us dwellen here,
But as it were a twinkling of an eye,
Hem both hath slaine, and alle we shul dye.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man
That taughte me this Tale as I began,
I say that first he with highe stile enditeth
(Or he the body of his Tale writeth)
A proheme, in the which describeth he
Piemont, and of Saluces the contree,
And speketh of Apennin the hilles hie,
That ben the boundes of west Lombardie,
And of Mount Vesulus in special,
Wher as the Poo out of a welle smal
Taketh his firste springing and his fours,
That estward ay encrefeth in his cours
To Emelie ward, to Ferare and Venise,
The which a longe thing were to devise;
And trewely, as to my jugement,
Me thinketh it a thing impertinent,
Save that he wol, conveyen his matere;
But this is the Tale which that ye mow here.

§ Or *Linian*. The person meant was an eminent lawyer
and made a great noise (as we say) in his time,

THE CLERKES TALE.

Ther is right at the west side of Itaille,
Doun at the rote of Vefulus the cold,
A lusty plain habundant of vitaille,
Ther many a toun and tour thou maist behold,
That founded were in time of fathers old,
And many another delitable fighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markis whilom lord was of that lond,
As were his worthy elders him before,
And obeyfant, ay redy to his hond,
Were all his lieges both lesse and more :
Thus in delit he liveth, and hath don yore,
Beloved and drad, thurgh favour of Fortune,
Both of his lordes and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speken of linage,
The gentilest yborne of Lumbardie,
A faire person, and strong, and yong of age,
And ful of honour and of curtesie ;
Discret ynough, his contree for to gie,
Sauf in some thinges that he was to blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he considered nought
In time coming what might him betide,
But on his lust present was all his thought,
And for to hauke and hunt on every side ;
Wel neigh all other cures let he slide ;
And eke he nol'd (and that was worst of all)
Wedden no wif for ought that might befall.

Only that point his peple bare so fore
That flockmel on a day to him they went,
And on of hem, that wisest was of lore,
(Or elles that the lord wold best assent
That he shuld tell hem what the peple ment,
Or elles could he wel shew swiche matere)
He to the markis said as ye shull here.

O noble Markis, your humanitee
Assureth us and yveth us hardinesse,
As oft as time is of necessitee
That we to you mow tell our hevinesse ;
Accepteth, Lord, than of your gentillesse
That we with pitious herte unto you plaine,
And let your eres nat my vois disdaine.

Al have I not to don in this matere
More than another man hath in this place,
Yet for as moch as ye, my Lord so dere,
Han alway shewed me favour and grace,
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience to shewen our request,
And ye, my Lord, to don right as you lest.

For certes, Lord, so wel us liketh you
And all your werke, and ever hath don, that we
Ne couden not ourself devisen how
We mighten live in more felicittee,
Save o thing, Lord, if it your wille be
That for to be a wedded man you lest
Than were your peple in soverain hertes rest.

Boweth your nekke under the blisful yok
Of soveraintee, and not of servise,
Which that men clepen Spoufaile or Wedlok :
And thinketh, Lord, among your thoghtes wise,
How that our days passe in sondry wise ;
For though we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ride,
Ay fleth the time, it wol no man abide.

And though your grene youthe floure as yet,
In crepeth age alway as still as ston,
And deth manafeth every age, and finit
In eche estat, for ther escapeth non :
And al so certain as we knowe eche on
That we shul die, as uncertain we all
Ben of that day whan deth shal on us fall.

Accepteth than of us the trewe entent,
That never yet refuseden your hest,
And we wol, Lord, if that you wol assent,
Chese you a wise in short time at the mest
Borne of the gentillest and of the best
Of all this lond, so that it oughte seme
Honour to God and you as we can deme.

Deliver us out of all this besy drede,
And take a wif for highe Goddes sake ;
For if it so befell, as God forbede,
That thurgh your deth your linage shulde flake,
And that a strange successour shuld take
Your heritage, o ! wo were us on live ;
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wive.

Hir meke praier and hir pitous chere
Made the markis for to han pitee.
Ye wol, quod he, min owen peple dere,
To that I never er thought constrainen me :
I me rejoyced of my libertee,
That felden time is found in mariage ;
Ther I was free I moste ben in servage.

But natheles I see your trewe entent,
And trust upon your wit, and have don ay ;
Wherfore of my free will I wol assent
To wedden me as sone as ever I may :
But ther as ye han profred me to-day
To chesen we a wif, I you relese
That choiȝ, and pray you of that profer cese.

For God it wot that children often ben
Unlike hir worthy eldres hem before :
Bountee cometh al of God, not of the stren
Of which they ben ygendred and ybore :
I trust in Goddes bountee, and therefore
My mariage, and min estat and rest,
I him betake ; he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in chesing of my wif ;
That charge upon my bak I wol endure :
But I you pray and charge upon your lif
That what wif that I take ye me assure
To worship hire, while that hire lif may dure,
In word and werk both here and elles where,
As she an emperoures doughter were.

And forthermore this shuln ye swere, that ye
Again my chois shal never grutch ne strive ;
For sith I shal forgo my libertee
At your request, as ever mote I thrive
Ther as min herte is set ther wol I wive :
And but ye wol assent in swiche manere
I pray you speke no more of this matere.

With hertly will they sworn and assenten
To all this thing, ther saide not o wight nay,
Beseching him of grace, or that they wenten,
That he wold granten hem a certain day
Of his spousaile as sone as ever he may,
For yet alway the peple somewhat dred
Lest that this markis wolde no wif wed.

He granted hem a day, swiche as him lest,
On which he wold be wedded likerly,
And said he did all this at hir request ;
And they with humble herte ful buzumly,
Kneling upon hir knees ful reverently,
Him thonken all : and thus they han an end
Of hir entente, and home agen they wend.

And hereupon he to his officeres
Commandeth for the feste to purvay,
And to his privee knightes and squieres
Swiche charge he yave as hem list on hem lay,
And they to his commandement obey,
And eche of hem doth all his diligence
To do unto the feste al reverence.

Pars secunda.

Nought fer fro thilke paleis honourable,
Wher as this markis shope his mariage,
Ther stood a thorpe, of sighte delitable,
In which that poure folk of that village
Hadden hir bestes and hir herbergage,
And of hir labour toke hir sustenance,
After that the erthe yave hem habundance.

Among this poure folk ther dwelt a man
Which that was holden pourest of hem all,
But highe God somtime senden can
His grace unto a litel oxes stall ;
Janicola men of that thorpe him call :
A doughter had he, faire ynough to sight,
And Grifildis this yonge maiden hight.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Than was she on the fairest under sonne.
Ful pourely yfostred up was she ;
No likerous lust was in hire herte yronne :
Wel oster of the well than of the tonne
She dranke ; and for she wolde vertue plesse
She knew wel labour but non idel esse.

But though this mayden tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee
Ther was enclosed sad and ripe corage,
And in gret reverence and charitee
Hire olde poure fader fostred she :
A few sheep spinning on the feld she kept ;
She wolde not ben idel til she slept.

And whan she homward came she wolde bring
Wortes and other herbes times oft,
The which she shred and sethe for hire living,
And made hire bed ful hard and nothing soft ;
And ay she kept hire fadres lif on lost
With every obeisance and diligence
That child may don to fadres reverence.

Upon Grifilde, this poure creature,
Ful often sithe this markis sette his eye,
As he on hunting rode paraventure ;
And whan it fell that he might hire espie,
He not with wanton loking of folie
His eyen cast on hire, but in sad wise
Upon hire chere he wold him oft avise ;

Commending in his herte hire womanhede,
And eke hire vertue, passing any wight
Of so yong age as wel in chere as dede :
For though the peple have no gret in sight
In vertue, he considered ful right
Hire bountee, and disposed that he wold
Wedde hire only if ever he wedden shold.

The day of wedding came, but no wight can
Tellen what woman that it shulde be,
For which marvaille wondred many a man,
And saiden, whan they were in privetee,
Wol not our lord yet leve his vanitee ?
Wol he not wedde ? Alas, alas the while !
Why wol he thus himself and us begile ?

But natheles this markis hath do make
Of gemmes sette in gold and in asure
Broches and ringes, for Grifildes sake ;
And of hire clothing toke he the mesure
Of a maiden like unto hire stature,
And eke of other ornamentes all
That unto swiche a wedding shulde fall.

The time of underne of the same day
Approcheth that this wedding shulde be,
And all the paleis put was in array,
Both halle and chambres, eche in his degree,
Houses of office stuffed with plentee ;
Ther mayst thou see of deinteous vitaille
That may be found as fer as lasteth Itaille.

This real markis richely arraide,
Lordes and ladies in his compaignie,
The which unto the feste weren praide,
And of his retenue the bachelerie,
With many a foun of fondry melodie,
Unto the village of the which I told
In this array the righte way they hold.

Grifilde of this (God wot) ful innocent
That for hire shapen was all this array,
To fetchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh home as sone as ever she may ;
For wel she had herd say that thilke day
The markis shulde wedde, and if she might
She wolde fayn han seen som of that sight.

She thought I wol with other maidens stond,
That ben my felawes, in our dore, and see
The markisfesse, and therto wol I sond

To don at home, as fone as it may be,
The labour which that longeth unto me,
And than I may at leiser hire behold,
If she this way unto the Castel hold.

And as she wolde over the threswold gon
The markis came and gan hire for to call,
And she set down hire water-pot anon
Beside the threswold in an oxes stall,
And doun upon hire knees she gan to fall,
And with sad countenance kneleth still,
Til she had herd what was the lordes will.

This thoughtful markis spake unto this maid
Ful soberly, and said in this manere;
Wher is your fader, Grisildis? he said.
And she with reverence in humble chere
Answered, Lord, he is al redy here.
And in she goth withouten lenger lette,
And to the markis she hire fader sette.

He by the hond than toke this poure man,
And saide thus whan he him had aside;
Janicola, I neither may ne can
Lenger the plesance of min herte hide;
If that thou vouchesaf, what so betide,
Thy doughter wol I take or that I wend
As for my wif unto hire lives end.

Thou lovest me, that wot I wel certain,
And art my faithful liegeman ybore,
And all that liketh me, I dare wel fain,
It liketh thee, and specially therfore
Tell me that point that I have said before,
If that thou wolt unto this purpos drawe,
To taken me as for thy son in lawe?

This soden cas this man astoned so,
That red he wex, abaisht, and al quaking
He stood; unnethes said he wordes mo
But only thus; Lord, quod he, my willing
Is as ye wol, ne ageins your liking
I wol no thing, min owen Lord so dere;
Right as you list governeth this matere.

Than wol I, quod this markis fostely,
That in thy chambre I, and thou, and she,
Have a collation; and wost thou why?
For I wol ask hire if it hire wille be
To be my wif, and reule hire after me?
And all this shal be don in thy presence;
I wol not speke out of thin audience.

And in the chambre, while they were aboute
The trettee, which as ye shul after here,
The peple came into the hous withoute,
And wondred hem in how honest manere
Ententifly she kept hire fader dere:
But utterly Grisildis wonder might,
For never erst ne saw she swiche a sight.

No wonder is though that she be astoned
To see so gret a gest come in that place,
She never was to non swiche gestes woned,
For which she loked with ful pale face.
But shortly forth this matere for to chace,
Thise arn the wordes that the markis said
To this benigne veray faithful maid.

Grisilde, he said, ye shuln wel understond
It liketh to your fader and to me
That I you wedde, and eke it may so stond,
As I suppose, ye wol that it so be:
But thise demaundes aske I first (quod he)

That sin it shal be don in hasty wise,
Wol ye assent, or elles you avise?

I say this, be ye redy with good herte
To all my lust, and that I freely may,
As me best thinketh, do you laugh or sinerte,
And never ye to grutchen, night ne day,
And eke whan I say Ya ye say Nay,
Neither by word ne frowning countenance?
Swere this, and here I fwere our alliance.

Wondring upon this thing, quaking for drede,
She saide, Lorde, indigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede,
But as ye wol yourself, right so wol I:
And here I fwere that never willingly
In werk ne thought I n'ill you disobeie
For to be ded, though me were loth to deie.

This is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he.
And forth he goth with a ful sobre chere
Out at the dore, and after than came she,
And to the peple he said in this manere;
This is my wif, quod he, that stondeth here;
Honoureth her, and loveth hire, I pray,
Who so me loveth; ther n'is no more to say.

And for that nothing of hire olde gere
She shulde bring into his hous, he bad
That women shuld despoilen hire right there,
Of which thise ladies weren nothing glad
To handle hire clothes wherin she was clad:
But natheles this maiden bright of hew
Fro foot to hed they clothed han all new.

Hire heres han they kempt, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fingres smal
A coroune on hire hed they han ydressed,
And sette hire ful of nouches gret and smal.
Of hire array what shuld I make a tale?
Unneth the peple hire knew for hire fairnesse
Whan she transmewed was in swiche richesse.

This markis hath hire spoused with a ring
Brought for the same cause, and than hire sette
Upon an hors snow-white and wel ambling,
And to his paleis, or be lenger lette,
(With joyful peple that hire lad and mette)
Conveyed hire; and thus the day they spende
In revel til the sonne gan desceade.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I say that to this new markisesse
God hath swiche favour sent hire of his grace,
That it ne semeth not by likelinessse
That she was borne and fed in rudenesse,
As in a cote or in an oxes stall,
But nourished in an emperoures hall.

To every wight she waxen is so dere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore,
And fro hire birthe knew hire yere by yere,
Unnethes trowed they, but dorst han swore
That to Janicle, of which I spake before,
She doughter n'as; for as by conjecture
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For though that ever vertuous was she,
She was encrefed in swiche excellence
Of thewes good, yfet in high bountee,
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence,
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And coude so the peples herte embrace,
That eche hire loveth that loketh on hire face.

Not only of Saluces in the toun
Published was the bountee of hire name,
But eke beside in many a regioun;
If on faith wel, another faith the same:
So spredeth of hire hie bountee the fame,
That men and women, yong as wel as old,
Gon to Saluces upon hire to behold.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but really,
Wedded with fortunat honestee;
In Goddes pees liveth ful esily
At home, and grace ynough outward had he:
And for he saw that under low degree
Was honest vertu hid, the peple him held
A prudent man, and that is seen ful feld.

Not only this Grifildis thurgh hire wit
Coude all the fete of wifly homlineffe;
But eke whan that the cas required it,
The comune profit coude she redresse:
Ther n'as discord, rancour, ne hevinesse,
In all the lond that she ne coude appese,
And wisely bring hem all in hertes ese.

Though that hire husbond absent were or non
If gentilmen or other of that contree
Were wroth, she wolde bringen hem at on.
So wise and ripe wordes hadde she,
And jugement of so grete equitee,
That she from heaven sent was, as men wend,
Peple to save, and every wrong to amend.

Not longe time after that this Grifilde
Was wedded, she a doughter hath ybore,
All had hire lever han borne a knave childe:
Glad was the markis and his folk therfore;
For though a maiden childe come all before,
She may unto a knave child atteine,
By likelyhed, fin she n'is not barreine.

Pars tertia.

Ther fell, as it befalleth times mo,
Whan that this childe had fouked but a throwe,
This markis in his herte longed so
To tempt his wif, hire sadnesse for to knowe,
That he ne might out of his herte throwe
This marveillous desir his wif to assay:
Nedlees, God wot, he thought hire to affray.

He had assaied hire ynough before,
And found hire ever good: what needeth it
Hire for to tempt, and alway more and more?
Though some men praise it for a subtil wit;
But as for me, I say that evil it sit
To assay a wife whan that it is no nede,
And putten hire in anguish and in drede.

For which this markis wrought in this manere:
He came a-night alone ther as she lay
With stern face and with full trouble chere,
And sayde thus, Grifilde, (quod he) that day
That I you toke out of your poure array,
And put you in estat of high noblesse,
Ye han it not forgotten, as I gesse;

I say, Grifilde, this present dignitee,
In which that I have put you, as I trow,
Maketh you not forgetful for to be
That I you toke in poure estat ful low,
For ony wele ye mote yourselven know,
Take hede of every word that I you say,
Ther is ne wight that hereth it but we tway.

Ye wote yourself wel how that ye came here
Into this hous, it is not long ago;
And though to me ye be right lefs and dere,
Unto my gentils ye be nothing so:
They say to hem it is gret shame and wo
For to be fuggetes and ben in servage
To thee, that borne art of a smal linage.

And namely fin thy doughter was ybore,
Thise wordes hen they spoken douteles;
But I desire, as I have done before,
To live my lif with hem in rest and pees:
I may not in this cas be recheles:
I mote do with thy doughter for the best,
Not as I wold, but as my gentils left.

And yet, God wote, this is ful loath to me;
But natheles withouten your wetting
I wol nought do; but thus wol I (quod he)
That ye to me assenten in this thing;
Shew now your patience in your werking
That ye me hight and swore in your village
The day that maketh was our mariage.

Whan she had herd all this, she not ameved
Neyther in word, in chere, ne countenance,
(For as it semed, she was not agreved)
She sayde, Lord, all lith in your pleasance;
My child and I with hertely obeisance
Ben youres all, and ye may save or spill
Your owen thing: werketh after your will.

Ther may no thing, so God my soule save,
Like unto you that may displese me;
Ne I desire nothing for to have,
Ne drede for to lese, sauf only ye:
This will is in myn herte, and ay shall be,
No length of time or deth may this deface,
Ne change my courage to an other place.

Glad was this markis for hire answering,
But yet he feined as he were not so;
Al drery was his chere and his loking,
Whan that he shuld out of the chamber go.
Sone after this, a furlong way or two,
He prively hath told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wif him sent.

A maner sergeant was this prive man,
The which he faithful often founden had
In things gret, and eke swiche folk wel can
Don execution on things bad;
The lord knew wel that he him loved and drad.
And whan this sergeant wist his lordes will,
Into the chambre he stalked him ful still.

Madame, he sayd, ye mote foryeve it me,
Though I do thing to which I am constrained;
Ye ben so wise, that right wel knownen ye
That lordes hestes may not ben yfeined;
They may wel be bewailed and complained,
But men mote nedes to hir lust obey,
And so wol I; ther n'is no more to say.

The child I am commanded for to take—
And spake no more, but out the child he hent
Dispitously, and gan a chere to make,
As though he wold have slain it or he went,
Grifildis must al suffer and al consent;
And as a lambe she sitteth meke and still,
And let this cruel sergeant do his will.

Suspicious was the diffame of this man,
 Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
 Suspect the time in which he this began:
 Alas! hire doughter, that she loved so
 She wende he wold han flaien it right tho;
 But natheles she neither wept ne fiked,
 Conforming hire to that the markis liked.

But at the last to speken she began,
 And mekely she to the sergeant praid
 (So as he was a worthie gentilman)
 That she might kisse hire child or that it deid;
 And in hire barme this litel child she leid;
 With ful sad face, and gan the child to blisse,
 And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she sayd in hire benigne vois;
 Farewel, my child, I shal the never see,
 But sin I have thee marked with the crois,
 Of thilke fader yblest mot thou be
 That for us died upon a crois of tree,
 Thy soule, litel child, I him betake,
 For this night shalt thou dien for my sake.

I trow that to a norice in this cas
 It had been hard this ronthe for to see;
 Wel might a moder than han cried Alas!
 But natheles so sad stedfast was she,
 That she endured all adversitee.

And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
 Have here agen your litel yonge mayde.
 Goth now (quod she) and doth my lordes heft:
 And o thing wold I pray you of your grace,
 But if my lord forbade you at the left,
 Burieth this litel body in som place
 That bestes ne no briddes it to-race.
 But he no word to that purpos wold say,
 But toke the child, and went upon his way.

This sergeant came unto his lord again,
 And of Grisildes wordes and hire chere
 He told him point for point, in short and plain,
 And him presented with his doughter dere.
 Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his manere,
 But natheles his purpos held he still,
 As lordes don whan they wol have hir will;

And bad this sergeant that he prively
 Shulde this child ful softe wind and wrappe,
 With alle circumstances tendrely,

And carry it in a cofre or in a lappe;
 But upon peine his hed of for to swappe
 That no man shulde know of his entent,
 Ne whens he came ne whider that he went;

But at Boleigne, unto his suster dere,
 That thilke time of Pavie was Countesse,
 He shuld it take and shew hire this matere,
 Beseching hire to don hire besinneffe,
 This child to fostren in all gentilleffe;
 And whose child that it was he bade hire hide
 From every wight, for ought that may betide.

The sergeant goth, and hath fulfild this thing.

But to this marquis now retorne we;
 For now goth he ful fast, imagining
 If by his wives chere he mighte see,
 Or by hire wordes apperceive, that she
 Were changed; but he never could hire finde
 But ever in on ylike sad and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as besy in service

And eke in love, as she was wont to be,
 Was she to him in every manner wise;
 Ne of hire doughter not a word spake she:
 Non accident for non adversitee
 Was seen in hire, ne never hire doughters name
 Ne nevened she for ernest ne for game.

Pars quarta.

In this estat ther passed ben foure yere
 Er she with childe was, but as God wold,
 A knave childe sha bare by this Waltere
 Ful gracious, and fair for to behold;
 And whan that folk it to his fader told,
 Not only he but all his contree mery
 Was for this childe, and God they thonk and hery.

Whan it was two yere old, and from the brest
 Departed of his norice, on a day
 This markis caughte yet another left
 To tempte his wif yet ofter, if he may.
 O! nedeles was she tempted in assay:
 But wedded men ne connen no mesure
 Whan that they finde a patient creature.

Wif, quod this markis, ye han herd or this
 My peple sikely beren our mariage,
 And namely sin my sone yboren is,
 Now is it werse than ever in al our age;
 The murmur sleth myn herte and my corage,
 For to myn eres cometh the vois so smerte,
 That it wel nie destroyed hath myn herte.

Now say they thus; Whan Walter is agon,
 Than shall the blood of Janicle succede,
 And ben our lord, for other han we non.
 Swiche wordes sayn my peple, it is no drede;
 Wel ought I of swiche murmur taken hede,
 For certainly I drede al swiche sentence,
 Though they not plainen in myn audience.

I worde live in pees if that I might;
 Wherefore I am disposed utterly,
 As I his suster served er by night,
 Right so thinke I to serve him prively.
 This warne I you, that ye not sodenly
 Out of yourself for no wo shuld outraie;
 Beth patient, and therof I you praie.

I have, quod she, sayd thus, and ever shal,
 I wol no thing, ne n'ill ne thing certain,
 But as you list: not greveth me at al
 Though that my doughter and my sone be flain
 At your commandement: that is to fain,
 I have not had no part of children twein
 But first sikeneffe and after wo and peine.

Ye ben my lord, doth with your owen thing
 Right as you list: asketh no rede of me;
 For as I left at home al my clothing
 Whan I came first to you, right so (quod she)
 Left I my will and all my libertee,
 And toke your clothing; wherefore I you prey
 Doth your plesance, I wol youre lust obey.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
 Your will to know er ye your lust me told,
 I wold it do withouten negligence:
 But now I wote your lust, and what ye wold,
 All your plesance ferme and stable I hold;
 For wist I that my deth might do you ese
 Right gladely wold I dien you to ples.

Deth may not maken no comparisoun
Unto your love. And whan this markis say
The constance of his wif, he cast adoun
His eyen two, and wondreth how she may
In patience suffer al this array;
And forth he goth with drery contenance.
But to his herte it was ful gret plesance.

This ugly fergeant in the same wise
That he hire doughter caughte, right so he
(Or werse, if men can any werse devise)
Hath hent hire sone, that ful was of beautee:
And ever in on so patient was she
That she no chere made of hevinesse,
But kist hire sone, and after gan it blesse.

Save this she praied him, if that he might,
Hire litel sone he wold in erthe grave,
His tendre limmes, delicat to fight,
Fro foules and fro bestes for to save.
But she non answer of him mighte have:
He wen his way as him no thing ne rought,
But to Boloigne he tenderly it brought.

This markis wondereth ever lenger the more
Upon hire patience: and if that he
Ne hadde sothely knowen ther before
That parfitly hire children loved she,
He wold han wend that of som subtiltee
And of malice, or for cruel corage,
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next himself certain,
She loved hire children best in every wise.
But now of women wold I asken fayn,
If this assaies mighten not suffice?
What coud a sturdy husbond more devise
To preve hire wis hood and hire stedfastnesse,
And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swiche condition,
That whan they han a certain purpos take,
They cannot stint of hir entention,
But right as they were bounden to a stake,
They wol not of hir firste purpos flake:
Right so this markis fully hath purposed
To tempt his wif as he wes first disposed.

He waiteth if by word or contenance
That she to him was changed of corage;
But never coud he finden varience;
She was aye on in herte and in visage;
And aye the further she was in age,
The more trewe (if that it were possible)
She was to him in love, and penible.

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
Ther was but o will; for as Walter lest,
The same lust was hire plesance also;
And God be thanked, all fell for the best.
She shewed wel for ne wordly unrest
A wif, as of hireself, no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect but as hire husbond wolde.

The sclandre of Walter wonder wide spradde,
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a poure woman wedded hadde,
Hath murdred both his children prively:
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peples ere
Ther came no word but that they murdred were.

For which ther as his peple therbefore
Had loved him wel, the sclandre of his diffame
Made hem that they him hateden therefore:
To ben a mudrour is an hateful name.
But natheles for ernest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos n'olde stente:
To tempt his wif was sette all his entente.

Whan that his doughter twelf yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wise
Enformed of his will, sent his message,
Commanding him swiche billes to devise
As to his cruel purpos may suffice,
How that the Pope, as for his peples rest,
Bade him to wed another if him lest.

I say he bade they shulden contrefete
The Popes bulles, making mention
That he hath leve his firste wif to lete,
As by the Popes dispensation
To stinten rancour and dissention
Betwix his peple and him. Thus spake the bull;
The which they han published at the full.

The rude peple, as no wonder is,
Wenden ful wel that it had ben right so;
But whan this tidings came to Grisildis,
I deme that hire herte was ful of wo;
But she ylike sad for evermo
Disposed was, this humble creature,
The adversitee of fortune al to endure;

Abiding ever his lust and his plesance
To whom that she was yeven herte and al,
As to hire veray worldly suffisance.
But shortly if this storie tell I shal,
This markis writen hath in special
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
And secretly he to Boloigne it sente

To the Erl of Pavie, which that hadde the
Wedded his suster, prayed he specially
To bringen home agein his children two
In honourable estat al openly;
But o thing he him prayed utterly,
That he to no wight, though men wold enquire,
Shulde not tell whos children that they were.

But say the maiden shuld ywedded be
Unto the Markis of Saluces anon.
And as this erl was prayed, so did he;
For at day sette he on his way is gon
Toward Saluces, and lordes many on
In rich arraie, this maiden for to gide,
Hire yonge brother riding hire beside.

Arraied was toward hire mariage
This freshe maiden, ful of gemmes clere,
Hire brother, which that seven yere was of age,
Arraied eke ful fresh in his manere:
And thus in gret nobleffe and with glad chere
Toward Saluces shaping hir journey
Fro day to day they riden in hir way.

Pars quinta.

Among al his, after this wicked usage,
This markis yet his wif to tempten more
To the uttereste prefe of hire corage,
Fully to have experience and lore
If that she were as stedfast as before,

He on a day in open audience

Ful boistously hath said hire this sentence :

Certes, Grisilde, I had ynough plesance
To han you to my wif for your goodnesse,
And for your trouthe and for your obeyfance,
Not for your linage ne for your richesse ;
But now know I in very sothfastnesse
That in gret lordship, If I me wel avise,
Ther is gret servitude in sondry wise.

I may not don as every ploughman may :
My peple me constreinet for to take
Another wif, and crien day by day ;
And eke the Pope, rancour for to flake,
Consenteth it, that dare I undertake :
And trewely thus moche I wol you say,
My newe wif is coming by the way.

Be strong of herte, and void anon hire place,
And thilke dower that ye broughten me
Take it agen ; I grant it of my grace.
Returneth to your fadres hous, (quod he)
No man may alway have prosperitee.
With even herte I rede you to endure
The stroke of Fortune or of aventure.

And she agen answerd in patience ;
My Lord, quod she, I wote and wist alway
How that betwixen your magnificence
And my poverté no wight ne can ne may
Maken comparison ; it is no nay :
I ne held me never digne in no manere
To be your wif, ne yet your chamberere.

And in this hous ther ye me lady made
(The highe God take I for my witnesse,
And all so wisly he my soule glad)
I never held ne lady me maistresse,
But humble servant to your worthinesse,
And ever shal, while that my life may dure,
Aboven every wordly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobley,
Wheras I was not worthy for to be,
That thanke I God and you, to whom I prey
Foryelde it you ; ther is no more to sey.
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
And with him dwell unto my lives ende.

Ther I was fostred of a childe ful smal ;
Til I be ded, my lif ther wol I lede,
A widew clene in body, herte, and al :
For sith I yave to you my maidenhede,
And am your trewe wif, it is no drede,
God shilde swiche a lordes wif to take
Another man to husbond or to make.

And of your newe wif God of his grace
So graunte you wele and prosperite,
For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,
In which that I was blisful wont to be :
For sith it liketh you, my Lord, (quod she)
That whilom weren all myn hertes rest,
That I shal gon, I wol go whan you lest.

But ther as ye me profre swiche dowaire
As I first brough, it is wel in my mind
It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire,
The which to me were hard now for to find.
O goode God ! how gentil and how kind
Ye semed by your speche and your visage
The day that maked was oure marriage !

But soth is said, algate I find it trewe,
For in effect it preved is on me,
Love is not old as whan that it is newe.
But certes, Lord, for non adversitee
To dein in this cas, it shal not be
That ever in word or werke I shal repent
That I you yave min herte in hole entent.

My Lord, ye wote that in my fadres place
Ye did me stripe out of my poure wede,
And richely ye clad me of your grace ;
To you brought I nought elles out of drede
But faith, and nakednesse, and maidenhede ;
And here agen your clothing I restore,
And eke your wedding ring, for evermore.

The remenant of your jeweles redy be
Within your chambre, I dare it sailly sain.
Naked out of my fadres hous (quod she)
I came, and naked I mote turne again.
All your plesance wolde I folwe sain ;
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smokles out of your paleis went.

Ye coude not do so dishonest a thing.
That thilke wombe, in which your children lay,
Shulde before the peple in my walking
Be seen al bare ; wherefore I you prey
Let me not like a worme go by the way :
Remembre you, min owen Lord so dere,
I was your wif, though I unworthy were.

Wherefore in guerdon of my maidenhede,
Which that I brought and not agen I bere,
As vouchesauf to yeve me to my mede
But swiche a smok as I was wont to were,
That I therwith may wrie the wombe of hire
That was your wif. And here I take my leve
Of you, min owen Lord, lest I you greve.

The smok, quod he, that thou hast on thy bake
Let it be still, and bere it forth with thee.
But wel unnethes thilke word he spake,
But went his way for routhe and for pitee.
Before the folk hireselven striperh she,
And in hire smok, with foot and hed all bare,
Toward hire fadres hous forth is she fare.

The folk hire folwen weping in hir wey,
And Fortune ay they cursen as they gon ;
But she fro weping kept hire eyen drey,
Ne in this time word ne spak she non.
Hire fader, that this tiding herd anon,
Curseth the day and time that Nature
Shope him to ben a lives creature.

For out of doute this old poure man
Was ever in suspect of hire mariage ;
For ever he demed, sin it first began,
That whan the lord fulfilled had his corage,
Him wolde thinke it were a disparage
To his estat so lowe for to alight,
And voiden hire as sone as ever he might.

Agein his doughter hastily goth he,
(For he by noise of folk knew hire coming)
And with hire olde cote, as it might be,
He covereth hire, ful forwefully wepin
But on hire body might he it not bring,
For rude was the cloth, and more of age
By daies fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader for a certain space
Dwelleth this flour of wisly patience,

That nother by hire wordes ne hire face,
 Beforn the folk, ne eke in hir absence,
 Ne shewed she that hire was don offence,
 Ne of hire high estat no remembrance
 Ne hadde she as by hire contenance.

No wonder is, for in hire gret estat
 Hire gost was ever in pleine humilitee;
 No tendre mouth, no herte delicat,
 No pompe, no semblant of realtee,
 But ful of patient benignitee,
 Discrete, and prideles, ay honourable,
 And to hire husbond ever meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and most for his humbleste,
 As clerkes whan hem list can wel endite,
 Namely of men, but as in sothfastnesse,
 Though clerkes preisen women but a lite,
 Ther can no man in humbleste him acquite
 As woman can, ne can be half so trewe
 As women ben, but it be falle of newe.

Pars sexta.

Fro Boloigne is this Earl of Pavie come,
 Of which the fame up sprang to more and lesse :
 And to the peples eres all and some
 Was couth eke that a newe markiseffe
 He with him brought in swiche pomp and richesse,
 That never was ther seen with mannes eye
 So noble array in al West Lumbardie.

The markis, which that shope and knew all this,
 Er that this erl was come sent his messaige
 For thilke poure sely Grisildis,
 And she with humble herte and glad visage,
 Not with no swollen thought in hire corage,
 Came at his hest, and on hire knees hire sette,
 And reverently and wisely she him grette.

Grisilde, (quod he) my will is utterly
 This maiden that shal wedded be to me
 Received be to-morwe as really
 As it possible is in myn hous to be;
 And eke that every wight in his degree
 Have his estat in sitting and service,
 And high plesance, as I can best devise.

I have no woman sufficient certain
 The chambres for to array in ordinance
 After my lust, and therefore wolde I fain
 That thin were all swiche manere governance;
 Thou knowest eke of old all my plesance:
 Though thin array be bad, and evil besey,
 Do thou thy devoir at the leste wey.

Not only, Lord, that I am glad (quoth she)
 To don your lust, but I desire also
 You for to serve and plesse in my degree
 Withouten fainting, and shal evermo:
 Ne never for no wele ne for no wo
 Ne shal the gost within myn herte stente
 To love you best with all my trewe entente.

And with that word she gan the hous to dight,
 And tables for to sette, and beddes make,
 And peined her to don all that she might,
 Praying the chambereres for Goddes sake
 To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake;
 And she, the moste serviceable of all,
 Hath every chambre arraied and his hall.

Abouten undern gan this erl alight
 That with him brought thise noble children twey,
 For which the peple ran to see the sight
 Of hir array, so richely besey;
 And that at erst amonges hem they sey
 That Walter was no fool, though that him lest
 To change his wif, for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they demen all,
 Than his Grisilde, and more tendre of age,
 And fairer fruit betwene hem shulde fall,
 And more plesant, for hire high linage:
 Hire brother eke so faire was of visage
 That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesance,
 Commending now the markis governance.

O stormy peple, unsad and ever untrew,
 And undiscrete and changing as a fane,
 Delighting ever in rombel that is newe,
 For like the mone waxen ye and wane:
 A ful of clapping, dere ynough a jane,
 Your dome is fals, your constance evil preveth,
 Ay ful gret fool is he that on you leveth!

Thus saiden fadde folk in that citee
 Whan that the peple gased up and down,
 For they were glad right for the noveltee
 To have a new lady of hir toun.
 No more of this make I now mentioun,
 But to Grisilde agen I wol me dresse.
 And tell hire constance and hire besinesse.

Ful besy was Grisilde in every thing
 That to the feste was appertinent;
 Right naught was she abaist of hire clothing,
 Though it were rude, and somdel eke to-rent.
 But with glade chere to the yate is went,
 With other folk, to grete the markiseffe,
 And after that doth forth hire besinesse.

With so glad chere his gastes she receiveth,
 And conningly everich in his degree,
 That no default no man apperceiveth,
 But ay they wondren what she mighte be
 That in so poure array was for to see,
 And coude swiche honour and reverence,
 And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In all this mene while she ne stent
 This maide and eke hire brother to commend,
 With all hire herte in ful benigne entent,
 So wel that no man coude hire preise amend;
 But at the last whan that thise lordes wend
 To sitten down to mete, he began to call
 Grisilde, as she was besy in the hall,

Grisilde, (quod he, as it were in his play)
 How liketh thee my wif and hire beautee?
 Right wel, my Lord, quod she, for in good say
 A fairer saw I never non than she;
 I pray to God yeve you prosperitee,
 And so I hope that he wol to you send
 Plesance ynough unto your lives end.

O thing beseech I you and warne also,
 That ye ne prikke with no turmenting
 This tendre maiden as ye han do me.
 For she is fostred in hire nourishing
 More tendrely, and to my supposing
 She mighte not adversitee endure
 As coude a poure fostred creature.

And whan this Walter saw hire patience,
Hire glad chere, and no malice at all,
And he so often hadde hire don offence,
And she ay fadde and constant as a wall,
Continuing ever hire innocence over all,
This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse
To rewe upon hire wisly stedfastnesse.

This is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he,
Be now no more agast ne evil apaid;
I have thy faith and thy benignitee,
As wel as ever woman was, affaid,
In gret estat and pouerelich arraid :
Now know I, dere wif, thy stedfastnesse;
And hire in armes toke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder toke of it no kepe;
She herde not what thing he to hire said;
She ferde as she had stert out of a slepe,
Til she out of hire masednesse abraid.
Grisilde, quod he, by God that for us deid,
Thou art my wif; non other I ne have
Ne never had, as God my soule save.

This is thy doughter which thou hast supposed
To be my wif; that other faithfully
Shal be min heir, as I have ay disposed;
Thou bare hem of thy body trewely;
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively :
Take hem agen, for now maist thou not say
That thou hast lorn non of thy children tway.

And folk that otherwise han said of me,
I warne hem wel that I have don this dede
For no malice ne for no crueltee,
But for to assay in thee thy womanhede,
And not to flee my children (God forbede)
But for to kepe hem prively and still
Til I thy purpos knew and all thy will.

Whan she this herd, afwounedoun she falleth
For pitous joye; and after hire swouning
She both hire yonge children to hire calleth,
And in hire armes, pitously weping,
Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissing
Ful like a moder, with hire salte teres
She bathed both hir visage and hir heres.

O, swiche a pitous thing it was to see
Hire swouning, and hire humble vois to here!
Grand mercy! Lord, God thank it you (quod she)
That ye han saved me my childten dere :
Now rekke I never to be ded right here,
Sin I stond in your love and in your grace,
No force of deth, ne whan my spirit pace.

O tendre, o dere, o yonge, children mine!
Your woful mother wened stedfastly
That cruel houndes or som foul vermine
Had eten you; but God of his mercy
And your benigne fader tendrely
Hath don you kepe : and in that same stound
Al sodenly she swapt adoun to ground.

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she
Hire children two, whan she gan hem embrace,
That with gret sleight and gret difficultee
The children from hire arm they gan arrace.
O! many a tere on many a pitous face
Doun ran of hem that stoden hire beside;
Unnethe abouten hire might they abide.

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sorwe slaketh;
She riseth up abashed from hire trance,

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And every wight hire joye and feste maketh
Til she hath caught agen hire contenance.
Walter hire doth so faithfully plesance,
That it was deintee for to seen the chere
Betwixt hem two sin they ben met in fere.

Thise ladies, whan that they hir time fey,
Han taken hire, and into chambre gon,
And stripen hire out of hire rude array,
And in a clothe of gold that brighte shone,
With a coroune of many a riche stone
Upon hire hed, they into hall hire broughte,
And ther she was honoured as hire ought.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful end;
For every man and woman doth his might
This day in mirth and revel to dispend,
Til on the welkin shone the sterres bright;
For more solempne in every mannes sight
This feste was, and greter of costage,
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yere in high prosperitee
Liven thise two in concord and in rest,
And richely his doughter married he
Unto a lord, on of the worthiest
Of all Itaille, and than in pees and rest
His wives fader in his court he kepeth
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage,
In rest and pees, after his fadres day,
And fortunat was eke in mariage,
Al put he not his wif in gret assay :
This world is not so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath ben in olde times yore,
And herkne what this auctour faith therfore.

This story is said, not for that wives shuld
Folwe Grisilde as in humilitee,
For it were importable tho they wold,
But for that every wight in his degree
Shulde be constant in adversitee
As was Grisilde, therfore Petrark writeth
This storie, which with high stile he enditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient
Unto a mortal man, wel more we ought
Receiven all in gree that God us sent.
For gret skill is he preve that he wrought;
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought,
As faith Seint Jame, if ye his pistell rede;
He preveth folk al day, it is no drede;

And suffreth us, as for our exercise,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee
Ful often to be bete in sondry wise,
Not for to know our will, for certes he,
Or we were borne, knew all our freeletee,
And for our best is all his governance;
Let us than live in vertuous suffrance.

But o word, Lordings, herkne or I go :
It were ful hard to finden now adayes
In all a toun Grisildes three or two;
For if that they were put to swiche assayes
The gold of hem hath now so bad alayes
With bras, that though the coine be faire at eye
It wolde rather braft atwo than plie.

For which here, for the Wives love of Bathe,
Whas lif and al hire secte God maintene
In high maistrie, and elles were it scathe,

F

I wol with lusty herte freshe and grene
Say you a song to gladen you I wene,
And let us stint of ernestful matere.
Herkeneth my song, that saith in this manere :

Grifilde is ded, and eke hire patience,
And both at ones buried in Itaille,
For which I erie in open audience,
No wedded man so hardy be to assaille
His wives patience, in trust to find
Grifildes, for in certain he shal faille.

O noble wives ! ful of high prudence,
Let non humilitee your tonges naile,
Ne let no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of you a storie of swiche mervaille
As of Grifildis, patient and kinde,
Lest Chichevache you swalwe in hire entraille.

Folweth Ecco, that holdeth no silence,
But ever answereth at the countretaille :
Beth not bedaffed for your innocence,
But sharply taketh on you the governaille :
Emprenteth wel this lesson in your minde

For comun profit, sith it may availle,
Ye archewives ! stondeth ay at defence,
Sin ye be strong as is a gret camaille,
Ne suffreth not that men do you offence.
And sclendre wives, feble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tigre yond in Inde ;
Ay clappeth as a mill I you counsaile.

Ne drede hem not, doth hem no reverence,
For though thin husband armed be in maille,
The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest and eke his aventaille :
In jalousie I rede eke thou him binde,
And thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be faire, ther folk ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage and thin aparaille ;
If thou be foule, be free of thy dispence ;
To get thee frendes ay do thy travaille :
Be ay of chere as light as lese on linde,
And let him care, and wepe, and wringe, and
waille.

THE MARCHANTES PROLOGUE.

THE MARCHANTES PROLOGUE.

WEPING and wailing, care, and other sorwe,
I have ynough on even and on morwe,
Quod the Marchant, and so have other mo
That wedded ben; I trowe that it be so,
For wel I wot it fareth so by me.
I have a wif the werste that may be,
For though the fend to hire ycoupled were,
She wolde him overmatche, I dare wel fwere.
What shulde I you reherse in special
Hire high malice? she is a shrew at al.

Ther is a long and a large difference
Betwix Grisildes grete patience
And of my wife the passing crueltee.
Were I unbounden, all so mote I the,
I wolde never eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men live in sorwe and care;

Affay it who so wol, and he shal finde
That I say soth, by Seint Thomas of Inde,
As for the more part, I say not alle;
God shilde that it shulde so befall.

A, good Sire Hoste, I have ywedded be
Thise monethes two, and more not parde;
And yet I trowe that he that all his lif
Wifles hath ben, though that men wolde him rise
Into the herte, ne conde in no manere
Tellen so much sorwe as I you here
Coud tellen of my wives cursednesse. [bless,

Now, quod our Hoste, Marchant, so God you
Sin ye so mochel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray you tell us part.

Gladly, quod he, but of min owen sore,
For fory herte I tellen may no more.

THE MARCHANTES TALE*.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in Lumbardie
A worthy knight, that born was at Pavie,
In which he lived in gret prosperitee;
And sixty yere a wifles man was he,
And folwed ay his bodily delit
On women ther as was his appetit,
As don thise fooles that ben feculere.
And whan that he was passed sixty yere,
Were it for holinesse or for dotage
I cannot sain, but swiche a gret corage
Hadde this knight to ben a wedded man,
That day and night he doth all that he can
To espie wher that he might wedded be,
Praying our Lord to granten him that he
Mighte ones knowen of that blisful lif
That is betwix an husband and his wif,

And for to live under that holy bond
With which God firste man and woman bond,
Non other lif (said he) is worth a bene;
For wedlok is so esy and so clene
That in this world it is a paradise.
Thus saith this olde knight that was so wise.

And certainly, as soth as God is king,
To take a wif it is a glorious thing;
And namely whan a man is old and hore,
Than is a wif the fruit of his trefore;
Than shuld he take a yong wif and a faire,
On which he might engendren him an heire,
And lede his lif in joye and in solas,
Wheras thise bachelers singen alas!
Whan that they finde any adversitee
In love, which n'is but childish vanitee.
And trewely it fit wel to be so
That bachelers have often peine and wo;

* Old January marrieth young May, and for his unequal match receiveth a foul reward. *Urry*,

On brotel ground they bilde, and brotelnesse
 They finden whan they wenen sikernesse;
 They live but as a bird or as a beste,
 In libertee and under non areste,
 Ther as a wedded man in his estat
 Liveth a lif blisful and ordinat,
 Under the yoke of mariage ybound;
 Wel may his herte in joye and blisse abound:
 For who can be so buxom as a wif?
 Who is so trewe and eke so ententif
 To kepe him, fike and hole, as is his make?
 For wele or wo she n'ill him not forsake;
 She n'is not wery him to love and serve,
 Though that he lie bedrede til that he sterve.

And yet som clerkes fain it is not so,
 Of which he Theophrast is on of tho.
 What force though Theophrast list for to lie?

Ne tak no wif, quod he, for husbondrie,
 As for to spare in houshold thy dispenche:
 A trewe servant doth more diligence
 Thy good to kepe, than doth thin owen wif,
 For she wol claimen half part al hire lif.
 And if that thou be fike, so God me save,
 Thy veray frendes or a trewe knave
 Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
 After thy good, and hath don many a day.

This sentence, and an hundred thinges werse,
 Writeth this man, ther God his bones curse.
 But take no kepe of all swiche vanitee;
 Desieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.

A wif is Goddes yeste veraily;
 All other maner yestes hardely,
 As londes, rentes, pasture, or commune,
 Or mebles, all ben yestes of Fortune,
 That passen as a shadow on the wall;
 But drede thou not if plainly speke I shal;
 A wif wol last and in thin hous endure
 Wel lenger than thee list paraventure.

Mariage is a ful grete sacrament;
 He which that hath no wif I hold him shent;
 He liveth helples and all desolat:
 (I speke of folk in secular estat)
 And herkneth why, I say not this for nought,
 That woman is for mannes helpe ywrought:
 The highe God, whan he had Adam maked,
 And saw him al alone belly naked,
 God of his grete goodnesse saide than,
 Let us now make an helpe unto this man
 Like to himself, and than he made him Eve.

Here may ye see, and hereby may ye preve,
 That a wif is mannes helpe and his comfort,
 His paradis terrestre, and his disport:
 So buxom and so vertuous is she,
 They mosten nedes live in unitee:
 O flesh they ben, and o flesh, as I gesse,
 Hath but on herte in wele and in distresse.

A wif? a! Seinte Marie, *benedicite!*
 How might a man have any adversite
 That hath a wif? certes I cannot seye.
 The blisse the which that is betwix hem tweye
 Ther may no tonge telle or herte thinke.
 If he be poure, she helpeth him to swinke;
 She kepeth his good, and wasteth never a del;
 All that hire husbond doth, hire liketh wel:

She saith not ones, Nay, whan he saith, Ye;
 Do this, saith he; Al redy, Sire, saith she.

O blisful ordre, o wedlok precious!
 Thou art so mery and eke so vertuous,
 And so commended and approved eke,
 That every man that holt him worth a leke,
 Upon his bare knees ought all his lif
 Thanken his God that him hath sent a wif,
 Or elles pray to God him for to send
 A wif to last unto his lives end;
 For than his lif is set in sikernesse,
 He may not be deceived, as I gesse,
 So that he werche after his wives rede;
 Than may he boldly beren up his hede,
 They ben so trewe, and therwithal so wise;
 For which, if thou wilt werchen as the wif,
 Do alway so as women wol thee rede.

Lo how that Jacob, as thise clerkes rede,
 By good conseil of his mother Rebekke
 Bounde the kiddes skin about his nekke,
 For which his fadres benifon he wan.

Lo Judith, as the storie eke tell can,
 By good conseil she Goddes peple kept,
 And slow him Holofernes while he slept.

Lo Abigail, by good conseil how she
 Saved hire husbond Nabal, whan that he
 Shuld han be slain. And loke, Hester also
 By good consell delivered out of wo
 The peple of God, and made him Mardochee
 Of Assuere enhansed for to be.

Ther n'is no thing in gree superlatif
 (As saith Senek) above an humble wif.
 Suffer thy wives tonge, as Caton bit;
 She shal command and thou shalt suffren it,
 And yet she wol obey of curtesie.

A wif is keper of thin husbondrie:
 Wel may the fike man bewaile and wepe
 Ther as ther is no wif the hous to kepe.
 I warne thee, if wisely thou wilt werche,
 Love wel thy wif, as Crist loveth his cherche;
 If thou lovest thyself, love thou thy wif.
 No man hateth his flesh, but in his lif
 He fostreth it, and therefore bid I thee
 Cherish thy wif, or thou shalt never the.
 Husbond and wif, what so men jape or play,
 Of worldly folk holden the fiker way:
 They ben so knit ther may non harm betide,
 And namely upon the wives side.

For which this January, of whom I told,
 Considered hath within his dayes old
 The lusty lif, the vertuous quite,
 That is in mariage honey-swete,
 And for his frendes on a day he sent
 To tellen hem th' effect of his entent.

With face sad his tale he hath hem told:
 He sayde, Frendes, I am hore and old,
 And almost (God wot) on my pittes brinke,
 Upon my soule somwhat most I thinke.
 I have my body folily dispended,
 Blessed be God that it shall ben amended!
 For I wol ben certain a wedded man,
 And that anon in all the hast I can.
 Unto som maiden, faire and tendre of age,
 I pray you shapeth for my mariage

All sodenly, for I wol not abide;
And I wol fonde to espie on my side
To whom I may be wedded hastily.
But for as moche as ye ben more than I,
Ye shullen rather swiche a thinge espie
Than I, and wher me beste were to allie.

But o thing warn I you, my frendes dere;
I wol non olde wif han in no manere;
She shal not passen twenty yere certain:
Old filh and yonge flesch wold I have fain.
Bet is (quod he) a pike than a pikerel,
And bet than old beef is the tendre veel.
I wol no woman thirty yere of age;
It is but benestraw and gret forage.
And eke thise olde widewes (God it wote)
They connen so moch craft on Wades bote;
So mochel broken harm whan that hem left,
That with hem shuld I never live in rest.
For sondry scoles maken subtil clerkes;
Woman of many scoles half a clerk is.
But certainly a yong thing men may gie,
Right as men may warm wax with handes plie;
Wherfore I say you plainly in a clause
I wol non old wif han right for this cause.

For if so were I hadde swiche meschance,
That I in hire ne coude have no plesance;
Than shuld I lede my lif in avoutrie,
And so streight to the devil whan I die.
Ne children shuld I non upon hire geten;
Yet were me lever houndes had me eten
Than that min heritage shulde fall
In straunge hondes; and this I tell you all.
I dote not, I wot the cause why
Men shulden wedde; and furthermore wot I
Ther speket many a man of mariage
That wot no more of it than wot my page
For which causes a man shuld take a wif.
If he may not liven chaste his lif,
Take him a wif with gret devotion,
Because of leful procreation
Of children; to the honour of God above;
And not only for paramour or love;
And for they shulden lecherie eschue,
And yield hir dette whan that it is due,
Or for that ech of hem shuld helpen other
In meschese, as a suster shal the brother,
And live in chastitee ful holily.

But, Sires, (by your leve) than am not I,
For, God be thanked, I dare make avaunt;
I fele my limmes stark and suffisant
To don all that a man belongeth to:
I wot myselven best what I may do.
Though I be hoor, I fare as doth a tre
That blosmeth er the fruit ywoxen be;
The blofmy tre n'is neither drie ne ded:
I fele me no wher hoor but on my hed:
Min herte and all my limmes ben as grene
As laurer thurgh the yere is for to sene.
And sin that ye han herd all min entent,
I pray you to my will ye wolde assent.

Diverse men diversely him told
Of mariage many ensamples old;
Som blamed it, som praised it certain;
But atte laste, shortly for to sain,

(As all day falleth altercation
Betwixen frendes and disputifon)
Ther fell a strif betwix his brethren two;
Of which that on was cleped Placebo,
Justinus sothly called was that other.

Placebo sayd, O January! brother,
Ful litel nede han ye, my lord so dere,
Conseil to aske of any that is here,
But that ye ben so ful of sapience
That you ne liketh for your high prudence
To weiven fro the word of Salomon;
This word, sayd he, unto us everich on,
Werke alle thing by conseil, thus sayd he,
And than ne shalt thou not repenten thee.
But though that Salomon spake swiche a word,
Min owen dere brother and my lord,
So wisly God my soule bringe at rest;
I hold your owen conseil is the best.

For, brother min, take of me this motif;
I have now ben a court-man all my lif,
And God it wot, though I unworthy be,
I have stonden in ful gret degree
Abouten lordes of ful high estat,
Yet had I never with non of hem debat;
I never hem contraried trewely.
I wot wel that my lord can more than I;
What that he saith I holde it firme and stable;
I say the same, or elles thing semblable.
A ful gret fool is any conseillour,
That serveth any lord of high honour,
That dare presume, or ones thinken it,
That his conseil shuld passe his lordes wit.
Nay, lordes be no fooles by my fay.
Ye han yourselven shewed here to-day
So high sentence, so holily, and wel,
That I consent, and confirme every del
Your wordes all; and your opinioun.
By God ther n'is no man in all this toun,
Ne in Itaille, coud bet han ysaid:
Crist holt him of this conseil wel appaid.
And trewely it is an high corage
Of any man that stopen is in age
To take a young wif: by my fader kin
Your herte hongeth on a joly pin.
Doth now in this matere right as you lest,
For finally I hold it for the best.

Justinus, that ay stille sat and herd,
Right in this wise he to Placebo answerd e
Now, brother min, be patient I pray,
Sin ye han said, and herketh what I say.

Senek, among his other wordes wise,
Saith that a man ought him right wel avise
To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel:
And sith I ought avisen me right wel
To whom I yeve my good away fro me,
Wel more I ought avisen me, parde,
To whom I yeve my body; for alway
I warne you wel it is no childes play
To take a wif without avisement.
Men must enqueren (this is min assent)
Wheder she be wise and sobre or dronkelewe,
Or proud, or elles other waies a shrew,

A chidester, or a wastour of thy good,
 Or riche or poure, or elles a man is wood :
 Al be it so that no man finden shal
 Non in this world that trotteth hol in al,
 Ne manne beste, swiche as men can devise,
 But natheles it ought ynough suffice
 With any wif, if so were that she had
 Mo good thewes than hire vices bad :
 And all this axeth leifure to enquire ;
 For God it wot I have wept many a tere
 Ful prively fin that I had a wif.
 Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lif,
 Certain I find in it but cost and care,
 And observances of alle blisses bare ;
 And yet, God wot, my neigheours aboute,
 And namely of women many a route,
 Sain that I have the moste stedefast wif,
 And eke the mekest on, that bereth lif :
 But I wot best wher wringeth me my sho.
 Ye may for me right as you liketh do.
 Aviseeth you, ye ben a man of age,
 How that ye entren into mariage,
 And namely with a yong wif and a faire.
 By him that made water, fire, erth, and aire,
 The yongest man that is in all this route
 Is besy ynow to bringen it aboute
 To han his wif alone, trusteth me :
 Ye shul not plesen hire fully yeres three ;
 This is to sain, to don hire ful plesance :
 A wif axeth ful many an observance.
 I pray you that ye be not evil appaid.

Wel, quod this January, and hast thou saide ?
 Straw for Senek, and straw for thy proverbes ;
 I counte not a panier ful of herbes
 Of scole termes : wiser men than thou,
 As thou hast herd, assented here right now
 To my purpos. Placebo, what saye ye ?

I saye it is a cursed man, quod he,
 That letteth matrimoine likerly.
 And with that word they risen sodenly,
 And ben assented fully that he sholde
 Be wedded whan him list and wher he wolde.

High fantasie and curious besinesse
 Fro day to day gan in the soule empresse
 Of January about his mariage :
 Many a faire shap and many a faire visage
 Ther passeth thurgh his herte night by night,
 As who so toke a mirroure polished bright,
 And set it in a comune market place,
 Then shuld he see many a figure pace
 By his mirroure, and in the same wise
 Gan January in with his thought devise
 Of maidens which that dwelten him beside ;
 He wiste not wher that he might abide ;
 For if that on have beautee in hire face,
 Another stont so in the peples grace,
 For hire sadnesse and hire benignitee,
 That of the peple the gretest vois hath she :
 And som were riche and hadden a bad name ;
 But natheles, betwix earnest and game,
 He at the last appointed him on on,
 And let all other from his herte gon,
 And chees hire of his owen auctoritee,
 For love is blind all day and may not see.

And whan that he was in his bed ybrought,
 He purtreied in his herte and in his thought
 Hire freshe beautee and hire age tendre,
 Hire middel smal, hire armes long and selendre,
 Hire wise governance, hire gentilleffe,
 Hire womanly bering, and hire sadnesse.

And whan that he on hire was condescended,
 Him thought his chois it might not ben amended ;
 For whan that he himself concluded had,
 Him thought eche other mannes wit so bad,
 That impossible it were to replie
 Again his chois : this was his fantasie.

His frendes sent he to, at his instance,
 And praied hem to don him that plesance
 That hastily they wolden to him come ;
 He wolde abregge hir labour all and some :
 Neded no more to hem to go ne ride,
 He was appointed ther he wolde abide.

Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone,
 And alderfirst he bade hem all a bone,
 That non of hem non argumentes make
 Again the purpos that he hath ytake ;
 Which purpos was plesant to God (said he)
 And veray ground of his prosperitee.

He said ther was a maiden in the toun
 Which that of beautee hadde gret renoun,
 Al were it so she were of smal degree ;
 Sufficeth him hire youth and hire beautee ;
 Which maid (he said) he wold han to his wif,
 To lede in ese and holinesse his life ;
 And thanked God that he might han hire all,
 That no wight with his blisse parten shal ;
 And praied hem to labour in this nede,
 And shapen that he faille not to spede :
 For than, he sayd, his spirit was at ese ;
 Than is (quod he) nothing may me displese,
 Save o thing pricketh in my conscience,
 The which I wol reharfe in your presence.

I have (quod he) herd said ful yore ago,
 Ther may no man han parfite blisses two,
 This is to say, in erthe and eke in heven ;
 For though he kepe him fro the finnes seven
 And eke from every branch of thilke tree,
 Yet is ther so parfit felicitee,
 And so grete ese and lust, in mariage,
 That ever I am agast, now in min age,
 That I shal leden now so mery a lif,
 So delicat, withouten we or strif,
 That I shal han min heven in erthe here ;
 For fin that veray heven is bought so dere,
 With tribulation and gret penance,
 How shuld I than, living in swiche plesance
 As alle wedded men don with hir wives,
 Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on live is ?
 This is my drede, and ye, my brethren twee,
 Assoileth me this question I preie.

Justinus, which that hated his folie,
 Answerd anon right in his japerie,
 And for he wold his long tale abregge,
 He wolde non auctoritee allege,
 But sayde, Sire, so ther be non obstacle
 Other than this, God of his hie miracle,
 And of his mercy, may so for you werche,
 That er ye have your rights of holy cherche

Ye may repent of wedded mannes lif,
 In which ye sain ther is no wo ne strif;
 And elles God forbede but if he sent
 A wedded man his grace him to repent
 Wel often; rather than a single man:
 And therefore, Sire, the best rede that I can,
 Despeire you not, but haveth in memorie
 Paraventure she may be your Purgatorie;
 She may be Goddes mene and Goddes whippe,
 Than shal your soule up unto heaven skippe
 Swifter than doth an arow of a bow.
 I hope to God hereafter ye shal know
 That ther n'is non so gret felicitie
 In mariage, ne never more shal be;
 That you shal let of your salvation,
 So that ye use; as skill is and reson,
 The lustes of your wif attemprely,
 And that ye plesse hire nat to amorously,
 And that ye kepe you eke from other sinne.
 My Tale is don, for my wit is but thinne.
 Beth not agast hereof, my brother dere,
 But let us waden out of this matere.
 The Wif of Bathe; if ye han understond,
 Of mariage, which ye now han in hond,
 Declared hath ful wel in litel space.
 Fareth now wel, God have you in his grace!

And with this word this Justine and his brother
 Han take hir leve; and eche of hem of other.
 And whan they saw that it must nedes be,
 They wroughten so by sleighte and wise trettee
 That she this maiden, which that Maius hight,
 As hastily as ever that she might,
 Shal wedded be unto this January.
 I trow it were to longe you to tary,
 If I you told of every script and bond
 By which that she was feoffed in this lond,
 Or for to rekken of hire rich array.
 But, finally, ycomen is the day
 That to the chirche both ben they went
 For to receive the holy sacrament.
 Forth cometh the preest, with stole about his nekke,
 And bade hire be like Sara and Rebekke
 In wisdom and in trouthe of mariage;
 And sayd his orisons, as is usage,
 And crouched hem, and bade God shuld hem blesse,
 And made all liker ynow with holinesse.

Thus ben they wedded with solempnitee;
 And at the feste sitteth he and she,
 With other worthy folk, upon the deis.
 Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleis;
 And ful of instruments, and of vitaille
 The moste deinteous of all Itaille.
 Beforn hem stood swiche instruments of soun
 That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion,
 Ne maden never swiche a melodie:
 At every cours in came loud minstrelcie,
 That never Joab tromped for to here,
 Ne he Theodomas yet half so clere
 At Thebes whan the citee was in doute:
 Bacchus the win him skinketh all aboute;
 And Venus laugheth upon every wight,
 (For January was become hire knight,
 And wolde both assaien his corage
 In libertee and eke in mariage)

And with hire firebrond in hire hond aboute
 Danceth before the bride and all the route.
 And certainly I dare right wel say this,
 Ymeneus, that god of Wedding is,
 Saw never his lif so mery a wedded man.

Hold thou thy pees, thou poet Marcian,
 That writest us that ilke wedding mery
 Of hire Philologie and him Mercurie,
 And of the songes that the Muses songe;
 To smal is both thy pen and eke thy tonge
 For to descriven of this mariage.
 Whan tendre Youth hath wedded stouping Age,
 Ther is swiche mirth that it may not be written:
 Assaieth it yourself, than may ye witen
 If that I lie or non in this matere.

Maius, that sit with so benigne a chere,
 Hire to behold it semed Faerie.
 Quene Hester looked never with swiche an eye
 On Assuere, so meke a look hath she.
 I may you not devise all hire beautee;
 But this moch of hire beautee tell I may,
 That she was like the brighte morwe of May,
 Fulfilled of all beautee and plesance.

This January is ravished in a trance
 At every time he loketh in hire face;
 But in his herte he gan hire to manace
 That he that night in armes wold hire streine
 Harder than ever Paris did Haleine.
 But natheles yet had he gret pitee
 That thilke night offenden hire must he,
 And thought, alas! o tendre creature!
 Now wolde God ye mighten wel endure
 All my corage; it is so sharpe and kene
 I am agast ye shal it nat sustene!
 But God forbede that I did all my might!
 Now wolde God that it were waxen night,
 And that the night wold lasten ever mo!
 I wold that all this peple were ago!
 And, finally, he doth all his labour,
 As he best mighte, saving his honour,
 To heste him fro the mete in subtil wise.

The time came that reson was to rise,
 And after that men dance and drinken fast,
 And spices all about the hous they cast,
 And ful of joye and blisse is every man,
 All but a squier that highte Damian,
 Which carf befor the knight ful many a day:
 He was so ravisht on his Lady May,
 That for the veray peine he was nie wood;
 Almost he swelt, and fwouned ther he stood:
 So sore hath Venus hurt him with hire brond
 As that she bare it dancing in hire hond;
 And to his bed he went him hastily:
 No more of him as at this time speke I,
 But ther I let him wepe ynow and plaine,
 Til freshe May wol rewen on his peine.

O perilous fire that in the bedstrow bredeth!
 O famuler so that his service bedeth!
 O servant traitor, false of holy hewe,
 Like to the nedder in bosom flie untrew,
 God shelde us alle from your acquaintance!
 O January! drunken in plesance
 Of mariage, see how thy Damian,
 Thin owen squier and thy boren man,

Entendeth for to do thee vilanie :

God grant thee thin homly fo to espie,
For in this world n'is werse pestilence
Than homly fo all day in thy presence.

Parformed hath the sonne his arke diurne,
No longer may the body of him sojourne
On the orisont, as in that latitude ;
Night, with his mantel that is derke and rude,
Gan oversprede the hemisperie aboute,
For which departed is this lusty route
Fro January, with thank on every side.
Home to hir houses lustily they ride,
Ther as they don hir thinges as hem lest,
And whan they saw hir time gon to rest.

Sone after that this hastif January
Wol go to bed, he wol no longer tary.
He drinketh Ipocras, clarre, and Vernage,
Of spices hot, to encrefen his corage ;
And many a letuarie had he ful fine,
Swiche as the cursed monk Dan Constantine
Hath written in his book *De Coitu* ;

To ste hem all he wolde nothing eschue ;
And to his priuee frendes thus sayd he :

For Goddes love, as sone as it may be,
Let voiden all this hous in curteis wise.
And they han don right as he wol devise.

Men drinken, and the travers drawe anon ;
The bride is brought a-bed as still as ston :
And whan the bed was with the preest yblessed
Out of the chambre hath every wight him dressed,
And January hath fall in armes take
His freshe May, his paradis, his make.
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful oft ;
With thicke bristles of his berd unsoft,
Like to the skin of houndfish, sharp as brere,
(For he was shave al newe in his manere)
He rubbeth hire upon hire tendre face,
And sayde thus ; Alas ! I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you gretly offend,
Or time come that I wol down descend :
But natheles considereth this, (quod he)
Ther n'is no werkman, whatsoever he be,
That may both werken wel and hastily :
This wol be don at leiser parfitly.

It is no force how longe that we play ;
In trewe wedlock coupled be we tway ;
And blessed be the yoke that we ben inne,
For in our actes may ther be no sinne.
A man may do no sinne with his wif,
Ne hurt himselven with his owen knif,
For we have leve to play us by the lawe.

Thus laboureth he til that the day gan dawne,
And than he taketh a sop in fine clarre,
And upright in his bed than sitteth he.
And after that he sang ful loud and clere,
And kist his wif, and maketh wanton chere.
He was al coltish, ful of ragerie,
And ful of jergon as a flecked pie.
The slacke skin about his necke shaketh
While that he sang, so chanteth he and craketh.
But God wot what that May thought in hire herte
Whan she him saw up sitting in his sherte,
In his night cap, and with his necke lene :
She praiseth not his playing worth a bene.

Than sayd he thus ; My reste wol I take,
Now day is come, I may no longer wake ;
And down he layd his hed and slept til prime.
And afterward, whan that he saw his time,
Up riseth January, but freshe May
Held hire in chambre til the fourth day,
As usage is of wives for the beste ;
For every labour somtime mooste han reste,
Or elles longe may he not endure ;
This is to say, no lives creature,
Be it of fish, or brid, or best, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damian,
That langueth for love, as ye shul here,
Therefore I speke to him in this manere.
I say, O fely Damian, alas !

Answer to this demand as in this cas ;
How shalt thou to thy lady freshe May
Tellen thy wo ? she wol alway say nay ;
Eke if thou speke she wol thy wo bewrein ;
God be thin help ! I can no better sein.

This fike Damian in Venus fire
So brenneth that he dieth for desire,
For which he put his lif in aventure,
No lenger might he in this wise endure,
But prively a penner gan he borwe,
And in a lettre wrote he all his forwe,
In manere of a complaint or a lay,
Unto his faire freshe Lady May,
And in a purse of silk heng on his sherte
He hath it put, and layd it at his herte.

The mone that at none was thilke day
That January hath wedded freshe May,
In ten of Taure was into Cancer gliden,
So long hath Maius in hire chambre abiden,
As custome is unto thise nobles alle.
A bride shal not eten in the halle
Til dayes four, or three days at the leste,
Ypassed ben, than let hire go to feste.
The fourthe day complete fro none to none,
Whan that the highe messe was ydone,
In halle sat this January and May,
As fresh as is the brighte somers day ;
And so besel how that this goode man
Remembred him upon this Damian,
And sayde, Seinte Marie, how may it be
That Damian entendeth not to me ?
Is he ay fike ? or how may this betide ?

His squiers, which that stoden ther beside,
Excused him because of his siknesse,
Which letted him to don his besinesse ;
Non other cause mighte make him tary.

That me forthinketh, quod this January ;
He is a gentil squier by my trouthe,
If that he died, it were gret harme and routhe :
He is as wise, discret, and as secree,
As any man I wote of his degree,
And therto manly and eke servisable,
And for to ben a thrifty man right able.
But after mete, as sone as ever I may,
I wol myselfe visite him, and eke May,
To don him all the comfort that I can.
And for that word him blessed every man,
That of his bountee and his gentillesse
He wolde so comforten in siknesse

His squier, for it was a gentil dede,
 Dame, quod this January, take good hede
 At after mete ye with your women alle,
 (Whan that ye ben in chambre out of this halle)
 That all ye gon to see this Damian;
 Doth him disport, he is a gentil man,
 And telleth him that I wol him visite,
 Have I no thing but rested me a lite:
 And spede you faste, for I wol abide
 Til that ye slepen faste by my side.
 And with that word he gan unto him calle
 A squier that was marshal of his halle,
 And told him certain thinges that he wolde.

This freshe May hath streight hire way yhold,
 With all hire women, unto Damian:
 Doun by his beddes side sit she than,
 Comforting him as goodly as she may.

This Damian, whan that his time he say,
 In secree wise his purse and eke his bill,
 In which that he ywritten had his will,
 Hath put into hire hond withouten more,
 Save that he fiked wonder depe and sore,
 And softly to hire right thus sayd he;
 Mercie, and that ye nat discover me,
 For I am ded if that this thing be kid.

This purse hath she in with hire bosome hid,
 And went hire way: ye get no more of me:
 But unto January ycome is she,
 That on his beddes side fate ful soft.
 He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful oft,
 And layd him doun to slepe, and that anon.
 She feined hire as that she muste gon
 Ther as ye wote that every wight mot nede;
 And whan she of this bill hath taken hede,
 She rent it all to cloutes at the last,
 And in the privce softly it cast.

Who studieth now but faire freshe May?
 Adoun by olde January she lay,
 That slepte til the cough had him awaked.
 Anon he prayd hire stripen hire al naked,
 He wolde of hire, he said, have som plesance,
 And said hire clothes did him encombrance.
 And she obeieth him, be hire lese or loth.
 But lest that precious folk be with me wroth,
 How that he wrought I dare nat to you tell,
 Or wheder hire thought it paradis or hell:
 But ther I let hem werken in hir wise
 Til eveesong rang, and that they must arise.

Were it by destinee or aventure,
 Were it by influence or by nature,
 Or constellation, that in swiche estat
 The heven stood at that time fortunat,
 As for to put a bill of Venus werkes
 (For alle thing hath time, as sayn thise clerkes)
 To any woman for to get hire love,
 I cannot say but grete God above,
 That knoweth that non act is causeles,
 He deme of all, for I wol hold my pees.
 But soth is this, how that this freshe May
 Hath taken swiche impressioun that day
 Of pitee on this like Damian,
 That fro hire herte she ne driven can
 The remembrance for to don him ese.
 Certain (thought she) whom that this thing displese

I rekke not, for here I him assure
 To love him best of any creature,
 Though he no more hadde than his sherte.

Lo, pitee renneth sone in gentil herte:
 Here may ye seen how excellent franchise
 In women is whan they hem narwe avise.
 Som tyraunt is, as ther ben many on,
 That hath an herte as hard as any ston,
 Which wold han lette him sterven in the place
 Wel rather than han granted him hire grace.
 And hem rejoycen in hir cruel pride,
 And rekken not to ben an homicide.

This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,
 Right of hire hond a lettre maketh she,
 In which she granteth him hire veray grace:
 Ther lacked nought but only day and place
 Wher that she might unto his lust suffice;
 For it shal be right as he wol devise.

And whan she saw hire time upon a day
 To visiten this Damian goth this May,
 And sotilly this lettre doun she threst
 Under his pilwe, rede it if him left.
 She taketh him by the hond, and hard him twist,
 So secretly that no wight of it wist,
 And bade him ben all hol; and forth she went
 To January whan he for hire sent.

Up riseth Damian the nexte morwe,
 Al passed was his siknesse and his sorwe,
 He kembeth him, he proineth him and piketh,
 He doth all that his lady lust and liketh;
 And eke to January he goth as lowe
 As ever did a dogge for the bowe.
 He is so plesant unto every man,
 (For craft is all, who so that don it can)
 That every wight is fain to speke him good;
 And fully in his ladies grace he stood.

Thus let I Damian about his nede,
 And in my Tale forth I wol procede.

Some clerkes holden that felicitee
 Stant in delit, and therefore certain he,
 This noble January, with all his might,
 In honest wise as longeth to a knight,
 Shope him to liven ful deliciously.
 His housing, his array, as honestly
 To his degree was maked as a kinges.
 Amonges other of his honest thinges
 He had a gardin walled all with ston,
 So fayre a gardin wot I no wher non;
 For out of doute I veraily suppose
 That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
 Ne coude of it the beautee wel devise;
 Ne Priapus ne mighte not suffise,
 Though he be God of Gardins, for to tell
 The beautee of the gardin, and the well,
 That stood under a laurer alway grene:
 Ful often time he Pluto and his quene
 Proserpina and alle hir Faerie,
 Disporten hem and maken melodie
 Aboute that well, and daunced, as men told.

This noble knight, this January the old,
 Swiche deintee hath in it to walke and pley,
 That he wol suffre no wight bere the key
 Sauf he himself, for of the smal wicket
 He bare alway of silver a cliket,

With which whan that him list he it unshette;
And whan that he wold pay his wives dette
In somer seson thider wold he go,
And May his wif, and no wight but they two;
And thinges which that were not don a-bedde
He in the gardin parfourned hem, and spedde.

And in this wise many a mery day
Lived this January and freshe May:
But worldly joye may not alway endure
To January ne to no creature.

O foden hap, o thou Fortune unstable!
Like to the scorpion so deceivable,
That flatrest with thy hed whan thou wolt sting;
The tayl is deth thurgh thin eveniming.
O brotel joye! o swete poyson queinte!
O monstre! that so sotilly canst peinte
Thy giftes under hewe of stedfastnesse,
That thou deceivest bothe more and lesse,
Why hast thou January thus deceived,
That haddest him for thy ful frend received?
And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen,
For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Alas! this noble January free,
Amidde his lust and his prosperitee,
Is waxen blind, and that al sodenly.
He wepeth and he wailleth pitously,
And therewithall the fire of jalousie
(Lest that his wif shuld fall in som folie)
So brent his herte that he wolde fain
That som man had both him and hire yslain;
For nother after his deth ne in his lif
Ne wold he that she were no love ne wif,
But ever live as a widewe in clothes blake,
Sole as the turtle that hath lost hire make.
But at the last, after a moneth or tway,
His sorwe gan asswagen, soth to say;
For whan he wist it might non other be,
He patiently toke his adversitee;
Save out of doute he ne may nat forgon
That he n'as jalous ever more in on;
Which jalousie it was so outrageous,
That neither in halle, ne in non other hous,
Ne in non other place never the mo,
He n'olde suffre hire for to ride or go
But if that he had honde on hire alway;
For which ful often wepeth freshe May,
That loveth Damian so brenningly,
That she mooste either dien sodenly
Or elles she mooste han him as hire lest:
She waited whan hire herte wold to-brest.

Upon that other side Damian
Becomen is the sorwefullest man
That ever was, for neither night ne day
Ne might he speke a word to freshe May,
As to his purpos, of no swiche matere,
But if that January must it here,
That had an hand upon hire evermo;
But natheles by writing to and fro,
And privee signes, wist he what she ment,
And she knew eke the fin of his entent.

O January! what might it thee availe
Though thou might seen as fer as shippes faile?
For as good as blind to deceived be
As be deceived whan a man may see.

Lo Argus, which that had an hundred eyen,
For all that ever he coude pore or prien,
Yet was he blent, and, God wot, so ben mo;
That wenen wisly that it be not so.
Passie over is an ese; I say no more.

This freshe May, of which I spake of yore,
In warm wex hath enprented the cliket
That January bare of the smal wicket,
By which into his gardin oft he went,
And Damian, that knew all hire entent,
The cliket contrefeted prively:
Ther n'is no more to say, but hastily
Som wonder by this cliket shal betide,
Which ye shul heren if ye wol abide.

O noble Ovide! soth sayest thou, God wote,
What sleight is it, if Love be long and hote,
That he n'ill find it out in som manere?
By Pyramus and Thisbe may men lere;
Though they were kept ful long and streit over all,
They ben accorded, rowning thurgh a wall,
Ther no wight coude han founden swiche a sleightes;
But now to purpos. Er that daies eighte
Were passed of the month of Juil, befill
That January hath caught so gret a will,
Thurgh egging of his wif, him for to play
In his gardin, and no wight but they tway,
That in a morwe unto this May said he,
Rise up, my wif, my love, my lady free!
The turtles vois is herd, myn owen swete!
The winter is gon, with all his raines wete.
Come forth now with thin eyen columbine;
Wel fairer ben thy brests than any wine.
The gardin is enclosed all aboute;
Come forth, my white spouse, for out of doute
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, o wif!
No spot in thee n'as never in all thy lif.
Come forth, and let us taken our disport;
I chese thee for my wif and my comfort.

Swiche olde lewed wordes used he.
On Damian a signe made she,
That he shuld go before with his cliket.
This Damian hath opened the wicket,
And in he stert, and that in swiche manere
That no wight might him see neyther yhere;
And still he sit under a bush. Anon
This January, as blind as is a ston,
With Maius in his hand, and no wight mo,
Into this freshe gardin is ago,
And clappet to the wicket sodenly.

Now wif, quod he, here n'is but thou and I,
That art the creature that I best love;
For by that Lord that sit in heven above
I hadde lever dien on a knif
Than thee offenden, dere trewe wif.
For Geddes sake thinke how I thee chees,
Not for no covetise douteles,
But only for the love I had to thee.
And though that I be old and may not see,
Beth to me trewe, and I wol tell you why;
Certes three thinges shal ye win therby;
First love of Crist, and to yourself honour,
And all min heritage, toun and tour;
I yeve it you, maketh chartres as you lest:
This shal be don to-morwe er sonne rest,

So wisly God my soule bring to blisse :
 I pray you on this covenant ye me kisse.
 And though that I be jalous wite me nought ;
 Ye ben so depe enprinted in my thought,
 That whan that I consider your beautee,
 And therewithall the unlikely elde of me,
 I may not certes, though I shulde die,
 Forbere to ben out of your compaignie
 For veray love ; this is withouten doute :
 Now kisse me, wif, and let us come aboute.

This freshe May, whan she thise wordes herd,
 Benignely to January answerd,
 But first and forward she began to wepe :
 I have, quod she, a soule for to kepe
 As wel as ye, and also min honour,
 And of my wifhood, thilke tendre flour
 Which that I have assured in your hond,
 Whan that the preest to you my body bond,
 Wherefore I wol answer in this manere,
 With leve of you, myn owen lord so dere.

I pray to God that never daw that day
 That I ne starve, as soule as woman may,
 If ever I do unto my kin that shame,
 Or elles I empeire so my name
 That I be false ; and if I do that lakke,
 Do stripen me and put me in a sakke,
 And in the nexte river do me drenche :
 I am a gentil woman and no wenche.
 Why speke ye thus ? but men ben ever untrewe,
 And women han represe of you ay newe.
 Ye con non other daliance, I leve,
 But speke to us as of untrust and repreve.

And with that word she saw wher Damian
 Sat in the bush, and coughen she began ;
 And with hire finger a signe made she
 That Damian shulde climb up on a tre
 That charged was with fruit, and up he went ;
 For veraily he knew all hire entent,
 And every signe that she coude make,
 Wel bet than January her own make ;
 For in a lettre she had told him all
 Of this matere, how that he werken shall.
 And thus I let him sitting in the pery,
 And January and May roming ful mery.

Bright was the day, and blew the firmament ;
 Phebus of gold his freames down hath sent
 To gladen every flour with his warmnesse ;
 He was that time in Geminis I gesse,
 But litel fro his declination
 Of Cancer, Joves exaltation.
 And so befell in that bright morwe tide,
 That in the gardin, on the fether side,
 Pluto that is the King of Faerie,
 And many a ladie in his compaignie
 Folwing his wif, the Quene Proserpina,
 Which that he ravished out of Ethna,
 While that she gadred floures in the mede,
 (In Claudian ye may the story rede,
 How that hire in his grisely carte he sette)
 This King of Faerie adoun him sette
 Upon a benche of turves freshe and grene,
 And right anon thus said he to his quene :

My wif, quod he, ther may no wight say nay,
 The experience so preveth it every day,

The treson which that woman doth to man :
 Ten hundred thousand stories tell I can
 Notable of your untrouth and brotelnesse.

O Salomon ! richest of all richesse,
 Fulfilled of sapience and wordly glorie,
 Ful worthy ben thy wordes to memorie
 To every wight that wit and reson can.
 Thus praiseth he the bountee yet of man ;
 Among a thousand men yet fond I on,
 But of all women fond I never non.

Thus saith this king, that knewe your wickednesse :
 And Jesus, *filius* Sirach, as I gesse,
 He speketh of you but selden reverence.
 A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence,
 So fall upon your bodies yet to-night.
 Ne see ye not this honourable knight ?
 Because, alas ! that he is blind and old
 His owen man shal make him cokewold :
 Lo wher he sit, the lechour, in the tree.
 Now wol I graunten of my majestee
 Unto this olde blinde worthy knight,
 That he shal have again his eyen sight
 Whan that his wif wol don him vilanie,
 Than shal he knowen all hire harlotrie,
 Both in represe of hire and other mo.

Ye, Sire, quod Proserpine, and wol ye so ?
 Now by my modre Ceres soule I swere
 That I shal yeve hire suffisant answer,
 And alle women after for hire sake,
 That though they ben in any gilt ytake,
 With face bold they shul hemselve excuse,
 And beren hem down that wolden hem accuse :
 For lacke of answer non of us shul dien.
 Al had ye seen a thing with both your eyen,
 Yet shul we so visage it hardely,
 And wepe, and swere, and chiden, subtilly,
 That ye shul ben as lewed as ben gees.

What rekketh me of your auctoritees ?
 I wote wel that this Jewe, this Salomon,
 Fond of us women fooles many on :
 But though that he ne fond no good woman,
 Ther hath yfonden many an other man
 Women ful good, and trewe and vertuous,
 Witnesse on hem that dwelte in Cristes hous ;
 With martyrdom they preved hir constance.
 The Roman gestes maken remembrance
 Of many a veray trewe wif also.
 But, Sire, ne be not wroth al be it so,
 Though that he said he fond no good woman ;
 I pray you take the sentence of the man :
 He ment thus, that in soverein bountee
 N'is non but God, no, nouthen he ne she.

Ey, for the veray God that n'is but on,
 What maken ye so moche of Salomon ?
 What though he made a temple, Goddes hous ?
 What though he were riche and glorious ?
 So made he eke a temple of false goddes ;
 How might he don a thing that more forbode is ?
 Parde as faire as ye his name emplastre,
 He was a lechour and an idolastre,
 And in his elde he veray God forsoke ;
 And if that God ne hadde (as faithe the boke)
 Spared him for his fathers sake, he sholde
 Han lost his regne rather than he wolde.

I fete nat of all the vilanie
That he of women wrote a boterflie.
I am a woman; nedes moſte I ſpeke,
Or ſwell unto that time min herte breke:
For ſin he ſaid that we ben jangleresſes,
As ever mote I brouken hole my trefles,
I ſhal nat ſparen for no curteſie
To ſpeke him harm that ſayth us vilanie.

Dame, quod this Pluto, be no lenger wroth,
I yeve it up: but ſin I ſwore min oth,
That I wold graunten him his ſight again,
My word ſhal ſtand, that warne I you certain:
I am a king, it ſit me not to lie.
And I, quod ſhe, am Quene of Facrie.
Hire anſwere ſhe ſhal han I undertake;
Let us no more wordes of it make.
Forſoth, quod he, I wol you not contrary.

Now let us turn again to January,
That in the gardin with his faire May
Singeth wel merier than the poppingay;
You love I beſt, and ſhal, and other non.

So long about the alleyes is he gon,
Til he was comen again to thilke pery
Wher as this Damian ſitteth ful mery
On high, among the freſhe leves grene.

This freſhe May, that is ſo bright and ſhene,
Gan for to ſike, and ſaid, Alas, my ſide!
Now, Sire, quod ſhe, for ought that may betide,
I moſte have of the peres that I ſee,
Or I moſte die, ſo fore longeth me
To eten of the ſmale peres grene;
Help for hire love that is of heaven quene.
I tell you wel a woman in my plit
May have to fruit ſo gret an appetit,
That ſhe may dien but ſhe of it have.

Alas! quod he, that I n'adde here a knave
That coude climbe: alas! alas! (quod he)
For I am blinde. Ye, Sire, no force, quod ſhe;
But wold ye vouchesauf, for Goddes ſake,
The pery in with your armes for to take,
(For wel I wot that ye miſtruſten me)
Than wold I climben wel ynough, (quod ſhe)
So I my fote might ſetten on your back.

Certes, ſaid he, therin ſhal be no lack,
Might I you helpen with min herte blood.

He ſtoupeth down, and on his back ſhe ſtood,
And caught hire by a twiſt; and up ſhe goth.
(Ladies, I pray you that ye be not wroth;
I can nat gloſe; I am a rude man:)
And ſodenly anon this Damian
Gan pullen up the ſmock, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto ſaw this grete wrong,
To January he yaf again his ſight,
And made him ſee as wel as ever he might;
And whan he thus had caught his ſight again
Ne was ther never man of thing ſo fain:
But on his wiſ his thought was ever mo.

Up to the tree he caſt his eyen two,

And ſaw how Damian his wife had dreſſed
In ſwiche manere it may not ben expreſſed;
But if I wolde ſpeke uncurteſly;
And up he yaf a roring and a cry,
As doth the mother whan the child ſhal die:
Out! helpe! alas! harow! he gan to cry;
O ſtronge lady ſtore, what doeſt thou?
And ſhe answered, Sire, what aileth you?
Have patience and reſon in your minde,
I have you holpen on both your eyen blinde.
Up peril of my ſoule, I ſhal nat lien,
As me was taught to helpen with your eyen
Was nothing better for to make you ſee
Than ſtrogle with a man upon a tree:
God wot, I did it in ful good entent.

Strogle! quod he; ye, algate in it went.
Gode yeve you both on ſhames deth to dien;
He ſwived thee, I ſaw it with min eyen,
And elles be I honged by the halſe.

Than is, quod ſhe, my medicine al falſe;
For certainly if that ye mighten ſee,
Ye wold not ſay thiſe wordes unto me.
Ye have ſom glimſing, and no parſit ſight.

I ſee, quod he, as wel as ever I might
(Thanked be God) with both min eyen two,
And by my feith me thought he did thee ſo.

Ye maſe; ye maſen, good Sire, quod ſhe;
This thank have I for I have made you ſee:
Alas! quod ſhe, that ever I was ſo kind.

Now Dame, quod he, let al paſſe out of mind;
Come down, my leſe, and if I have miſſaid,
God helpe me ſo as I am evil appaid:
But by my fadres ſoule I wende have ſein
How that this Damian had by thee lein,
And that thy ſmock had lein upon his breſt.

Ye, Sire, quod ſhe, ye may wene as you leſt:
But, Sire, a man that weketh of his flepe,
He may not ſodenly wel taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne ſeen it parſitly;
Til that he be adawed veraily:
Right ſo a man that lang hath blind ybe,
He may not ſodenly ſo wel yſee,
Firſt whan his ſight is newe comen ageing,
As he that hath a day or two yſein.

Til that your ſight yſateled be a while,
Ther may ful many a fighte you begile.
Beware, I pray you, for by heaven King
Ful many a man weneth to ſee a thing,
And it is all another than it ſemeth:
He which that miſconceiveth oft miſdemeth.

And with that word ſhe lep down fro the tree.
This January who is glad but he?
He kiſſeth hire and clippeth hire ful oft,
And on hire wombe he ſtoketh hire ful ſoft,
And to his paleis home he hath hire-lad.
Now, goode men, I pray you to be glad.

Thus endeth here my Tale of Januarie;
God bleſſe us, and his moder Seinte Marie!

THE SQUIERES PROLOGUE.

By Goddes mercy, sayde oure Hoste tho,
 Now swiche a wif I preie God kepe me fro,
 Lo, swiche sleightes and subtilitees
 In women ben; for ay as besy as bees
 Ben they us sely men for to deceiue,
 And from a sothe wol they ever weive:
 By this Marchantes Tale it preveth wel,
 But natheles, as trewe as any stele
 I have a wif, though that she poure be,
 But of hire tonge a labbing shrewe is she;
 And yet she hath an hepe of vices mo.
 Therof no force; let all swiche thinges go,
 But wete ye what? in conseil be it seyde,
 Me reweth fore I am unto hire teyde;
 For and I shulde rekene every vice
 Which that she hath, ywis I were to nice;

And cause why, it shulde reported be
 And told to hire of som of this compaignie,
 (Of whom it nedeth not for to declare,
 Sin women connen utter swiche chaffare)
 And eke my wit sufficeth not therto
 To tellen all; wherfore my Tale is do.

Squier, come ner, if it youre wille be,
 And say somwhat of love, for certes ye
 Connen theron as moche as any man.
 Nay, Sire, quod he, but swiche thing as I can
 With hertly wille, for I wol not rebelle
 Agein your lust, a Tale wol I telle.
 Have me excused if I speke amis;
 My wille is good; and lo, my Tale is this.

THE SQUIERES TALE*.

At Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,
 Ther dwelt a king that werreied Ruffie,
 Thurgh which ther died many a doughty man,
 This noble king was cleped Cambuscan,
 Which in his time was of so gret renoun,
 That ther n'as no wher in no regioun

* The King of Araba sendith to Cambuscan King of Sarra a horse and a sword of rare qualite, and to his daughter Canace a glas and a ring, by the virtue whereof the understandeth the language of all fowles. Much of this Tale is either lost or else never finished by Chaucer.
 Erry.

So excellent a lorde in alle thing;
 Him lacked nought that longeth to a king,
 As of the secte of which that he was borne.
 He kept his lay to which he was ysworne,
 And therto he was hardy, wise, and riche,
 And pitous and just, and alway yliche,
 Trewe of his word, benigne and honourable,
 Of his corage as any centre stable,
 Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous,
 As any bachelor of all his hous.
 A faire person he was and fortunat,
 And kept alway so wel real estat,

That ther n'as no wher swiche another man.

This noble king, this Tartre Cambuscan,
Hadde two sones by Elfeta his wif,
Of which the eldest sone highte Algarfif,
That other was ycleped Camballo.

A doughter had this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canace :
But for to tellen you all hire beautee
It lith not in my tonge ne in my conning ;
I dare not undertake so high a thing :
Min English eke is insufficient ;
It muste ben a rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that art,
If he shuld hire descriven ony part :
I am non swiche ; I mote speke as I can.

And so befel that whan this Cambuscan
Hath twenty winter borne his diademe,
As he was wont fro yere to yere I deme,
He let the feste of his nativitee
Don crien thurghout Sarra his citee
The last idus of March after the yere.

Phebus the sonne ful jolif was and clere,
Fer he was nigh his exaltation
In Martes face, and in his mansion
In Aries, the colerike hote signe :
Ful lusty was the wether and benigne,
For which the soules again the sonne shene :
What for the seson and the yonge grene
Ful londe songen hir affections :
Hem semed han gotten hem protections
Again the sward of winter kene and cold.

This Cambuscan, of which I have you told,
In real vestiments, sit on his deis
With diademe, ful high in paleis,
And holt his feste so solempne and so riche,
That in this world ne was ther non it liche,
Of which if I shall tellen all the array,
Than wold it occupie a somers day ;
And eke it nedeth not for to devise
At every cours the order of hir service :
I wol not tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of hir swannes ne hir heronsewes :
Eke in that lond, as tellen knightes old,
Ther is som mete that is ful deintee hold,
That in his lond men recche of it ful smal ;
Ther n'is no man that may reporten al.
I wol not tarien you, for it is prime,
And for it is no fruit, but losse of time ;
Unto my purpos I wol have recours.

And so befelle, that after the thridde cours,
While that this king sit thus in his nobley,
Herking his ministralles hir thinges pley,
Beforne him at his bord deliciously,
In at the halle dore al sodenly
Ther came a knight upon a stede of bras,
And in his hond a brod mirroure of glas ;
Upon his thombe he had of gold a ring,
And by his side a naked sward hanging ;
And up he rideth to the highe bord.
In all the halle ne was ther spoke a word
For mervaille of this knight ; him to behold
Ful besily they waiten yong and old.

This strange knight that come this sodenly,
Al armed save his hed ful richely,

Salueth king and quene, and lordes alle,
By order as they faten in the halle,
With so high reverence and observance,
As wel in speche as in his contenance,
That Gawain with his olde curtesie,
Though he were come agen out of Faerie,
Ne coude him not amenden with a word :
And after this befor the highe bord
He with a manly vois sayd his message,
After the forme used in his langage,
Withouten vice of fillable or of letter :
And for his tale shulde seme the better,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it lere.
Al be it that I cannot sounne his stile,
Ne cannot climben over so high a stile,
Yet say I this, as to comun entent,
Thus much amounteth all that ever he ment,
If it so be that I have it in mind.

He sayd, The King of Arabie and of Inde,
My liege Lord, on this solempne day,
Salueth you as he best can and may,
And sendeth you, in honour of your feste,
By me, that am al redy at your heste,
This stede of bras, that esily and wel
Can in the space of a day naturel
(This is to sayn, in four-and-twenty houres)
Wher so you list, in drought or elles shoures,
Beren your body into every place
To which your herte willeth for to pace,
Withouten wemme of you thurgh foule or faire ;
Or if you list to fleen as high in the aire
As doth an egle, whan him list,
This same stede shal bere you evermore,
Withouten harme, till ye be ther you lest,
(Though that ye slepen on his back or rest)
And turne again with writhing of a pin ;
He that it wrought he coude many a gin ;
He waited many a constellation
Or he had don this operation,

And knew ful many a fele and many a bond,
This mirroure eke that I have in min hond
Hath swiche a might that men may in it see
Whan ther shal falle ony adversitee
Unto your regne or to yourself also,
And openly who is your friend or so ;
And over all this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
If he be false, she shal his treson see,
His newe love, and all his subtiltee,
So openly, that ther shal nothing hide.

Wherefore again this lusty somer tide
This mirroure and this ring, that ye may se,
He hath sent to my Lady Canace,
Your excellent doughter that is here.

The vertue of this ring, if ye wol here,
Is this, that if hire list it for to were
Upon hire thombe, or in hire purse it bere,
Ther is no foule that fleeth under heven
That she ne shal wel understond his steven,
And know his mening openly and plaine,
And answeere him in his langage again ;
And every gras that groweth upon rote
She shal eke know, and whom it wol do bote.

All be his woundes never so depe and wide,

This naked swerd, that hangeth by my side,
Swiche vertue hath, that what man that it finte,
Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and bite,
Were it as thicke as is a braunched oke;

And what man that is wounded with the stroke
Shal never be hole, til that you list of grace
To stroken him with the platte in thilke place
Ther he is hurt; this is as much to sain
Ye moten with the platte swerd again
Stroken him in the wound and it wol close.

This is the veray soth withouten glose:
It faileth not while it is in your hold.

And whan this knight hath thus his tale told
He rideth out of halle, and down he light.

His stede, which that shone as sonne bright,
Stant in the court as stille as any ston.

This knight is to his chambre ladde anon,

And is unarmed, and to the mete yfette,

Thise presents ben ful richelich yfette,

This is to sain, the swerd and the mirroure,

And borne anon into the highe tour

With certain officers ordained therfore;

And unto Canace the ring is bore

Solempnely, ther she sat at the table,

But sikerly, withouten any fable,

The hors of bras, that may not be remued,

It stant as it were to the ground yglued:

Ther may no man out of the place it drive

For non engine of windas or polive:

And cause why, for they con not the craft,

And therfore in the place they han it last

Til that the knight hath taught hem the manere

To voiden him, as ye shal after here.

Gret was the prees that swarmed to and fro

To gauren on this hors that stondeth so;

For it so high was, and so brod and long,

So wel proportioned for to be strong,

Right as it were a stede of Lombardie,

Therwith so horfly and so quick of eye

As it a gentil Poileis courser were;

For certes fro his tayl unto his ere

Nature ne art ne coud him not amend

In no degree, as all the peple wend.

But evermore hir moste wonder was

How that it coude gon and was of bras:

It was of Faerie, as the peple semed:

Diverse folk diversely han demed:

As many heds as many wittes ben.

They murmured as doth a swarme of been,

And maden skilles after hir fantasies,

Reherfing of the olde poetries,

And sayd it was ylike the Pegasee,

The hors that hadde winges for to flee,

Or elles it was the Grekes hors Sinon,

That broughte Troye to destruction,

As men moun in thise olde gesses rede.

Min herte (quod on) is evermore in drede;

I trow som men of armes ben therin,

That shapen hem this citee for to win:

It were right good that al swiche thing were know.

Another rownded to his felaw low,

And sayd, He lieth, for it is rather like

An apparence ymade by som magike,

As jogelours plaien at thise festes grete.

Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,

As lewed peple demen comunly

Of thinges that ben made more subtilly

Than they can in hir lewednesse comprehende:

They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And som of hem wondred on the mirroure

That born was up in to the maister tour,

How men mighte in it swiche thinges see.

Another answered and sayd, It might wel be

Naturelly by compositions

Of angles and flie reflections;

And faide that in Rome was swiche on.

They speke of Alhazen and Vitellon,

And Aristotle, that writen in hir lives

Of queinte mirroures and of prospectives,

As knowen they that han hir bookes herd.

And other folk han wondred on the swerd

That wolde percen thurghout every thing;

And fell in speche of Telephus the king,

And of Achilles for his queinte spere,

For he coude with it bothe hele and dere,

Right in swiche wise as men may with the swerd

Of which right now ye have yourselven herd.

They speken of sondry harding of metall,

And speken of medicines therwithall,

And how and whan it shuld yharded be,

Which is unknow algates unto me.

Tho speken they of Canacees ring,

And saiden all that swiche a wonder thing

Of craft of ringes herd they never non,

Save that he Moises and King Salomon

Hadden a name of conning in swiche art.

Thus sain the peple, and drawn hem apart.

But natheles som saiden that it was

Wonder to maken of ferne ashen glas,

And yet is glas nought like ashen of ferne;

But for they han yknowen it so ferne,

Therfore ceseth hir jangling and hir wonder.

As fore wondren som on cause of thonder,

On ebbe and floud, on gossomer and on mist,

And on all thing til that the cause is wist.

Thus janglen they, and demen and devise,

Til that the king gan fro his bord arise.

Phebus hath lest the angle meridional,

And yet ascending was the este real,

The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,

Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambuscan,

Rose from his bord, ther as he sat ful hie:

Before him goth the loude minstrelcie,

Til he come to his chambre of parements,

Ther as they founden divers instruments,

That it is like an heven for to here.

Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere,

For in the Fish hir lady sat ful hie,

And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.

This noble king is set upon his trone,

This straunge knight is set to him ful sone,

And on the daunce he goth with Canace.

Here is the revell and the jolitee

That is not able a dull man to devise:

He must han knowen Love and his servise,

And ben a festlich man, as fresh as May,

That shulde you devisen swiche array.

Who coude tellen you the forme of daunces
So uncouth, and so freshe contenaunces,
Swiche subtil lokings and dissimulings,
For dred of jalous mennes apperceivings?
No man but Launcelot, and he is ded;
Therefore I passe over all this lustyhed;
I say no more, but in this jolineffe
I lete hem til men to the souper hem dresse.

The steward bit the spices for to hie,
And eke the win, in all this melodie;
The ushers and the squierle ben gon,
The spices and the win is come anon:
They ete and drinke, and whan this had an end
Unto the temple, as reson was, they wend:
The service don, they soupen all by day.

What nedeth you reherfen hir array?
Eche man wot wel that at a kinges fest
Is plentee to the most and to the lest,
And deintees mo than ben in my knowiing.

At after souper goth this noble king
To seen this hors of bras, with all a route
Of lordes and of ladies him aboute.
Swiche wondring was ther on this hors of bras,
That sin the gret asslege of Troye was
Ther as men wondred on an hors also,
Ne was ther swiche a wondring as was tho.
But, finally, the king asketh the knight
The vertue of this courser and the might,
And praied him to tell his governaunce.

This hors anon gan for to trip and daunce.
Whan that the knight laid hond up on his rein,
And saide, Sire, ther n'is no more to sain,
But whan you list to riden any where
Ye moten trill a pin stant in his ere,
Which I shal tellen you betwixt us two,
Ye moten nempne him to what place also,
Or to what contree that you list to ride.

And whan ye come ther as you list abide,
Bid him descend, and trill another pin,
(For therin lieth the effect of all the gin)
And he wol down descend and don your will,
And in that place he wol abiden still;
Though all the world had the contrary swore,
He shal not thennes be drawe ne be bore:
Or if you list to bid him thennes gon,
Trille this pin, and he wol vanish anon
Out of the sight of every maner wight,
And come agen, be it by day or night,
Whan that you list to clepen him again
In swiche a guise as I shal to you sain
Betwixen you and me, and that ful sone.
Ride whan you list, ther n'is no more to done.

Enfourmed whan the king was of the knight,
And hath conceived in his wit aright
The maner and the forme of all this thing,
Ful glad and blith this noble doughty king
Repaireth to his revel as beforne.
The bridel is in to the tour yborne,
And kept among his jewels lese and dere:
The hors vanisht, I n'ot in what manere,
Out of hir sight, ye get no more of me:
But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
This Cambuscan his lordes festeying
Til that wel nigh the day began to spring.

Pars secunda.

The norice of digestion, the slepe,
Gan on hem winke, and bad hem taken kepe
That mochel drinke and labour wol have rest,
And with a galping mouth hem all he kest,
And said, that it was time to lie adoun,
For blood was in his dominioun:
Cherisheth blood, natures frend, quod he.

They thanken him galping, by two, by three;
And every wight gan drawe him to his rest,
As slepe hem bade; they toke it for the best.

Hir dremes shal not now be told for me;
Ful were hir hedes of fumositee,
That causeth dreame, of which ther is no charge:
They slepen till that it was prime large,
The moste part, but it were Canace;
She was ful mesurable, as women be;
For of hire father had she take hire leve
To gon to rest sone after it was eve;
Here liste not appalled for to be,
Nor on the morwe unfeistliche for to see,
And slept hire firste slepe, and than awoke:
For swiche a joy she in hire herte toke
Both of hire queinte ring and of hire mirrour,
That twenty time she chaunged hire colour.
And in hire slepe right for the impressioun
Of hire mirrour she had a visioun;
Wherefore or that the sonne gan up glide
She clepeth upon hire maistresse hire beside,
And saide that hire luste for to arise.

This olde woman that ben gladly wise,
As is hire maistresse, answerd hire anon,
And said, Madam, whider wol ye gon
Thus erly? for the folk ben all in rest.

I wol, quod she, arisen (for me lest
No longer for to slepe) and walken aboute.

Hire maistresse clepeth women a gret route,
And up they risen wel a ten or twelve;
Up riseth freshe Canace hireselfe,
As rody and bright as the yonge sonne
That in the Ram is foure degrees yronne;
No higher was he whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty seson fote
Lightely for to playe, and walken on fote,
Nought but with five or sixe of hire meinie,
And in a trenche forth in the park goth she.

The vapour which that fro the erthe glode
Maketh the sonne to seme rody and brode;
But natheles it was so faire a sight
That it made all hir hertes for to light,
What for the seson and the morwening,
And for the foules that she herde sing,
For right anon she wiste what they ment
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entent.

The knotte why that every tale is tolde,
If it be taried til the lust be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore,
The favour passeth ever lenger the more
For fulsumnesse of the prolixitee;
And by that same reson thinketh me
I shuld unto the knotte condescende,
And maken of hire walking sone an ende.

Amidde a tree for-dry, as white as chalk,
 As Canace was playing in hire walk,
 Ther sat a faucon over hire hed ful hie
 That with a pitous vois so gan to crie,
 That all the wood resounded of hire cry,
 And beten had hireself so pitously
 With both hire winges til the rede blood
 Ran endelong the tree ther as she stood;
 And ever in on alway she cried and shrighit,
 And with hire bek hireselfen she so twight,
 That ther n'is tigre ne no cruel best
 That dwelleth other in wood or in forest
 That n'olde han wept, if that he wepen coude,
 For forwe of hire, she shrighit alway so loude.

For ther was never yet no man on live,
 If that he coude a faucon wel describe,
 That herde of swiche another of fayrenesse
 As wel of plumage as of gentileffe
 Of shape, of all that might yrekened be :
 A faucon peregrine semed she
 Of fremde lond, and ever as she stood
 She swouned now and now for lack of blood,
 Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This faire kinges doughter Canace,
 That on hire finger bare the queinte ring,
 Thurgh which she understood wel every thing
 That any foule may in his leden fain,
 And coude answere him in his leden again,
 Hath understonden what this faucon seyde,
 And wel neigh for the routhe almost she deyde;
 And to the tree she goth ful hastily,
 And on this faucon loketh pitously,
 And held hire lap abroad, for wel she wist
 The faucon muste fallen from the twist
 Whan that she swouned next, for faute of blood.
 A longe while to waiten hire she stood,
 Til at the last she spake in this manere
 Unto the hawk, as ye shul after here :

What is the cause, if it be for to tell,
 That ye ben in this furial peine of hell ?
 Quod Canace unto this hawk above;
 Is this for sorwe of deth or losse of love ?
 For as I trow thise be the causes two
 That causen most a gentil herte wo.
 Of other harme it nedeth not to speke,
 For ye yourself upon yourself awreke,
 Which preveth wel that other ire or drede
 Mote ben encheson of your cruel dede,
 Sin that I se non other wight you chace.
 For the love of God as doth yourselven grace;
 Or what may be your helpe ? for west ne est
 Ne saw I never er now no brid ne best
 That ferde with himself so pitously.
 Ye sle me with your sorwe veraily,
 I have of you so gret compassioun.
 For Goddes love come fro the tree adoun,
 And as I am a kinges doughter trewe,
 If that I veraily the causes knewe
 Of your disese, if it lay in my might
 I wold amend it or that it were night,
 As wisly help me the gret God of kind;
 And herbes shal I right ynough yfind
 To helen with your hurtes hastily.

Tho shrighit this faucon yet more pitously
 Than ever she did, and fell to ground anon,
 And lith aswouned as ded as lith a ston,

VOL. I.

'Til Canace hath in hire lappe hire take
 Unto that time she gan of swoone awake,
 And after that she out of swoone abraide
 Right in hire haukes leden thus she sayde :

That pitee renneth sone in gentil herte
 (Feling his similitude in peines smerte)
 Is proved alle day, as men may see
 As wel by werke as by auctoritee,
 For gentil herte kitheth gentilleffe.
 I see wel that ye have on my distresse
 Compassion, my faire Canace,
 Of veray womanly benignitee
 That Nature in your principles hath set.
 But for non hope for to fare the bet,
 But for to obey unto your herte free,
 And for to maken other yware by me,
 As by the whelpe chastised is the leon,
 Right for that cause and that conclusion;
 While that I have a leiser and a space,
 Min harme I wol confessen er I pace.
 And ever while that on hire sorwe told
 That other wept as she to water wold,
 Til that the faucon bad hire to be still,
 And with a sike right thus she said hire till :

Ther I was bred (alas that ilke day !)
 And fostred in a roche of marble gray
 So tendrely, that nothing ailed me;
 I ne wist not what was adversitee
 Til I coud flee full high under the skie.

Tho dwelled a tercelet me faste by
 That semed wel of alle gentilleffe,
 Al were he ful of trefon and falsenesse.
 It was so wrapped under humble chere,
 And under hew of trowth in swiche manere,
 Under plesance, and under besy peine,
 That no wight coud have wend he coude feine,
 So depe in greyn he died his coloures.
 Right as a serpent hideth him under floures,
 Til he may see his time for to bite,
 Right so this god of Loves hypocrite
 Doth so his ceremonies and obeifance,
 And kepeth in semblaunt alle his observance
 That souneth unto gentilleffe of love.
 As on a tombe is all the faire above,
 And under is the corps, swiche as ye wote,
 Swiche was this hypocrite both cold and hotte,
 And in this wise he served his entent,
 That save the fend non wiste what he ment
 Til he so long had weped and complained,
 And many a yere his service to me fained,
 Til that min herte, to pitous and to nice,
 Al innocent of his crowned malice,
 For-fered of his deth, as thoughte me,
 Upon his othes and his seuretee
 Graunted him love on this conditioun,
 That evermo min honour and renoun
 Were saved, both privee and apert;
 This is to say, that after his desert
 I yave him all min herte and all my thought,
 (God wote and he that other wayes nought)
 And toke his herte in chaunge of min for ay.
 But soth is said, gon sithen is many a day
 A trewe wight and a thief thinken not on.

And whan he saw the thing so fer ygon,
 That I had granted him fully my love,
 In swiche a guise as I have said above,

G

And yeven him my trewe herte as free
 As he swore that he yaf his herte to me,
 Anon this tigre, ful of doublenesse,
 Fell on his knees with so gret humbleffe,
 With so high reverence, as by his chere,
 So like a gentil lover of manere,
 So ravished, as it semed, for the joye,
 That never Jason ne Paris of Troye,
 Jason! certes ne never other man
 Sin Lamech was, that alderfirst began
 To loven two, as writen folk beforne,
 Ne never sithen the first man was borne,
 Ne coude man by twenty thousand part
 Contrefete the sophimes of his art,
 Ne were worthy to unbocle his galoche,
 Ther doublenesse of faining shuld approche,
 Ne coude so thanke a wight as he did me.
 His maner was an heven for to see
 To any woman, were she never so wise,
 So painted he and kempt at point devise
 As wel his wordes as his contenance :
 And I so loved him for his obeisance,
 And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
 That if so were that any thing him smerte,
 Al were it never so lite, and I it wist,
 Me thought I felt deth at myn herte twist.
 And, shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,
 That my will was his willes instrument;
 This is to say, my will obeyed his will
 In alle thing, as fer as reson fill,
 Keping the boundes of my worship ever :
 Ne never had I thing so lese ne lever
 As him, God wot, ne never shal no mo.

This lasteth lenger than a yere or two,
 That I supposed of him nought but good :
 But, finally, thus at the last it stood,
 That Fortune wolde that he muste twin
 Out of that place which that I was in.
 Wher me was wo it is no question ;
 I cannot make of it description :
 For o thing dare I tellen boldely,
 I know what is the peine of deth therby,
 Swiche harme I felt, for he ne might byleve.

So on a day of me he toke his leve,
 So sorweful eke, that I wend veraily
 That he had felt as mochel harme as I,
 Whan that I herd him speke and saw his hewe :
 But natheles I thought he was so trewe,
 And eke that he repairen shuld again
 Within a litel while, soth for to sain,
 And reson wold eke that he muste go
 For his honour, as often happeth so,
 That I made vertue of necessitee,
 And toke it wel sin that it muste be.
 As I best might I hid fro him my sorwe,
 And toke him by the hond, Seint John to borwe,
 And said him thus, Lo, I am youres all,
 Beth swiche as I have ben to you and shall.

What he answerd it nedeth not reherse ;
 Who can say bet than he, who can do werse ?
 Whan he hath al wel said than hath he done ;
 Therefore behoveth him a ful long sponse
 That shal ete with a fend ; thus herd I say.

So at the last he muste forth his way ;
 Whan forth he fleeth, til he come ther him left.
 Whan it came him to purpos for to rest,

I trow that he had thilke text in mind,
 That alle thing repairing to his kind
 Gladeth himself ; thus sain men as I gesse :
 Men loven of propre kind newefangelnesse,
 As briddes don that men in cages fede ;
 For though thou night and day take of hem hede,
 And strew hir cage faire and soft as filke,
 And give hem sugre, hony, bred, and milke,
 Yet right anon as that his dore is up
 He with his feet wol spurnen down his cup,
 And to the wood he wol and wormes ete,
 So newefangel ben they of hir mete,
 And loven noveltees of propre kind ;
 No gentilleffe of blood ne may hem bind.

So ferd this tercelet, alas the day !
 Though he were gentil borne, and fresh, and gay,
 And goodly for to seen, and humble, and free.
 He saw upon a time a kite flee,
 And sodenly he loved this kite so
 That all his love is clene from me ago,
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wise.
 Thus hath the kite my love in hire service,
 And I am lorn withouten remedy.

And with that word this faucon gan to cry,
 And swouneth eft in Canacees barme.
 Gret was the sorwe for that haukes harme
 That Canace and all hire women made ;
 They n'isten how they might the faucon glade :
 But Canace home bereth hire in hire lap,
 And softly in plastres gan hire wrap
 Ther as she with hir bek had hurt hireselfe.

Now cannot Canace but herbes delve
 Out of the ground, and maken salves newe
 Of herbes precious and fine of hewe
 To helen with this hawk : fro day to night
 She doth hire besinesse and all hire might.
 And by hire beddes hed she made a mew,
 And covered it with velouettes blew,
 In signe of trouth that is in woman sene,
 And all without the mew is peinted grene,
 In which were peinted all thise false foules,
 As ben thise tidises, tercelettes, and owles,
 And pies, on hem for to cry and chide,
 Right for despit were peinted hem beside.

Thus lete I Canace hire hawk keping :
 I wol no more as now speke of hire ring,
 Til it come eft to purpos for to sain,
 How that this faucon gat hire love again
 Repentant, as the story telleth us,
 By mediation of Camballus,
 The kinges sone, of which that I you told ;
 But hennesforth I wol my processe hold
 To speke of adventures and of batailles,
 That yet was never herd so gret mervailles.

First wol I tellen you of a Cambuscan,
 That in his time many a citee wan ;
 And after wol I speke of Algaris,
 How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
 For whom ful oft in gret peril he was,
 Ne had he ben holpen by the hors of bras ;
 And after wol I speke of Camballo,
 That fought in listes with the brethren two
 For Canace, er that he might hire winne,
 And ther I left I wol again beginne.

THE FRANKLEINES PROLOGUE.

In faith, Squier, thou hast thee wel yquit,
 And gentilly: I preise wel thy wit,
 Quod the Frankelein. Considering thin youthe
 So felingly thou spekest, Sire, I aloue the
 As to my dome ther is non that is here
 Of eloquence that shal be thy pere
 If that you live: God yeve thee goode chance,
 And in vertue send thee continuance,
 For of thy speking I have gret deintee.
 I have a sone, and by the Trinitee
 It were me lever than twenty pound worth lond,
 Though it right now were fallen in my hond,
 He were a man of swiche discretion
 As that ye ben. Fie on possession
 But if a man be vertuous withal!
 I have my sone snibbed and yet shal,
 For he to vertue listeth not to entend,
 But for to play at dis and to dispend,
 And lese all that he hath, is his usage;
 And he had lever talken with a page
 Than to commune with any gentil wight
 Ther he might lere gentillesse aright.

Straw for your gentillesse! quod our Hoste.
 What? Frankelein, parde, Sire, wel thou wost
 That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
 A Tale or two, or breken his behest.
 That know I wel, Sire, quod the Frankelein:
 I pray you haveth me not in disdain

Though I to this man speke a word or two.
 Tell on thy Tale withouten wordes mo.
 Gladly, Sire Hoste, quod he, I wol obey
 Unto your will: now herkeneth what I sey:
 I wol you not contrarien in no wise,
 As fer as that my wittes may suffice.
 I pray to God that it may plesen you,
 Than wot I wel that is good ynow.

Thise olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes
 Of diverse adventures maden layes
 Rimeyed in hir firste Breton tonge,
 Which layes with hire instruments they songe,
 Or elles reddem hem for hir plesance,
 And on of hem have I in remembrance,
 Which I shall sayn with good wille as I can.

But, Sires, because I am a borel man,
 At my beginning first I you beseche
 Have me excused of my rude speche:
 I lerned never rhetorike certain;
 Thing that I speke it mote be bare and plain:
 I slept never on the Mount of Pernafo,
 Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
 Colours ne know I non, withouten drede,
 But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
 Or elles swiche as men die with br peinte;
 Colours of rhetorike ben to me queinte;
 My spirit feleth not of swiche matere:
 But if you lust, my Tale shul ye here.

THE FRANKLEINES TALE*.

In Armorike, that called is Bretaigne,
 Ther was a knight that loved and did his peine
 To serve a ladie in his beste wife,
 And many a labour, many a gret emprise,
 He for his lady wrought or she were wonne,
 For she was on the fairest under sonne,

* Anselmus, after much labour and cost bestowed to win the love of Dorigen, another man's wife, is content in the end, through the good dealing of her and her husband, to lose both his labour and cost. The scope of this Tale seemeth to be a contention of courtesy. Urry.

And eke therto comen of so high kinrede
 That wel unnethes durst this knight for drede
 Tell hire his wo, his peine, and his distresse:
 But at the last she for his worthinesse,
 And namely for his meke obeyfance,
 Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penance,
 That prively she fell of his accord
 To take him for hire husbond and hire lord,
 (Of swiche lordship as men han over hir wives)
 And, for to lede the more in blisse hir lives,

Of his free will he swore hire as a knight
 That never in all his lif he day ne night
 Ne shulde take upon him no maistrie
 Agains hire will, ne kithe hir jaloufie,
 But hire obey, and folwe hire will in al,
 As any lover to his lady shal,
 Save that the name of foverainetee,
 That wold he han for shame of his degree.
 She thonked him, and with ful gret humbleffe
 She saide, Sire, sin of your gentillesse
 Ye profren me to have so large a reine,
 Ne wolde God never betwix us tweine,
 As in my gilt, were either werre or strif :
 Sire, I wol be your humble trewe wif,
 Have here my trouth, till that myn herte breste.
 Thus ben they both in quiete and in reste.

For o thing, Sires, fausly dare I seie,
 That frendes everich other must obeie,
 If they wol long holden compaignie :
 Love wol not be constreined by maistrie :
 Whan maistrie cometh, the god of Love anon
 Beteth his winges, and, farewel, he is gon.
 Love is a thing as any spirit free.
 Women of kind desiren libertee,
 And not to be constreined as a thral ;
 And so don men, if sothly I say shal.
 Loke, who that is most patient in love
 He is at his advantage all above.
 Patience is an high vertue certain,
 For it venquisheth, as thise clerkes sain,
 Things that rigour never shulde atteine.
 For every word men may not chide or pleine.
 Lerneth to suffren, or, so mote I gon,
 Ye shul it lerne whether ye wol or non ;
 For in this world certain no wight ther is
 That he ne doth or sayth somtime amis.
 Ire, siknesse, or constellation,
 Win, wo, or changing of complexion,
 Causeth ful oft to don amis or speken :
 On every wrong a man may not be wroken.
 After the time must be temperance
 To every wight that can of governance :
 And therefore hath this worthy wise knight
 (To liven in ese) suffrance hire behight,
 And she to him ful wisly gan to swere
 That never shuld ther be defaute in here.

Here may men seen an humble wise accord ;
 Thus hath she take hire servant and hire lord,
 Servant in love and lord in mariage.
 Than was he both in lordship and servage ?
 Servage ! nay, but in lordship al above,
 Sin he hath both his lady and his love ;
 His lady certes, and his wif also,
 The which that law of love accordeth to.
 And whan he was in this prosperitee
 Home with his wif he goth to his contree,
 Not fer fro Penmark, ther his dwelling was,
 Wher as he liveth in blisse and in solas.

Who coude telle, but he had wedded be,
 The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee
 That is betwix an husbond and his wif ?
 A yere and more lasteth this blisful lif,
 Til that this knight, of which I spake of thus,
 That of Cairrud was cleped Arviragus,

Shope him to gon and dwelle a yere or twaine
 In Englelond, that cleped was eke Bretaigne,
 To seke in armes worship and honour,
 (For all his lust he set in swiche labour)
 And dwelte ther two yere : the book saith thus.

Now wol I stint of this Arviragus,
 And speke I wol of Dorigene his wif,
 That loveth hire husbond as hire hertes lif.
 For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
 As don thise noble wives whan hem liketh :
 She morneth, waketh, waileth, fasteth, pleineth ;
 Desir of his presence hire so distraineth,
 That all this wide world she set at nought.
 Hire frendes, which that knew hire hevy thought,
 Comforten hire in all that ever they may ;

hey prechen hire, they telle hire night and day
 That causeles she sleth hireself, alas !
 And every comfort possible in this cas
 They don to hire with all hire besinesse,
 Al for to make hire leve hire hevinesse.

By proceffe, as ye knowen everich on,
 Men mowe so longe graven in a ston
 Til som figure therin emprented be :
 So long han they comforted hire til she
 Received hath, by hope and by reson,
 The emprenting of hir consolation,
 Thurgh which hire grete sorwe gan assuage :
 She may not alway duren in swiche rage.
 And eke Arviragus, in all this care,
 Hath sent his lettres home of his welfare,
 And that he wol come hastily again,
 Or elles had this sorwe hire herte slain.

Hire frendes saw hire sorwe gan to flake,
 And preiden hire on knees, for Goddes sake,
 To come and romen in hir compaignie,
 Away to driven hire darke fantasie :
 And, finally, she granted that request,
 For wel she saw that it was for the best.

Now stood hire castel faste by the see,
 And often with hire frendes walked she,
 Hire to disporten on the bank an hie,
 Wher as she many a ship and barge sie
 Sailing hir cours wher as hem list to go :
 But than was that a parcel of hire wo,
 For to hireself ful oft, alas ! said she,
 Is ther no ship, of so many as I see,
 Wol bringen home my lord ? than were my herte
 Al warished of his bitter peines smerte.

Another time wold she sit and thinke,
 And cast hire eyen downward fro the brinke ;
 But whan she saw the grisly rockes blake,
 For veray fere so wold hire herte quake
 That on hire feet she might hire not sustene :
 Than wold she sit adoun upon the grene,
 And pitously into the see behold,
 And say right thus, with careful sikes cold :

Eterne God ! that thurgh thy purveance
 Ledest this world by certain governance,
 In idel, as men sain, ye nothing make :
 But, Lord ! thise grisly fendly rockes blake,
 That semen rather a foule confusion
 Of werk than any faire creation
 Of swiche a parfit wise God and stable,
 Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable ?

For by this werk north, south, ne west, ne est,
 Ther n'is yfostred man, ne brid, ne best :
 It doth no good to my wit, but anoyeth.
 See ye not, Lord! how mankind it destroyeth?
 An hundred thousand bodies of mankind
 Han rockes slain, al be they not in mind,
 Which mankind is so faire part of thy werk,
 Thou made it like to thyn owen merk.
 Than, semeth it, ye had a gret chertee
 Toward mankind; but how than may it be
 That ye swiche menes make it to destroyen,
 Which menes don no good, but ever anoyen?

I wote wel clerkes wol fain as hem lest,
 By arguments, that all is for the best,
 Though I ne can the causes nought yknow;
 But thilke God that made the wind to blow
 As kepe my lord; this is my conclusion;
 To clerkes lete I all disputison:
 But wolde God that all thise rockes blake
 Were sonken into helle for his sake:
 Thise rockes flee min herte for the fere.
 Thus wold she say with many a pitous tere.

Hire frendes saw that it was no disport
 To romen by the see, but discomfort,
 And shapen hem for to plaien somwher elles.
 They leden hire by rivers and by welles,
 And eke in other places delitable;
 They dancen, and they play at ches and tables.
 So on a day, right in the morwe tide,
 Unto a gardin that was ther beside,
 In which that they had made hir ordinance
 Of vitaille and of other purveance,
 They gon and plaie hem all the longe day;
 And this was on the fixte morwe of May,
 Which May had peinted with his softe shoures
 This garden ful of leves and of floures:
 And craft of mannes hond so curiously
 Arrayed had this gardin trewely,
 That never was ther gardin of swiche pris,
 But if it were the veray Paradis.
 The odour of floures and the freshe sight
 Wold han ymaked any herte light
 That ever was born, but if to gret likeness
 Or to gret sorwe held it in distresse,
 So ful it was of beautee and plesance.

And after dinner gonne they to dance
 And sing also, sauf Dorigene alone,
 Which made alway hire complaint and hire mone,
 For she ne saw him on the dance go
 That was hire husbond and hire love also:
 But natheles she must a time abide,
 And with good hope let hire sorwe slide.

Upon this dance, amonges other men,
 Danced a squier before Dorigen
 That fresher was and jolier of array,
 As to my dome, than is the month of May.
 He singeth, danceth, passing any man
 That is or was sin that the world began;
 Therwith he was, if men shuld him discrive,
 On of the beste faring men on live;
 Yong, strong, and vertuous, and riche, and wise,
 And wel beloved, and holden in gret prise.
 And, shortly, if the soth I tellen shal,
 Unweting of this Dorigene at al,

This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius,
 Had loved hire best of any creature
 Two yere and more, as was his aventure,
 But never dorst he tell hire his grevance:
 Withouten cup he dranke all his penance.
 He was dispeired; nothing dorst he say,
 Sauf in his songes somewhat wold he wray
 His wo, as in a general complaining;
 He said he loved and was beloved nothing.
 Of swiche matere made he many layes,
 Songes, complaintes, roundels, vielayes;
 How that he dorste not his sorwe telle,
 But languisheth as doth a Furie in helle;
 And die he must, he said, as did Ecco
 For Narcissus, that dorst not tell hire wo.

In other manner than ye here me say
 Ne dorst he not to hire his wo bewray,
 Sauf that paraventure somtime at dances,
 Ther yonge folk kepen hir observances,
 It may wel be he looked on hire face
 In swiche a wise as man that axeth grace;
 But nothing wiste she of his entent.
 Natheles it happened or they thennes went,
 Because that he was hire neighebour,
 And was a man of worship and honour,
 And had yknowen him of time yore,
 They fell in speche, and forth ay more and more
 Unto his purpos drew Aurelius,
 And when he saw his time he saide thus:
 Madame quod he, by God that this world made,
 So that I wist it might your herte glade,
 I wold that day that your Arviragus
 Went over see that I Aurelius
 Had went ther I shuld never come again,
 For wel I wot my service is in vain;
 My guerdon n'is but breisting of min herte.
 Madame, rueth upon my peines smerte,
 For with a word ye may me fleen or save.
 Here at your feet God wold that I were grave.
 I ne have as now no leiser more to sey:
 Have mercy, swete! or ye wol do me dey.

She gan to loke upon Aurelius:
 Is this your will, (quod she) and say ye thus?
 Never erst (quod she) ne wist I what ye ment,
 But now, Aurelie, I know your entent.
 By thilke God that yaf me soule and lif
 Ne shal I never ben an untrew wif
 In word ne werk, es fer as I have wit;
 I wol ben his to whom that I am knit:
 Take this for final answer as of me.
 But after that in play thus said she:

Aurelie, (quod she) by high God above
 Yet wol I granten you to ben your love,
 (Sin I you see so pitously complaine.)
 Loke, what day that endelong Bretaigne
 Ye remue all the rockes ston by ston,
 That they ne letten ship ne bote to gon;
 I say, whan he han made the cost so clene
 Of rockes that ther n'is no ston yfene,
 Than wol I love you best of any man;
 Have here my trouth, in all that ever I can,
 For wel I wote that it shal never betide.
 Let swiche folie out of your herte glide:

What deintee shuld a man have in his lif
For to go love another mannes wif
That hath hire body whan that ever him liketh?

Aurelius ful often fore liketh:

Is ther non other grace in you? quod he.

No, by that Lord, quod she, that maked me.

Wo was Aurelie whan that he this herd,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerd:

Madame, quod he, this were impossible;

Than moſte I die of ſoden deth horrible.

And with that word the turned him anon.

Tho come hire other frendes many on,

And in the alleyes romed up and down,

And nothing wiſt of this concluſioun,

But ſodenly begonnen revel newe,

Til that the brighte ſonne had loſt his hewe,

For the orizont had reſt the ſonne his light,

(This is as much to ſayn as it was night)

And home they gon in mirthe and in ſolas,

Sauf only wrecche Aurelius, alas!

He to his hous is gon with ſorweful herte;

He ſaith he may not from his deth aſterte:

Him ſemeth that he felt his herte cold.

Up to the heaven his hondes gan he hold,

And on his knees bare he ſet him down,

And in his raving ſaid his oriſoun.

For veray wo out of his wit he braide;

He n'iſte what he ſpake, but thus he ſaide;

With pitous herte his plaint hath he begonne

Unto the goddes, and firſt unto the Sonne.

He ſaid, Apollo! god and governour

Of every plante, herbe, tree, and flour,

That yeveſt after thy declination

To eche of hem his time and his ſeſon,

As that thin herbergh changeth low and hie,

Lord Phebus! caſt thy merciſtable eie

On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorne:

Lo, Lord! my lady hath my deth yſworne

Withouten gilt, but thy benignitee

Upon my dedly herte have ſom pitee:

For wel I wot Lord Phebus, if you leſt,

Ye may me helpen ſauf my lady beſt.

Now voucheth ſauf that I may you deviſe

How that I may be holpe, and in what wiſe.

Your bliſful ſuſter, Lucina the ſhene,

That of the ſee is chief goddeſſe and quene,

Though Neptunus have deitee in the ſee,

Yet emperice aboven him is ſhe:

Ye knowe wel, Lord, that right as hire deſire

Is to be quicked and lighted of your fire,

For which ſhe ſolweth you ful beſily,

Right ſo the ſee deſireth naturelly

To ſolwen hire, as ſhe that is goddeſſe

Both in the ſee and rivers more and leſſe:

Wherfore, Lord Phebus! this is my requeſt,

Do this miracle, or do min herte beſt,

That now next at this oppoſition,

Which in the ſigne ſhal be of the Leon,

As preyeth hire ſo gret a flood to bring,

That five ſadome at the leſt it overſpring

The higheſt rock in Armorike Bretaigne,

And let this flood enduren yeres twaine;

Than certes to my lady may I ſay,

Holdeth your heſt, the rockes ben away.

Lord Phebus! this miracle doth for me,
Prey hire ſhe go no faſter cours than ye:

I ſay this, preyeth your ſuſter that ſhe go

No faſter cours than ye thiſe yeres two,

Than ſhal ſhe ben even at ful alway,

And ſpring-flood laſten bothe night and day.

And but ſhe vouchesauf in ſwicke manere

To graunten me my ſoveraine lady dere,

Prey hire to ſinken every rock adoun

Into hire owen derke regioun

Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth in,

Or nevermo ſhal I my lady win.

Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot ſeke.

Lord Phebus! ſee the teres on my cheke,

And on my peine have ſom compaſſioun.

And with that word in ſorwe he fell adoun,

And longe time he lay forth in a trance.

His brother, which that knew of his penance,

Up caught him, and to bed he hath him brought.

Diſpeired in this turment and this thought

Let I this woful creature lie,

Cheſe he for me whether he wol live or die.

Arviragus with hele and gret honour

(As he that was of chevalrie the flour)

Is comen home, and other worthy men:

Of bliſful art thou now, thou Dorigen!

That haſt thy luſty huſbond in thin armes,

The freſhe knight, the worthy man of armes,

That loveth thee as his owen hertes lif.

Nothing liſt him to be imaginatif

If any wight had ſpoke while he was oute

To hire of love; he had of that no doubte:

He not entendeth to no ſwicke matere,

But danceth, juſteth, and maketh mery chere.

And thus in joye and bliſſe I let him dwell,

And of the ſike Aurelius wol I tell.

In langour and in turment furious

Two yere and more lay wrecched Aurelius

Er any foot on erthe he mighte gon;

Ne comfort in this time ne had he non

Sauf of his brother, which that was a clerk:

He knew of all this wo and all this werk;

For to non other creature certain

Of this matere he dorſte no word ſain:

Under his breſt he bare it more ſecree

Than ever did Pamphilus for Galathee.

His breſt was hole withouten for to ſeen,

But in his herte ay was the arwe kene,

And wel ye knowe that of a ſurfanure

In ſurgerie is perilous the cure,

But men might touch the arwe or come therby.

His brother wepeth and wailleth prively,

Til at the laſt him fell in remembrance

That while he was at Orleauce in France,

As yonge clerkes that ben likerous

To reden artes that ben curious

Seken in every halke and every herne

Particuler ſciences for to lerne,

He him remembred that upon a day

At Orleauce in ſtudie a book he ſay

Of magike naturel, which his ſelaw

That was that time a bachelor of law,

Al were he ther to lerne another craft,

Had prively upon his deſk ylaſt;

Which book spake moche of operations
 Touching the eight-and-twenty mansions
 That longen to the mone, and swiche folie
 As in our dayes n'is not worth a flie;
 For holy churches feith, in our beleve,
 Ne suffreth non illusion us to greve.
 And whan this book was in his remembrance
 Anon for joye his herte gan to dance,
 And to himself he saied prively,
 My brother shall be warished hastily;
 For I am liker that ther be sciences
 By which men maken divers apperances
 Swiche as thise subtil tregetoures play;
 For oft at festes have I wel herd say
 That tregetoures, within an halle large,
 Have made come in a water and a barge,
 And in the halle rowen up and down;
 Some time had semed com a grim leoun,
 And somtime floures spring as in a mede,
 Somtime a vine, and grapes white and rede,
 Somtime a castel al of lime and ston,
 And whan hem liketh voideth it anon:
 Thus semeth it to every mannes sight.

Now than conclude I thus; if that I might
 At Orleunce som olde felaw find
 That hath thise mones mansions in mind,
 Or other magike naturel above,
 He shuld wel make my brother have his love;
 For with an apparence a clerk may make,
 To mannes sight, that all the rockes blake
 Of Bretaigne were yvoided everich on,
 And shippes by the brinke comen and gon,
 And in swiche forme endure a day or two:
 Than were my brother wareshed of his wo,
 Than must she nedes holden hire beheft,
 Or elles he shal shame hire at the lest.

What shuld I make a lenger Tale of this?
 Unto his brothers bed he comen is,
 And swiche comfort he gaf him for to gon
 To Orleunce, that he up stert anon,
 And on his way forthward than is he fare,
 In hope for to ben lissed of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that citee,
 But if it were a two furlong or three,
 A yonge clerk roming by himself they mette,
 Which that in Latine thriftily hem grette:
 And after that he sayd a wonder thing;
 I know, quod he, the cause of your coming:
 And or they forther any foote went
 He told hem all that was in hir entent.

This Breton clerk him axed of felawes
 The which he had yknownen in olde dawes,
 And he answered him that they dede were,
 For which he wept ful often many a tere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius light anon,
 And forth with this magicien is gon
 Home to his hous, and made hem wel at ese:
 Hem lacked no vitaille that might hem plesse.
 So wel arraied hous as ther was on
 Aurelius in his lif saw never non.

He shewed him, or they went to soupere,
 Forrestes, parkes, ful of wilde dere:
 Ther saw he hertes with hir hornes hie,
 The gretest that were ever seen with eie:

He saw of hem an hundred slain with houndes
 And som with arwes blede of bitter woundes:
 He saw, when voided were the wilde dere,
 Thise fauconers upon a faire rivere
 That with hir haukes han the heron slain.

Tho saw he knightes justen in a plain:
 And after this he did him swiche plesance,
 That he him shewed his lady on a dance,
 On which himselven danced, as him thought.
 And whan this maister, that this magike wrought,
 Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes two,
 And farewell, al the revel is ago!

And yet remued they never out of the hous,
 While they saw all thise fightes marvellous,
 But in his studie, ther his bookes be,
 They faten still, and no wight but they three.

To him this maister called his squier,
 And sayd him thus, May we go to souper?
 Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
 Sin I you bade our souper for to make,
 Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
 Into my studie ther my bookes be.

Sire, quod this squier, whan it liketh you,
 It is al redy, though ye wol right now.

Go we than soupe, quod he, as for the best;
 Thise amorous folk somtime most han rest.

At after souper fell they in tretee
 What summe shuld this maisters guerdon be
 To remue all the rockes of Bretaigne,
 And eke from Gerounde to the mouth of Saine.

He made it strange, and swore, so God him
 save,

Lesse than a thousand pound he wold not have,
 Ne gladly for that summe he wol not gon.

Aurelius with blisful herte anon
 Answered thus; Fic on a thousand pound!
 This wide world, which that men sayn is round,
 I wold it yeve, if I were lord of it.

This bargaine is ful drive, for we ben knit.
 Ye shul be paid trewely, by my trouth;
 But loketh, for non negligence or slouth
 Ye tarie us here no lenger than to morwe.
 Nay, quod this clerk, have here my faith to borwe.

To bed is gon Aurelius whan him lest,
 And wel nigh all that night he had his rest.
 What for his labour and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte of penance had a lisse.

Upon the morwe whan that it was day
 To Bretaigne token they the righte way,
 Aurelie, and this magicien him beside,
 And ben descended ther they wold abide:
 And this was, as the bookes me remember,
 The colde frosty seson of December.

Phebus waxe old and hewed like Laton,
 That in his hote declination
 Shone as the burned gold with stremes bright;
 But now in Capricorne adoun he light,
 Wher as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sain.
 The bitter froste with the fleet and rain
 Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd;
 Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
 And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine;
 Beforn him stant braune of the tusked swine,

And Newel crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in all that ever he can
Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
And praieth him to don his diligence
To bringen him out of his peines smerte,
Or with a swerd that he wold slit his herte.

This sotil clerk swiche routh hath on this man,
That night and day he spedeth him that he can
To wait a time of his conclusion;
This is to sayn, to make illusion,
By swiche an apparence or joglerie,

(I can no termes of astrologie)
That she and every wight shuld wene and say
That of Bretaigne the rockes were away,

Or elles they were sonken under ground.
So at the last he hath his time yfound
To make his japes and his wretchednesse
Of swiche a superstitious cursednesse.

His tables Toletanes forth he brought,
Ful wel corrected, that ther lacked nought,
Nother his collect ne his expans yeres,
Nother his rotes ne his other geres,

As ben his centres and his argumentes,
And his proportionel convenientes,
For his equations in every thing:

And by his eighte speres in his werking
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the hed of thilke fix Aries above
That in the ninthe spere considered is:

Ful sotilly he calculed all this.
Whan he had found his firste mansion
He knew the remenant by proportion,
And knew the rising of his mone wel,

And in whos face, and terme, and every del;
And knew ful wel the mones mansion
Accordant to his operation;

And knew also his other observances,
For swiche illusions and swiche meschances
As Hethen folke used in thilke daies;

For which no lenger maketh he delaies,
But thurgh his magike, for a day or tway,
It seemed all the rockes were away.

Aurelius, which that despaired is
Whether he shal han his love or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
And whan he knew that ther was non obstacle,

That voided were thise rockes everich on,
Doun to his maisteres feet he fell anon,
And sayd, I, woful wretch Aurelius,

Thanke you, my lord, and lady min Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares cold
And to the temple his way forth hath he hold,

Theras he knew he shuld his lady see;
And whan he saw his time anon right he
With dredful herte and with ful humble chere
Salued hath his soveraine lady dere.

My rightful Lady, quod this woful man,
Whom I most drede and love as I best can,
And lothest were of all this world displese,
Ne're it that I for you have swiche disese
That I must die here at your foot anon,
Nought wold I tell how me is wo begon;
But certes other must I die or plaine;
Yesse me gilteles for veray peine;

But of my deth though that ye han no routh
Aviseeth you or that you breke your trouth:
Repenteth you, for thilke God above,
Or ye me fle, because that I you love:

For, Madame, wel ye wote what ye have hight;
Not that I challenge any thing of right
Of you my soveraine Lady, but of grace;

But in a garden yond, in swiche a place,
Ye wote right wel what ye behighten me,
And in myn hond your trouthe plighen ye
To love me best: God wote ye saied so,

Although that I unworthy be therto.
Madame, I speke it for the honour of you,
More than to save my hertes lif right now,
I have don so as ye commanded me,

And if ye vouchesauf ye may go see.
Doth as you list, have your behest in mind,
For quick or ded right ther ye shul me find.
In you lith all to do me live or dey,

But wel I wote the rockes ben away.
He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood;
In all hire face n'as o drope of blood:
She wened never han come in swiche a trappe.

Alas! quod she, that ever this should happe!
For wend I never by possibilittee
That swiche a monstre or mervaille might be;
It is again the processe of Nature.

And home she goth a sorweful creature;
For veray fere unnethes may she go.
She wepeth, wailleth, all a day or two,

And swouneth that it routh was to see,
But why it was to no wight tolde she,
For out of toun was gon Arviragus;

But to hireself she spake, and saied thus,
With face pale, and with ful sory chere,
In hire complaint, as ye shul after here.

Alas! quod she, on thee, Fortune, I plain,
That unaware hast me wrapped in thy chain,
Fro which to escapen wote I no foccour
Sauf only deth or elles dishonour:

On of thise two behoveth me to chese.
But natheles, yet had I a lever lese
My lif than of my body have a shame,
Or know myselven false, or lese my name:

And with my deth I may be quit ywis;
Hath ther not many a noble wif or this,
And many a maid, yslaine hireself, alas!

Rather than with hire body don trespas?
Yes certes; lo, thise stories bere witnesse.
Whan thirty tyrants ful of cursednesse
Had slain Phidon in Athens at the fest,

They commanded his doughtren for to arrest
And bringen hem beforne him despit
Al naked, to fulfil hire foule delit;

And in hir fadres blood they made hem dance
Upon the pavement, God yeve hem meschance!
For which thise woful maidens, ful of drede,
Rather than they wold lese hir maidenhede,

They prively ben stert into a welle,
And dreint hemselven, as the bookes telle.
They of Messene let enquire and seke
Of Lacedomie fifty maidens eke

On which the wolden don hir lecherie;
But ther was non of all that compaignie

That she n'as flaine, and with a glad entent
Chees rather for to dien than assent
To ben oppressed of hire maidenhede.
Why shuld I than to dein ben in drede?

Lo eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
That loved a maid hight Stimphalides,
Whan that hire father flaine was on a night,
Unto Dianes temple goth she right,
And hente the image in hire handes two,
Fro which image wold she never go;
No wight her handes might it of it arrace
Til she was flaine right in the selve place.

Now sin that maidens hadden swiche despit
To be defouled with mannes foule delit,
Wel ought a wif rather hireselfen fle
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.

What shal I sayn of Hasdrubales wif,
That at Cartage beraft hireself hire lif?
For whan she saw that Romaines wan the toun,
She toke hire children all, and skipt adoun
Into the fire, and chees rather to die
Than any Romain did hire valanie.

Hath not Lucrece yflaine hireself, alas!
At Rome, whan that she oppressed was
Of Tarquine? for hire thought it was a shame
To liven whan she hadde lost hire name.

The seven maidens of Milesie also
Han flaine hemself, for veray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gaule hem shuld oppresse.

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Coude I now tell as touching this matere.

Whan Abradate was slain, his wif so dere
Hireselfen flow, and let hire blood to glide
In Abradates woundes depe and wide,
And sayd, My body at the leste way
Ther shal no wight defoulen if I may.

What shuld I mo ensamples hereof sain?
Sin that so many han hemselfen slain,
Wel rather than they wold defouled be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To fle myself than be defouled thus:
I wol be trewe unto Arviragus,
Or elles fle myself in some manere,
As Did Demotiones doughter dere,
Because she wolde not defouled be.

O Sedasus! it is ful gret pitee
To reden how thy doughtren died, alas!
That flowe hemselfen for swiche maner cas.

As gret a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban maiden that for Nichanore
Hireselfen flow right for swiche menere wo.
Another Theban mayden did right so,
For on of Macedoine had hire oppressed;
She with hire deth hire maidenhed redressed.

What shal I sain of Nicerates wif,
That for swiche cas bereft hireself hire lif?

How trewe was eke to Alcibiades
His love, that for to dien rather chees
Than for to suffre his body unburied be?

Lo, which a wif was Alceste eke? (quod she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope?
All Greece knoweth of hire chastitee.

Parde of Laodomia is wretten thus,
That whan at Troye was slain Prothesilaus

No lenger wolde she live after his day.
The same of noble Portia tell I may;
Withouten Brutus coude she not live,
To whom she had all whole hire herte yeve.

The parfit wifhood of Artemisie
Honoured is thurghout all Barbarie.

O Teuta quene! thy wifly chastitee
To alle wives may a mirrour be.

Thus plained Dorigene a day or twey,
Purposing ever that she wolde dey;
But natheles upon the thridde night
Home came Arviragus, the worthy knight,
And axed hire why that she weep so fore?
And she gan wepen ever lenger the more.
Alas, quod she, that ever I was yborne!
Thus have I said, (quod she) thus have I sworne,
And told him all, as ye have herd before:
It nedeth not reherse it you no more.

This husbond with glad chere, in frendly wise,
Answerd and sayd as I shal you devise;
Is ther ought elles, Dorigene, but this?

Nay, nay, quod she, God, helpe me so, as wis
This is to much, and it were Goddes will.

Ye, wif, quod he, let slepen that is still;
It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.
Ye shal your trouthe holden by my fay;
For God so wifly have mercy on me,
I had wel lever stiked for to be,
For veray love which that I to you have,
But if ye shuld your trouthe kepe and save:
Trowth is the hiest thing that man may kepe.
But with that word he braft anon to wepe,
And sayd; I you forbede, on peine of deth,
That never while you lasteth lif or breth
To no wight tell ye this misaventure;
As I may best I wol my wo endure:
Ne make no contenance of hevinesse,
That folk of you may demen harme or gesse,
And forth he cleped a squier and a maid.
Goth forth anon with Dorigene, he said,
And bringeth hire to swiche a place anon.
They take hir leve, and on hir way they gon;
But they ne wisten why she thider went;
She n'olde no wight tellen hire entent.

This squier which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigene that was so amorous,
Of aventure happed hire to mete
Amid the toun, right in the quickest strete,
As she was boun to go the way forthright
Toward the gardin, ther as she had hight;
And he was to the gardinward also,
For wel he spied whan she wolde go
Out of hire hous to any maner place:
But thus they met of aventure or grace,
And he salueth hire with glad entent,
And axeth of hire whiderward she went.

And she answered half as she were mad,
Unto the gardin, as myn husbond bad,
My trouthe for to hold, alas! alas!

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had gret compassion
Of hire, and of hire lamentation,
And of Arviragus, the worthy knight,
That bad hire holden all that she had hight,

So loth him was his wif shuld breke hire trouthe;
 And in his herte he caught of it gret routhe,
 Considering the best on every side,
 That fro his lust yet were him lever abide
 Than do so high a cherlish wretchednesse
 Ageins fraunchise and alle gentilleffe
 For which in few wordes sayd he thus:

Madame, say to your Lord Arviragus
 That fin I see the grete gentilleffe
 Of him, and eke I see wel your distresse,
 That him were lever have shame (and that were
 routhe)

Than ye to me shuld breken thus your trouthe,
 I hadde wel lever ever to suffren wo
 Than to depart the love betwix you two.
 I you relese, Madame; into your hond
 Quit every seurement and every bond
 That ye han made to me as herebeforne
 Sin thilke time that ye were yborne.
 Have here my trouthe, I shal you never reprove
 Of no behest; and here I take my leve
 As of the trewest and the beste wif
 That ever yet I knew in all my lif.
 But every wif beware of hire behest;
 On Dorigene remembreth at the lest.
 Thus can a squier don a gentil dede
 As wel as can a knight, withouten drede.

She thanketh him upon hire knees bare,
 And home unto hire hufbond is she fare,
 And told him all as ye han herd me sayd;
 And, trusteth me, he was so wel apayd
 That it were impossible me to write.

What shuld I lenger of this cas endite?
 Arviragus and Dorigene his wif
 In foveraine blisse leden forth hir lif,
 Never eft ne was ther anger hem betwene;
 He cherished hire as though she were a quene,
 And she was to him trewe for evermore.
 Of thise two folk ye get of me no more.

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne,
 Curseth the time that ever he was borne.
 Alas! quod he, alas that I behight
 Of pured gold a thousand pound of wight
 Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
 I see no more but that I am fordo.
 Min heritage mote I nedes sell,
 And ben a beggar here In'ill not dwell,
 And shamen all my kinrede in this place,
 But I of him may geten better grace:
 But natheles I wol of him assay
 At certain daies yere by yere to pay,
 And thanke him of his grete curtesie.
 My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol not lie.

With herte fore he goth unto his cofre,
 And broughte gold unto this philosophre,
 The value of five hundred pound I gesse,
 And him besecheth of his gentilleffe
 To graunt him daies of the remenaunt,
 And sayde; Maister, I dare wel make avaunt
 I failed never of my trouthe as yet;
 For sikerly my dette shal be be quit
 Towardes you, how so that ever I fare
 To gon a begging in my kirtle bare:
 But wold ye vouchen sauf upon seurttee
 Two yere or three for to respiten me,
 Than were I wel, for elles mote I sell
 Min heritage; ther is no more to tell.

This philosophre sobrelly answerd,
 And saied thus, whan he thise wordes herd;
 Have I not holden covenant to thee?

Yes, certes, wel and trewely, quod he.
 Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?

No, no, quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.
 What was the cause? tell me if thou can.

Aurelius his tale anon began,
 And told him all as ye han herd before;
 It nedeth not reherse it any more.
 He sayd, Arviragus of gentilleffe
 Had lever die in forwe and in distresse
 Than that his wif were of hire trouthe fals.
 The forwe of Dorigene he told him als,
 How loth hire was to ben a wicked wif,
 And that she lever had lost that day hire lif;
 And that her trouthe she swore thurgh innocence;
 She never erst hadde herd speke of apparence:
 That made me han of hire so gret pitee,
 And right as freely as he sent hire to me
 As freely sent I hire to him again.
 This is all and som; ther n'is no more to sain.

The philosophre answerd; Leve brothre,
 Everich of you did gentilly to other:
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knight,
 But God forbede, for his blisful might,
 But if a clerk could don a gentil dede
 As wel as any of you, it is no drede.

Sire, I relese thee thy thousand pound,
 As thou right now were crope out of the ground,
 Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me:
 For, Sire, I wol not take a peny of thee
 For all my craft, ne nought for my travaille:
 Thou hast ypaied wel for my vitaille.
 It is ynough, and farewell, have good day.
 And toke his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordings, this question wold I axen now,
 Which was the moste free, as thinketh you?
 Now telleth me or that ye further wende,
 I can no more, my Tale is at an ende.

THE DOCTOURES PROLOGUE.

Ye, let that passen, quod our Hoste, as now.
Sire Doctour of Physike, I prey you,
Tell us a Tale of som honest matere.

It shal be don, if that ye wol it here,
Said this Doctour, and his Tale began anon.
Now, good men, quod he, herkeneth everich one.

THE DOCTOURES TALE*.

Ther was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knight that cleped was Virginus,
Fulfilled of honour and worthinesse,
And strong of frendes, and of gret richesse.
This knight a doughter hadde by his wif;
No children had he mo in all his lif.
Faire was this maid in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see,
For Nature hath with soveraine diligence
Yformed hire in so gret excellence
As though she wolde sayn, Lo, I Nature,
Thus can I forme and peint a creature,
Whan that me list: who can me countrefete?
Pigmalion? not though he ay forge and bete,
Or grave, or peinte; for I dare wel sain
Apelles, Xeuxis, shulden werche in vain
Other to grave, or peinte, or forge, or bete,
If they presumed me to countrefete:
For he that is the former principal
Hath maked me his vicaire general
To forme and peinten earthly creatures
Right as we list; and eche thing in my cure is
Under the mone that may wane and waxe;
And for my werk right nothing wol I axe:
My lord and I ben ful of on accord;
I made hire to the worship of my lord,

* Virginus slayeth his only daughter rather than she
shall be defiled by the lecherous judge Applus. *Sp.*

So do I all min other creatures,
What colour that they han or what figures.
Thus semeth me that Nature wolde say.

This maid of age twelf yere was and tway
In which that nature hadde swiche delit;
For right as she can peint a lily whit
And red a rose, right with swiche peinture
She painted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne upon hire limmes free,
Wheras by right swiche colours shulden be;
And Phebus died hath hire tresses grete
Like to the stremes of his burned hete.
And if that excellent were hire beautee,
A thousand fold more vertuous was she.
In hire ne lacked no condition
That is to preise, as by discretion.
As wel in gost as body chast was she,
For which she floured in virginitee
With all humilitee and abstinence,
With all attemperance and patience,
With measure eke of bering and array.
Discrete she was in answering alway,
Though she were wise as Pallas, dare I sain,
Hire lacounde eke ful womanly and plain:
No countrefeted terms hadde she
To semen wise, but after hire degree
She spake, and all hire werdes more and lesse
Souning in vertue and in gentillesse.

Shamefast she was in maidens shamefastnesse,
 Constant in herte out of idel besinesse
 To drive hire out of idel flogardie.
 Bacchus had of hire mouth right no maistrice,
 For wine and youthe don Venus encrese,
 As men in fire wol casten oile and grese.
 And of hire owen vertue unconstrained
 She hath hireself ful often like yfeined,
 For that she wolde flee the compaignie
 Wher likely was to treten of folie,
 As is at festes, at revels, and at dances
 That ben occasions of daliances.
 Swiche thinges maken children for to be
 To sone ripe and bold, as men may see,
 Which is ful perilous, and hath ben yore ;
 For al to sone may she lernen lore
 Of boldnesse whan she woxen is a wif.

And ye maistresses in your olde lif,
 That lordes daughters han in governance,
 Ne taketh of my wordes displeance :
 Thinketh that ye ben set in governinges
 Of lordes daughters only for two thinges,
 Other for ye han kept your honestee,
 Or elles for ye han fallen in freeltee,
 And knowen wel ynough the olde dance,
 And han forsaken fully swiche meschance
 For evermo ; therefore for Christes sake
 To teche hem vertue loke that ye ne flake.

A thief of venison, that hath forlaft
 His likerousnesse and all his olde craft,
 Can kepe a forest best of any man :
 Now kepeth hem wel, for if ye wol ye can.
 Loke wel that unto no vice assent,
 Lest ye be damned for your wikke entent,
 For who so doth a trayteur is certain :
 And taketh kepe of that I shal you sain ;
 Of alle treson soveraine pestilence
 Is whan a wight betrayeth innocence.

Ye fathers, and ye mothers eke also,
 Though ye han children, be it on or mo,
 Your is the charge of all hir surveance,
 While that they ben under your governance :
 Beth ware that by ensample of your living.
 Or by your negligence in chastising,
 That they ne perish, for I dare wel saye
 If that they don ye shul it dere abeye.
 Under a shepherd soft and negligent
 The wolf hath many a shepe and lamb to-rent,

Sufficeth this ensample now as here,
 For I mote turne agen to my matere.

This maid, of which I tell my Tale expresse,
 She kept hireself, hire neded no maistresse,
 For in hire living maidens mighten rede,
 As in a book, every good word and dede
 That longeth to a maiden vertuous :
 She was so prudent and so bounteous,
 For which the fame out sprong on every side
 Both of hire beautee and hire bountee wide,
 That thurgh the lond they preised hire ech one
 That loved vertue, fauf Envie alone,
 That sory is of other mannes wele,
 And glad is of his sorwe and his unhele.
 The Doctour maketh this description.

This maiden on a day went in the toun

Toward a temple, with hire mother dere,
 As is of young maidens the manere.

Now was ther than a justice in that toun
 That governour was of that regioun ;
 And so befell this juge his eyen cast
 Upon this maid, avising hire ful fast
 As she came forth by ther this juge stood :
 Anon his herte changed and his mood,
 So was he caught with beautee of this maid,
 And to himself ful prively he said,
 This maiden shal be min for any man.

Anon the fend into his herte ran,
 And taught him sodenly that he by sleight
 This maiden to his purpos winnen might ;
 For certes by no force ne by no mede
 Him thought the was not able for to spede ;
 For she was strong of frendes, end eke she
 Confermed was in swiche soveraine bountee
 That wel he wist he might hire never winne
 As for to make hire with hire body sinne :
 For which with gret deliberatioun
 He sent after a cherl was in the toun,
 The which he knew for sotil and for bold.
 This juge unto this cherl his tale hath told
 In secree wise, and made him to ensue
 He shulde tell it to no creature,
 And if he did he shulde lese his hede.

And whan assented was this cursed rede,
 Glad was the juge, and maked him gret chere,
 And yaf him yestes precious and dere

Whan shapen was all hir conspiracie
 Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
 Parformed shulde be ful sotilly,
 As ye shul here it after openly,
 Home goth this cherl, that highte Claudius ;
 This false juge, that highte Appius,
 (So was his name, for it is no fable,
 But knowen for an historial thing notable ;
 The sentence of it soth is out of doute)

This false juge goth now fast aboute
 To hasten his delit all that he may.
 And so befell, sone after on a day
 This false juge, as telleth us the storie,
 As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
 And yaf his domes upon sondry cas,
 This false cherl came forth a ful gret pas,
 And saide ; Lord, if that it be your will,
 As doth me right upon this pitous bill,
 In which I plaine upon Virginus ;
 And if that he wol sayn it is not thus,
 I wol it preve, and finden good witnesse
 That soth is that my bille wol expresse.

The juge answerd, Of this in his absence
 I may not yeve diffinitif sentence.
 Let don him call, and I wol gladly here :
 Thou shalt have right and wrong as now here.
 Virginus came to wete the juges will,
 And right anon was red this cursed bill ;
 The sentence of it was as ye shul here.

To you my Lord Sire Appius so dere
 Sheweth your poure servant Claudius
 How that a knight called Virginus
 Agein the lawe, agein all equitee,
 Holdeth, expresse agein the will of me,

My servant which that is my thral by right,
Which from min hous was stolen on a night
While that she was ful yong; I wol it preve
By witnesse, Lord, so that it you not greve:
She n'is his doughter nought, what so he say;
Wherfore to you, my Lord the juge, I pray;
Yeld me my thral, if that it be your will.
Lo, this was all the sentence of his bill.

Virginus gan upon the cherl behold;
But hastily er he his tale told,
And wold han preved it as shuld a knight,
And eke by witnesing of many a wight
That all was false that said his adversary,
This cursed juge wolde nothing tary,
Ne here a word more of Virginus,
But yave his jugement, and saide thus:

I deme anon this cherl his servant have;
Thou shalt no lenger in thin hous hire save;
Go bring hire forth, and put hire in our ward:
The cherl shal have his thral; thus I award.

And whan this worthy knight Virginus,
Thurgh sentence of this justice Appius,
Muste by force his dere doughter yeven
Unto the juge, in lecherie to liven,
He goth him home, and set him in his hall,
And let anon his dere doughter call;
And with a face ded as ashen cold
Upon hire humble face he gan behold,
With fadres pitee stiking thurgh his herte,
Al wold he from his purpos not converte,

Doughter, quod he, Virginia by thy name,
Ther ben two waies, other deth or shame,
That thou must suffre, alas that I was bore!
For never thou deservedest wherfore
To dien with a fwerd or with a knif.
O dere doughter, ender of my lif!
Which I have fostred up with swiche plesance
That thou were never out of my remembrance;
O doughter! which that art my laste wo,
And in my lif my laste joye also;
O gemme of chastitee! in patience
Take thou thy deth, for this is my sentence;
For love and not for hate thou must be ded;
My pitous hond must smiten of thin hed.
Alas that ever Appius thee say!
Thus hath he falsely judged thee to-day.
And told hire all the cas, as ye before
Han herd; it needeth not to tell it more.

O mercy, dere father! quod this maid.
And with that word she both hire armes laid
About his necke, as she was wont to do,
(The teres braut out of his eyen two)

And said, O goode father shal I die?
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedie?

No certes, dere doughter min! quod he.
Than yeve me leiser, father min quod she,
My deth for to complaine a litel space;
For parde Jepte yave his doughter grace
For to complaine or he hire flow, alas!
And God it wot nothing was hire trespas,
But for she ran hire father first to see,
To welcome him with gret solempnitee.
And with that word she fell aswoun anon,
And after, whan hire swouning was agon,
She riseth up, and to hire father said;
Blessed be God that I shal die a maid!
Yeve me my deth or that I have a shame:
Doth with your child your wille a Goddes name.
And with that word she praied him ful oft
That with his sward he wolde smite hire soft;
And with that word aswoun again she fell.
Hire father, with ful sorweful herte and will,
Hire hed of smote, and by the top it hent,
And to the juge he gan it to present,
As he sat yet in dome in consistorie.

And whan the juge it saw, as saith the storie,
He bad to take him and anhang him fast;
But right anon a thousand peple in thraff
To save the knight for routh and for pitee,
For knowen was the false inquitee.

The peple anon had suspect in this thing,
By maner of the cherles chalenging,
That it was by the assent of Appius
They wisten well that he was lecherous:
For which unto this Appius they gon,
And caste him in a prison right anon,
Whereas he flow himself; and Claudius,
That servant was unto this Appius,
Was demed for to hang upon a tree,
But that Virginus of his pitee
So prayed for him that he was exiled,
And elles certes had he ben beguiled;
The remenant were anhangd, more and lesse,
That were consentant of this cursednesse.

Here men may see how sin hath his merite;
Beth were, for no man wot whom God wol smite
In no degree, ne in which maner wise
The worme of conscience may agrise
Of wicked lif, though it so privee be
That no man wote therof sauf God and he;
For be he lewed man or elles lered
He n'ot how sone that he shal ben afered:
Therefore I rede you this conseil take.
Forlaketh sinne or sinne you forsake.

THE PARDONERES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste gan to swere as he were wood,
 Harrow ! (quod he) by nailes and by blood
 This was a false cherl and a false justice.
 As shameful deth as herte can devise
 Come to thisse juges and hir advocas.
 Algate this fely maide is flain, alas !
 Alas ! to dere abought she hire beautee ;
 Wherefore I say that all day man may see
 That yestes of Fortune and of Nature
 Ben cause of deth to many a creature.
 Hire beautee was hire deth, I dare wel sain :
 Alas ! so pitously as she was flain.
 Of bothe yestes that I speke of now
 Men han ful often more for harm than prow.

But trewely, min owen maister dere,
 This was a pitous Tale for to here ;
 But natheles passe over is no force.
 I pray to God to save thy gentil corps,
 And eke thyn urinals and thy jordanes,
 Thin Ypoeras, and eke thy Galianes,
 And every boist ful of thy letuarie
 God bleffe hem and our Lady Seint Marie.

So mote I the thou art a propre man,
 And like a prelat, by Seint Ronian.
 Said I not wel ? I cannot speke in terme ;
 But wel I wot thou dost min herte to erme,
 That I have almost caught a cardiacle :
 By *corpus Domini* but I have triacle,
 Or elles a draught of moist and corny ale,
 Or but I here anon a mery Tale,
 Myn herte is lost for pitee of this maid.
 Thou *bel amy*, thou Pardoner he said,
 Tel us som mirth of japes right anon.

It shal be don, quod he, by Seint Ronion.
 But first (quod he) here at this ale-stake
 I wol both drinke and biten on a cake.
 But right anon thisse gentiles gan to crie ;
 Nay, let him tell us of no ribaudrie :
 Tell us som moral thing, that we mow lere
 Som wit, and thanne wel we gladly here.
 I graunte ywis, quod he ; but I must thinke
 Upon som honest thing while that I drinke.

THE PARDONERES TALE*.

LORDINGS, quod he, in chirche whan I preche,
 I peine me to have an hautein speche,
 And ring it out as round as goth a bell,
 For I can all by rote that I tell.
 My teme is alway on, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.

First I pronounce whennes that I come,
 And than my bulles shew I alle and some :
 Our liege lordes sele on my patente
 That shew I first, my body to warrente,
 That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
 Me to disturbe of Cristes holy werk :

* A company of riotors conspire to kill Death, who killeth them one after another. *Speight.*

And after that than tell I forth my tales.
 Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
 Of patriarkes and bisshoppes, I shewe,
 And in Latin I speke a wordes fewe
 To saffron with my predication,
 And for to stere men to devotion :
 Than shew I forth my longe cristal stones,
 Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones ;
 Relikes they ben, as wenen they echon.

Than have I in laton a shulder bone
 Which that was of an holy lewes shepe.

Good men, say I, take of my wordes kepe ;
 If that this bone be washe in any well,
 If cow, or calf, or shepe, or oxe, swell

That any worm hath etc, or worm ystonge,
Take water of that well and wash his tonge,
And it is hole anon; and forthermore,
Of pockes and of scab, and every sore,
Shal every shepe be hole that of this well
Drinketh a draught: take kepe of that I tell.

If that the good man that the bestes oweth
Wol every weke, er that the cok him croweth,
Fasting ydrinken of this well a draught,
As thilke holy Jew our eldres taught,
His bestes and his store shal multiplie:
And, Sires, also it heleth jalousie;
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wif mistrust,
Though he the soth of hire defeaute wist,
Al had she taken preestes two or three.

Here is a mitaine eke that ye may see:
He that his hand wol put in this mitaine
He shal have multiplying of his grame,
Whan he hath sowed, be it whete or otes,
So that he offer pens or elles grotes.

And men and women, o thing warne I you;
If any wight be in this chirche now
That hath don sinne horrible, so that he
Dare not for shame of it yshriven be;
Or any woman, be she yong or old,
That hath ymade hire husbond cokewold,
Swiche folk shul han no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place:
And who so findeth him out of swiche blame
He wol come up and offer in Goddes name,
And I assoyle him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle ygranted was to me.

By this gaude have I wonnen yere by yere
An hundred mark fin I was Pardonere.
I stonde like a clerk in my pulpet,
And whan the lewed peple is down yset
I preche so as ye han herd before,
And tell an hundred false japes more:
Than peine I me to stretchen forth my necke,
And est and west upon the peple I becke,
As doth a dove sitting upon a berne:
Myn hondes and my tonge gon so yerne,
That it is joye to see my besinne.
Of avarice and swiche cursednesse
Is all my preching, for to make hem free
To yeve hir pens, and namely unto me;
For min entente is not but for to winne,
And nothing for correction of sinne:
I recke never whan that they be beried
Though that hir soules gon a blake beried.

For certes many a predication
Cometh oft time of evil entention;
Som for plesance of folk and flaterie,
To ben avanced by hypocrisie;
And som for vaine glorie, and som for hate:
For whan I dare non other wayes debate,
Than wol I sting him with my tonge smerte
In preching, so that he shal not asterte
To ben defamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespassed to my brethren or to me:
For though I telle not his propre name,
Men shal wel knowen that it is the same

By signes, and by other circumstances.
Thus quite I folk that don us displeances,
Thus spit I out my venime under hewe
Of holinesse, to seme holy and trewe.
But shortly min entente I wol devise;
I preche of nothing but for covetise,
Therefore my teme is yet, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.

Thus can I preche again the same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be gilty in that sinne,
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
From avarice, and fore hem to repente;
But that is not my principal entente:
I preche nothing but for covetise.
Of this matere it ought ynough suffice.

Than tell I hem ensamples many on
Of olde stories longe time agon,
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swiche thinges can they wel report and holde.
What? trowen ye that whiles I may preche
And winnen gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in poverte wilfully?
Nay, nay; I thought it never trewely:
For I wol preche and beg in sondry londes,
I wol not do no labour with min hondes,
Ne make baskettes for to live therby,
Because I wol not beggen idelly.
I wol non of the apostles contrefete;
I wol have money, wolles, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the pourest page,
Or of the pourest widewe in a village,
Al shulde hire children sterven for famine:
Nay, I wol drinke the licour of the vine,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.

But herkeneth, Lordings, in conclusioun,
Your liking is that I shall tell a Tale.
Now I have dronke a draught of corny ale,
By God I hope I shal you tell a thing
That shal by reson ben at your liking;
For though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral Tale yet I you tellen can,
Which I am wont to prechen for to winne.
Now hold your pees, my Tale I wol beginne.

In Flandres whilom was a compaignie
Of yonge folk that haunteden folie,
As hazard, riot, stewes, and tavernes,
Wheras with harpes, lutes, and giternes,
They dance and plaie at dis bothe day and night,
And etc also and drinke over hir might,
Thurgh which they don the devil sacrifice,
Within the devils temple, in cursed wise,
By superfluitee abhominable.
Hir othes ben so gret and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere.
Our blisful Lordes body they to-tere;
Hem thought the Jewes rent him not ynough;
And eche of hem at others sinne lough.

And right anon in comen tombeesters
Fetis and smale, and yonge frutessteres,
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Which ben the veray devils officeres,
To kindle and blow the fire of lecherie,
That is annexed unto glotonie.

The holy writ take I to my witnesse
That luxurie is in wine and dronkenesse.

Lo, how that dronken Loth unkindely
Lay by his daughters two unwetingly;
So dronke he was he n'iste what he wrought.

Herodes, who so wel the stories fought,
Whan he of wine replete was at his feste,
Right at his owen table he yave his heste
To sleen the Baptist John ful gilteles.

Seneca faith a good word douteles;
He faith he can no difference find
Betwix a man that is out of his mind
And a man whiche that is dronkelew;
But that woodnesse, yfallen in a shrew,
Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.

O glotonie! full of cursednesse,
O cause first of our confusio!
O original of our damnation!
Til Crist had bought us with his blood again:
Loketh how dere, shortly for to sain,
Abought was thilke cursed vilanie:
Corrupt was all this world for glotonie.

Adam our father, and his wif also,
Fro Paradis to labour and to wo
Were driven for that vice, it is no drede;
For while that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradis, and whan that he
Ete of the fruit defended on a tree,
Anon he was out cast to wo and peine.
O glotonie! on thee wel ought us plaine.

O! wist a man how many maladies
Folwen of excesse and of glotonies,
He wolde ben the more mesurable
Of his diete, sitting at his table.
Alas! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
Maketh that est and west, and north and south,
In erthe, in air, in water, men to swinke
To gete a gloten deintee mete and drinke.
Of this matere, O Poule! wel canst thou trete:
Mete unto wombe, and wombe eke unto mete,
Shal God destroi en bothe, as Paulus faith.
Alas! a foule thing is it by my faith,
To say this word, and fouler is the dede,
Whan man so drinketh of the white and rede
That of his throte he maketh his privee
Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.

The apostle faith weping ful pitoufly,
Ther walken many of which you told have I;
I say it now weping with pitous vois
That they ben enemies of Cristes crois,
Of whiche the end is deth; womb is hir God:
O wombe, o belly! stinking is thy cod,
Fulfilled of dong and of corruptioun;
At either end of thee foule is the soun.
How gret labour and cost is thee to find!
Thise cokes how they stamp, and streine, and grind,
And turnen substance into accident,
To fulfill all thy likerous talent!
Out of the hardy bones knocken they
The mary, for they casten nought away
That may go thurgh the gullet soft and sote:
Of spicerie, of leef, of barke, and rote,
Shal ben his fause ymaked, by delit
To make him yet a newer appetit:

But certes he that haunteth swiche delices
Is ded while that he liveth in tho vices.

A lecherous thing is wine, and dronkenesse
Is ful of striving and of wretchednesse.
O dronken man! disfigured is thy face,
Sour is thy breth, foul art thou to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronken nose semeth the soun
As though thou saidest ay Sampson! Sampson!
And yet, God wot, Sampson dronk never no wine;
Thou falest as it were a stiked swine;
Thy tonge is lost, and all thin honest cure,
For dronkenesse is veray sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discretion.

In whom that drinke hath domination
He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede.
Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede,
And namely fro the white wine of Lepe,
That is to sell in Fishstrete and in Chepe,
This wine of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
In other wines growing faste by,
Of which ther riseth swiche fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre,
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
He is in Spaigne, right at the toun of Lepe,
Not at the Rochell, ne at Burdeux toun,
And thanne wol he say Sampson! Sampson!

But herkeneth, Lordings, o word, I you pray;
That all the soveraine actes, dare I say,
Of victories in the Olde Testament,
Thurgh veray God that is omnipotent,
Were don in abstinence and in prayere;
Loketh the Bible, and there ye mow it lere.

Loke, Attila the grete conquerour
Died in his slepe with shame and dishonour,
Bleding ay at his nose in dronkenesse:
A capitaine shulde live in sobrenesse.

And over all this avise you right wel.
What was commanded unto Lamuel;
Not Samuel, but Lamuel, say I.
Redeth the Bible, and find it expresly
Of wine yeving to hem that have justice.
No more of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoke of glotonie,
Now wol I you defenden hasardrie.
Hasard is veray moder of lesinges,
And of deceite and cursed forsweringes,
Blaspheming of Crist, manslaughter, and wast also
Of catel, and of time; and forthermo
It is repreve, and contrary of honour
For to ben hold a comun hasardour,
And ever the higher he is of estat
The more he is holden desolat.
If that a prince useth hasarderie,
In alle governance and policie
He is, as is by comun opinion,
Yhold the lesse in reputation.

Stilbon, that was a wise embassadour,
Was sent to Corinth with ful gret honour
Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliance;
And whan he came he happed him *par chance*
That all the grettest that were of that lond
Yplaying atte hazard he hem fond;
For which, as sone as that it mighte be,
He stalle him home agein to his contree.

And sayde ther, I wol not lese my name,
Ne wol not take on me so gret defame,
You for to allie unto non hafardours :
Sendeth som other wise embassadours,
For by my trouthe me were liver die
Than I you shuld to hafardours allie;
For ye, that ben so glorious in honours,
Shal not allie you to non hafardours,
As by my wille, ne as by my trectee.
This wise philosophre thus sayd he.

Loke eke how to the King Demetrius
The King of Parthes, as the book sayth us,
Sent him a pair of dis of gold in fcerne,
For he had used hafard therbefore,
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputatioun.

Lordes may finden other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.

Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
A word or two, as olde bookes trecte.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The highe God forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
Of swering sayth the holy Jeremie,
Thou shalt swere soth thin othes, and not lie,
And swere in dome, and eke in rightwisnesse,
But idel swering is a cursednesse.

Behold and see that in the firste table
Of highe Goddes hestes honourable
How that the second hest of him is this,
Take not my name in idle or amis.
Lo, rather he forbedeth swiche swering
Than homicide or many an other thing.
I say that as by ordre thus it stondeth,
This knoweth he that his hestes understondeth
How that the second hest of God is that :
And furthermore, I wol the tell all plat
That vengeance shal not parten from his hous
That of his othes is outrageous.
By Goddes precious herte, and by his nailes,
And by the blood of Crist that is in Hailes,
Seven is my chance, and thin is cink and treye :
By Goddes armes if thou falsly pleye
This dagger shal thurghout thin herte go.
This fruit cometh of the bicchel bones two,
Forfwering, ire, falsenesse, and homicide.

Now for the love of Crist, that for us dide,
Leteth your othes bothe gret and smale.
But, Sires, now wol I tell you forth my Tale.

Thise riotoures three of which I tell,
Long erst or prime rong of any bell,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke,
And as they sat they herd a belle clinke
Beforen a corps was caried to his grave;
That on of hem gan callen to his knave,
Go bet, quod he, and axe redily
What corps is this that passeth here forth by;
And loke that thou report his name wel.

Sire, quod this boy, it nedeth never a del;
It was me told or ye came here two houres;
He was parde an old felaw of youres,
And sodenly he was yslain to-night,
For dronke as he sat on his bench upright;

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Ther came a privee theef men clepen Deth,
That in this contree all the peple sleth,
And with his spere he smote his herte atwo,
And went his way withouten wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slain this pestilence;
And, maister, or ye come in his presence
Me thinketh that it were ful necessarie
For to beware of swiche an adversarie :
Beth redy for me to mete him evermore;
Thus taughte me my dame; I say no more.

By Seinte Marie, sayd this tavernere,
The child sayth soth, for he hath slain this yere;
Hens over a mile, within a gret village,
Both man and woman, child, and hynce and page,
I trowe his habitation be there :
To ben avised gret wisdom it were
Or that he did a man a dishonour.

Ye, Goddes armes, quod this riotour,
Is it swiche peril with him for to mete?
I shal him seke by stile and eke by strete,
I make a vow by Goddes digne bones.
Herkeneth, felawes, we three ben alle ones;
Let eche of us hold up his hond to other,
And eche of us becomen others brother,
And we wol slen this false traitour Deth :
He shal be slain, he that so many sleth,
By Goddes dignitee, or it be night.

Togeder han thise three hir trouthes plight
To live and dien eche of hem for other,
As though he were his owen boren brother.
And up they stert al dronken in this rage,
And forth they gon towards that village
Of which the taverner had spoke beforen,
And many a grisly oth than have they sworn;
And Cristes blessed body they to-rent,
Deth shal be ded, if that we may him hent.

Whan they han gon not fully half a mile,
Right as they wold han troden over a stile,
An olde man and a poure with hem mette :
This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
And sayde thus; Now, Lordes, God you see!

The proudest of thise riotoures three
Answerd agen; What? cherl, with sory grace,
Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face?
Why livest thou so longe in so gret age?

This olde man gan loke in his visage,
And sayde thus; For I ne cannot finde
A man, though that I walked into Inde,
Neither in citee ne in no village,
That wolde change his youthe for min age;
And therefore mote I han min age still
As longe time as it is Goddes will.
Ne Deth, alas! ne wil not han my lif :
Thus walke I like a resteles caitif,
And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
I knocke with my staf erlich and late,
And say to hire, Leve mother, let me in.
Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin.
Alas! whan shul my bones ben at reste?
Mother, with you wold I changen my chesse,
That in my chambre longe time hath be,
Ye, for an heren clout to wrap in me.
But yet to me she wol not don that grace,
For which ful pale and welked is my face.

H

But, Sires, to you it is no curtesie
To speke unto an olde man vilanie,
But he trespase in word or elles in dede.
In holy writ ye moun yourselven rede
Ageins an olde man hore upon his hede
Ye shuld arise : therefore I yeve you rede
Ne doth unto an olde man non harm now,
No more than that ye wold a man did you
In age, if that ye may so long abide ;
And God be with you where you go or ride :
I mosste go thider as I have to go.

Nay, olde cherl, by God thou shalt not so,
Sayde this other hafardour anon ;
Thou parteft not so lightly, by Seint John.
Thou spake right now of thilke traitour Deth,
That in this contree all our frendes fleth ;
Have here my trouth, as thou art his espie,
Tell wher he is, or thou shalt it abie
By God and by the holy sacrament,
For sothly thou art on of his assent
To flen us yonge folk, thou false these.

Now, Sires, quod he, if it be you so lese
To finden Deth, tourne up this croked way,
For in that grove I left him by my fay
Under a tree, and ther he wol abide,
Ne for your bost he wol him nothing hide.
Se ye that oke ? right ther ye shuln him find.
God save you that bought agen mankind,
And you amende ! Thus sayd this olde man.

And everich of thise riotoures ran
Til they came to the tree, and ther they found
Of Floreins fine of gold ycoined round
Wel nigh and eighte bushels, as hem thought :
No lenger than after Deth they fought,
But eche of hem so glad was of the sight,
For that the Floreins ben so faire and bright,
That down they sette hem by the precious hord :
The werste of hem he spake the firste word.

Brethren, quod he, take kepe what I shal say ;
My wit is gret though that I bourde and play.
This tresour hath Fortune unto us yeven,
In mirth and jolitee our lif to liven,
And lightly as it cometh so wol we spend.
Ey, Goddes precious dignitee ! who wend
To-day that we shuld han so faire a grace ?
But might this gold be caried fro this place
Home to myn hous, or elles unto youres,
(For wel I wote that all this gold is oures)
Thanne were we in high felicitee ;
But trewely by day it may not be,
Men wolden say that we were theeves strong,
And for our owen tresour don us hong.
This tresour must ycaried be by night
As wisely and as sleighly as it might ;
Wherfore I rede that cut among us alle
We drawe, and let see wher the cut wol falle ;
And he that hath the cut, with herte blith,
Shal rennen to the toun, and that ful swith,
And bring us bred and win ful prively ;
And two of us shal kepen subtilly
This tresour wel ; and if he wol not tarien,
Whan it is night we wol this tresour carien
By on assent wher as us thinketh best.

That on of hem the cut brought in his fest,

And bad him drawe, and loke wher it wold falle,
And it fell on the yongest of hem alle,
And forth toward the toun he went anon :
And al so sone as that he was agon
That on of hem spake thus unto that other ;
Thou woteft wel thou art my sworn brother,
Thy profite wol I tell the right anon.
Thou wost wel that our felaw is agon,
And here is gold, and that ful gret plentee,
That shal departed ben among us three ;
But natheles, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Had I not don a frendes turn to thee ?

That other answerd, I n'ot how that may be :
He wote wel that the gold is with us tweye.
What shuln we don, what shuln we to him seye ?
Shal it be conseil ? sayde the firste shrewe,
And I shal tellen thee in wordes fewe
What we shul don, and bring it wel aboute.

I grante, quod that other, out of doute,
That by my trouth I wol thee not bewreie.

Now, quod the first, thou wost wel we ben
And tweie of us shal strengre be than on. [tweie.
Loke, whan that he is set thou right anon
Arise, as though thou woldest with him play,
And I shal rive him thurgh the sides tway
While that thou stroghest with him as in game,
And with thy dagger loke thou do the same ;
And than shal this gold departed be,
My dere frend ! betwixen thee and me ;
Than moun we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And play at dis right at our owen wille.
And thus accorded ben thise shrewes tweye
To flen the thridde, as ye han herde me seye.

This yongest, which that wente to the toun,
Ful oft in herte he rolleth up and down
The beautee of thise Floreins new and bright.
O Lord ! quod he, if so were that I might
Have all this tresour to myself alone,
Ther n'is no man that liveth under the trone
Of God that shulde live so mery as I.
And at the last the fend our enemy
Putte in his thought that he shuld poison beye,
With which he mighte flen his felaws tweye :
For why ? the fend fond him in swiche living
That he had leve to forwe him to bring ;
For this was outrely his ful entente,
To flen hem both and never to repente.
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he tary,
Into the toun unto a potecary,
And praied him that he wolde sell
Some poison, that he might his ratouns quell ;
And eke ther was a polkat in his hawe
That, as he sayd, his capons had yflawe ;
And sayn he wolde him wreken, if he might,
Of vermine that destroyed hem by night.

The potecary answerd, Thou shalt have
A thing, as wisely God my soule save,
In all this world ther n'is no creature
That ete or dronke hath of this confecture,
Not but the mountance of a corne of whete,
That he ne shal his lif anon forlete,
Ye, sterfe he shal, and that in lesse while
Than thou wolt gon a pas not but a mile ;

This poison is so strong and violent.

This curfed man hath in his hond yhent
This poison in a box, and fwith he ran
Into the nexte strete unto a man,
And borwed of him large botelles three;
And in the two the poisen poured he;
The thridde he kepte clene for his drinke,
For all the night he shope him for to swinke
In carying of the gold out of that place.

And whan this riotour with fory grace
Hath filled with win his grete bottelles three
To his felawes agen repaireth he.

What nedeth it thereof to sermon more?
For right as they had cast his deth before;
Right so they han him slain, and that anon.
And whan that this was don, thus spake that on;
Now let us sit and drinke, and make us mery.
And afterward we wiln his body bery.
And with that word it happed him *par cas*
To take the botelle ther the poison was,
And dronke, and yave his felaw drinke also,
For which anon they storven bothe two.

But certes I suppose that Avicenne
Wrote never in no canon ne in no fenne
Mo wonder signes of empoisoning
Than had thise wretches two or hir ending.
Thus ended ben thise homicides two,
And eke the false empoisoner also.

O curfednesse of all curfednesse;
O traitours homicide! o wickednesse!
O glotonie, luxurie, and hafardrie!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vilanie
And othes grete of usage and of pride!
Alas! mankinde, how may it betide
That to thy Creatour, which that thee wrought,
And with his precious herte-blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so unkind? alas!

Now, good men, God foryeve you your trespas,
And ware you fro the sinne of avarice,
Min holy pardon may you all warice,
So that ye offre nobles or starlinges,
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your hed under this holy bulle.
Cometh up, ye wives, and offreth of your wolle
Your names I entre here in my roll anon;
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon:
I you assoile by min high powere,
You that wiln offre, as clene and eke as clere
As ye were borne. Lo, Sires, thus I preche
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
So graunte you his pardon to receive.
For that is best, I wol you not deceive.

But, Sires, o word forgate I in my Tale;
I have relikes and pardon in my male
As faire as any man in Engeland,
Which were me yeven by the Popes hond.
If any of you wol of devotion
Offren, and han my absolution,
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth here adoun,
And mekely receiveth my pardoun;
Or elles taketh pardon as ye wende,
Al new and freshe at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens which that ben good and trewe,
It is an honour to everich that is here
That ye moun have a suffisant Pardonere
To assoilen you in contree as ye ride
For adventures which that moun betide.
Paraventure ther may falle on or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his necke atwo,
Loke, which a seurtee is it to you alle
That I am in your felawship yfalle,
That may assoile you both more and lesse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our Hoste shal beginne,
For he is most enveloped in sinne.
Come forth, Sire Hoste, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse the relikes everich on,
Ye for a grote: unbokel anon thy purse.

Nay, nay, quod he; than have I Cristes curse.
Let be, quod he; it shal not be, so the ich.
Thou woldest make me kisse thin olde brech,
And swere it were a relike of a seint,
Though it were with thy foundement depeint:
But by the crois which that Seint Heleine fond
I wolde I had thin coilons in min hond
Instede of relikes or of seintuarie.
Let cut hem of, I wol thee help hem carie:
They shul be shrined in an hogges tord.

This Pardoner answered not a word;
So wroth he was no worde ne wolde he say.
Now, quod our Hoste, I wol no lenger play
With thee, ne with non other angry man.
But right anon the worthy knight began,
(Whan that he saw that all the peple lough)
No more of this, for it is right ynough.
Sire Pardoner, be mery and glad of chere;
And ye, Sire Hoste, that ben to me so dere,
I pray you that ye kisse the Pardoner;
And, Pardoner, I pray thee draw thee ner,
And as we diden let us laugh and play.
Anon they kissed, and riden forth hir way.

H ij

THE SHIPMANNES PROLOGUE.

X Our Hoste upon his stirrops stode anon,
And saide, Good men, herkeneth everich on,
This was a thrifty Tale for the nones.
Sire Parish Preeft, quod he, for Goddes bones
Tell us a Tale, as was thy forward yore;
I see wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can mochel good, by Goddes dignitee.

The Person him answerd, *Benedicite!*
What eileth the man so sinfully to swere?

Our Hoste answerd, O Jankin! be ye there?
Now good men, quod our Hoste, herkneth to me!
I smell a Loller in the wind, quod he:
Abideth for Goddes digne passion,
For we shal han a predication:

This Loller here wol prechen us somewhat.

Nay, by my fathers soule, that shal he nat,
Sayde the Shipman; here shal he nat preche;
He shal no gospel glosen here ne teche.
We leven all in the gret God, quod he:
He wolde sowen som difficultee,
Or springen cockle in our clene corne;
And therefore Hoste, I warne thee beforne
My joly body shal a Tale telle,
And I shal clinken you so mery a belle
That I shal waken all this compaignie;
But it shal not ben of philosophie,
Ne of physike, ne termes queinte of lawe:
Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe.

X THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denise
That riche was, for which men held him wise:
A wif he had of excellent beautee,
And compaignable and revelous was she,
Which is a thing that causeth more dispence
Than worth is all the chere and reverence
That men hem don at festes and at dances:
Swiche salutations and contenances
Passen as doth a shadwe upon the wal;
But wo is him that payen mote for all,
The sely husbond algate he mote pay,
He mote us clothe and he mote us array
All for his owen worship richely,
In which array we dancen jolily:
And if that he may not paraventure,
Or elles lust not swiche dispence endure,
But thinketh it is wasted and ylost,
Than mote another payen for our cost,

Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.

This noble marchant held a worthy hous,
For which he had all day so gret repaire
For his largesse, and for his wif was faire,
That wonder is. But herkeneth to my Tale.

Amonges all thise gistes gret and smale
Ther was a monk, a faire man and a bold,
I trow a thritty winter he was old,
That ever in on was drawing to that place.
This yonge monk, that was so faire of face,
Acquainted was so with this goode man,
Sithen that hire firste knowlege began,
That in his hous as familier was he
As it possible is any frend to be,
And for as mochel us this goode man
And eke this monk of which that I began
Were bothe two yborne in o village,
The monk him claimeth as for cosinage,

And he again him sayd not ones nay,
But was as glad therof as foule of day,
For to his herte it was a gret plesance.
Thus ben they knit with eterne alliance,
And eche of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherhed while that hir lif may dure.

Free was Dan John, and namely of dispence,
As in that hous, and ful of diligence
To don plesance, and also gret costage;
He not forgate to yave the leste page
In all that hous, but after hir degree
He yave the lord and sithen his meinee,
Whan that he came, som maner honest thing,
For which they were as glad of his coming
As foule is sayn whan that the sonne up riseth.
No more of this as now, for it sufficeth.

But so befell this marchant on a day
Shope him to maken redy his array
Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,
To byen ther a portion of ware,
For which he hath to Paris sent anon
A messenger, and praied hath Dan John
That he shuld come to Seint Denis, and pleie
With him and with his wif a day or tweie,
Or he to Brugges went, in all wise.

This noble monk, of which I you devise,
Hath of his abbot as him list licence,
(Because he was a man of high prudence,
And eke an officer out for to ride
To seen hir granges and hir bernes wide)
And unto Seint Denis he cometh anon.

Who was so welcome as my Lord Dan John,
Our dere cousin, ful of curtesie?
With him he brought a jubbe of Malvesie,
And eke another ful of fine Vernage,
And volatile, as ay was his usage.
And thus I let hem etc, and drinke, and pleye,
This marchant and this monk, a day or tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up ariseth,
And on his nedes sadly him aviseth,
And up into his countour hous goth he,
To reken with himselfen, wel may be,
Of thilke yere how that it with him stood,
And how that he dispended had his good,
And if that he encrefed were or non.
His bookes and his bagges many on
He layeth befor him on his counting bord.
Ful riche was his tresour and his hord,
For which ful faste his countour dore he shet,
And eke he n'olde no man shuld him let
Of his accountes for the mene time;
And thus he sit til it was passed prime.

Dan John was risen in the morwe also,
And in the gardin walked to and fro,
And hath his thinges sayd ful curteisly.

This goode wif came walking prively
Into the gardin ther he walketh soft,
And him salueth, as she hath don oft;
A maiden child came in hire compaignie,
Which as hire lust she may governe and gie,
For yet under the yerde was the maide.

O dere cousin min! Dan John, she saide,
What aileth you so rathe for to arise?

Nece, quod he, it ought ynough suffice

Five houres for to slepe upon a night,
But it were for an olde appalled wight,
As ben this wedded men, that lie and dare,
As in a fourme sitteth a wery hare
Were al forstraught with houndes gret and smale,
But, dere nece! why be ye so pale?
I trowe certes that our goode man
Hath you laboured sith this night began,
That you were nede to resten hastily.
And with that word he lough ful merily,
And of his owen thought he waxe all red.

This faire wif gan for to shake hire hed,
And saide thus; Ye, God wote all, quod she:
Nay, cosin min, it stant not so with me;
For by that God that yave me soule and lif
In all the reame of Fraunce is ther no wif
That lassie lust hath to that sory play,
For I may sing alas and wala wa
That I was borne! but to no wight (quod she)
Dare I not tell how that it stant with me;
Wherfore I thinke out of this lond to wende,
Or elles of myself to make an ende,
So ful am I of drede and eke of care.

This monk began upon this wif to stare,
And sayd, Alas! my nece, God forbede
That ye for any forwe or any drede
Fordo yourself: but telleth me your grese,
Paraventure I may in your mischese
Conseile or helpe; and therfore telleth me
All your annoy, for it shal ben secree;
For on my portos here I make an oth
That never in my lif, for lese ne loth,
Ne shal I of no conseil you bewray.

The same agen to you, quod she, I say.
By God and by this portos I you swere,
Though men me wolden all in pieces tere,
Ne shall I never, for to gon to helle,
Bewrey o word of thing that ye me tell;
Nought for no cosinage ne alliance,
But veraily for love and affiance.

Thus ben they sworne, and hereupon they kiste,
And eche of hem told other what hem liste.

Cosin, quod she, if that I had a space,
As I have non, and namely in this place,
Than wold I tell a legend of my lif,
What I have suffred sith I was a wif
With min husbond, al be he your cosin.

Nay, quod this monk, by God and Seint Martin
He n'is no more cosin unto me
Than is the leef that hangeth on the tree;
I clepe him so, by Seint Denis of France,
To han the more cause of acquaintance
Of you, which I have loved specially
Aboven alle women sikerly;
This swere I you on my professioun.
Telleth your grese, lest that he come adoun,
And hasteth you, and goth away anon.

My dere love! quod she, o my Dan John!
Ful lese were me this conseil for to hide,
But out it mote, I may no lenger abide.

Myn husbond is to me the werste man
That ever was sith that the world began;
But sith I am a wif, it fit not me
To tellen no wight of our privetes

Neither in bed ne in non other place;
 God shilde I shulde it tellen for his grace:
 A wif ne shal not sayn of hire husbond
 But all honour, as I can understond;
 Save unto you thus moch I tellen shal:
 As helpe me God he is nought worth at all,
 In no degree the value of a flie.
 But yet me greveth most his nigardie:
 And wel ye wot that women naturally
 Desiren thinges fixe as well as I;
 They wolden that hir husbondes shulden be
 Hardy, and wise, and riche, and therto free,
 And buxome to his wif, and fresh a-bedde.
 But by that ilke Lord that for us bledde,
 For his honour myselven for to array,
 A Sonday next I muste nedes pay
 An hundred frankes, or elles am I lorne;
 Yet were me lever that I were unborne
 Than were don a sclandre or vilanie.
 And if min husbond eke might it espie
 I n'ere but lost; and therefore I you prey
 Lene me this summe, or elles mote I dey:
 Dan John, I say, lene me this hundred frankes;
 Parde I wol not faille you my thanks,
 If that you list to do that I you pray;
 For at a certain day I wol you pay,
 And do to you what plesance and service
 That I may don, right as you list devise;
 And but I do God take on me vengeance
 As foul as ever had Genelon of France.

This gentil monk answered in this manere;
 Now trewely, min owen lady dere!
 I have (quod he) on you so grete a routhe,
 That I you fwere, and plighte you my trouthe,
 That whan your husbond is to Flandres fare
 I wol deliver you out of this care,
 For I wol bringen you an hundred frankes.
 And with that word he caught her by the flankes,
 And hire embraced hard, and kiste hire oft.
 Goth now your way, quod he, al stille and soft,
 And let us dine as sone as that ye may,
 For by my kalender it is prime of day:
 Goth now, and beth as trewe as I shal be.

Now ellés God forbede, Sire, quod she.
 And forth she goth as joly as a pie,
 And bad the cokes that they shuld hem hie,
 So that men mighten dine, and that anon.
 Up to hire husbond is this wif ygon,
 And knocketh at his countour boldely.
Qui est la? quod he; Peter, it am I;
 Quod she. What, Sire, how longe wol ye fast?
 How longe time wol ye reken and cast
 Your summes, and your bookes, and your thinges?
 The devil have part of all swiche rekeninges!
 Ye han ynough parde of Goddes sonde.
 Come doun to-day, and let your bages stonde.
 Ne be ye not ashamed that Dan John
 Shal fasting all this day elenge gon?
 What! let us here a masse, and go we dine.

Wif, quod this man, litel canst thou divine
 The curious besynesse that we have;
 For of us chapmen, all so God me save,
 And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive,
 Scarfly amonges twenty ten shal thrive

Continuelly, lasting unto oure age.
 We moun wel maken chere and good visage,
 And driven forth the world as it may be,
 And kepen oure estat in privetee
 Til we be ded, or elles that we play
 A pilgrimage, or gon out of the way:
 And therefore have I gret necessitee
 Upon this queinte world to avisen me;
 For evermore mote we stond in drede
 Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.

To Flanders wol I go to-morwe at day,
 And come agein as sone as ever I may,
 For which, my dere wif! I thee beseke
 As be to every wight buxom and meke,
 And for to kepe our good be curious,
 And honestly governe wel our hous.
 Thou hast ynough in every maner wise
 That to a thrifty houshold may suffice.
 Thee lacketh non array ne no vitaille;
 Of silver in thy purse shalt thou not faille.
 And with that word his countour dore he shette,
 And doun he goth; no lenger wold he lette;
 And hastily a masse was ther saide,
 And spedily the tables were ylaide,
 And to the diner faste they hem spedde,
 And richely this monk the chapman fedde.

And after diner Dan John sobrelly
 This chapman toke apart, and prively
 He said him thus; Cofin, it stondeth so
 That wel I see to Brugges ye wol go;
 God and Seint Austin spede you and gide!
 I pray you, cofin, wisely that ye ride;
 Governeth you also of your diete
 Attemprely, and namely in this hete.
 Betwix us two nedeth no strange fare:
 Farewel, cofin, God shilde you fro care!
 If any thing ther be by day or night,
 If it lie in my power and my might,
 That ye me wol command in any wise,
 It shal be don right as ye wol devise.

But o thing or ye go, if it may be;
 I wolde prayen you for to lene me
 An hundred frankes for a weke or tweye,
 For certain bestes that I muste beye,
 To storen with a place that is oures,
 (God help me so I wold that it were youres)
 I shal not faille surely of my day,
 Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way.
 But let this thing be secree, I you preye;
 For yet to-night thise bestes mote I beye.
 And fare now wel, min owen cofin dere!
Grand mercy of your cost and of your chere.

This noble marchant gentilly anon
 Answerd and said, O cofin min, Dan John!
 Now likerly this is a smal requeste;
 My gold is youres, whan that it you leste,
 And not only my gold but my chaffare:
 Take what you lest, God shilde that ye spare.
 But o thing is, ye know it wel ynough
 Of chapmen that hir money is hir plough:
 We moun creancen while we han a name,
 But goodles for to ben it is no game.
 Pay it agen whan it lith in your ese:
 After my might ful fayn wold I you plesse.

Thise hundred frankes fet he forth anon,
And prively he toke hem to Dan John:
No wight in al this world wist of this lone
Saving this marchant and Dan John alone.
They drinke, and speke, and rome a while and
Til that Dan John rideth to his abbeye. [pleye,

The morwe came, and forth this marchant rideth
To Flandres ward; his prentis wel him gideth
Til he came in to Brugges merily.
Now goth this marchant faste and befily
About his nede, and bieth, and creanceth;
He neither playeth at the dis ne danceth,
But as a marchant, shortly for to tell,
He ledeth his lif; and ther I let him dwell.

The Sondag next the marchant was agon
To Seint Denis ycomen is Dan John,
With croune and berde all fresh and newe yshave.
In all the hous ther n'as so litel a knave,
Ne no wight elles, that he n'as ful fain
For that my Lord Dan John was come again.
And shortly to the point right for to gon,
This faire wif accordeth with Dan John
That for thise hundred frankes he shuld all night
Haven hire in his armes bolt upright:
And this accord parforned was in dede.
In mirth all night a besy lif they lede
Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way,
And bad the meinie farewell, have good day;
For non of hem, ne no wight in the toun,
Hath of Dan John right non suspectioun:
And forth he rideth home to his abbey,
Or wher him list; no more of him I sey.

This marchant, whan that ended was the faire,
To Seint Denis he gan for to repaire,
And with his wif he maketh feste and chere,
And telleth hire that chaffare is so dere
That nedes muste he make a chevifance
For he was bonde in a recognifance
To payen twenty thousand sheldes anon:
For which this marchant is to Paris gon
To borwe of certain frendes that he hadde
A certain frankes, and som with him he ladde.
And whan that he was come in to the toun,
For gret chiertee and gret affectioun
Unto Dan John he goth him first to pleye,
Not for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
But for to wete and seen of his welfare,
And for to tellen him of his chaffare,
As frendes don whan they ben mette in fere.

Dan John him maketh feste and mery chere,
And he him tolde agen ful specially
How he had wel ybought and graciously
(Thanked be God) all hole his marchandise,
Save that he must in alle manere wise
Maken a chevifance, as for his beste,
And than he shulde ben in joye and reste.
Dan John answered, Certes I am fain
That ye in hele be comen home again;
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
Of twenty thousand sheldes shuld ye not misse,
For ye so kindly this other day
Lente me gold, and as I can and may
I thanke you, by God and by Seint Jame,
But patheles I toke unto our dame,

Your wif, at home, the same gold again
Upon your benche; she wote it wel certain,
By certain tokenes that I can hire tell.
Now by your leve I may no lenger dwell;
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon,
And in his compaignie I muste gon.
Grete wel our dame, min owen nece swete!
And farewell, dere cosin! til we mete.

This marchant, which that was ful ware and
Creanced hath, and paide eke in Paris [wise,
To certain Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,
The summe of gold, and gate of hem his bond,
And home he goth mery as a popingay,
For wel he knew he stood in swiche array
That nedes muste he winne in that viage
A thousand frankes above all his costage.

His wif ful redy mette him at the gate,
As she was wont of old usage algate;
And all that night in mirth they ben sette,
For he was riche, and clerely out of dette.
Whan it was day, this marchant gan embrace
His wif all newe, and kiste hire in hire face,
And up he goth, and maketh it ful tough.
No more, quod she; by God ye have ynough;
And wantonly agen with him she plaide,
Til at the last this marchant to hire saide:

By God, quod he, I am a litel wrothe
With you my wif, although it be me lothe;
And wote ye why? by God, as that I gosse
That ye han made a manere strangenesse
Betwixen me and my cosin Dan John.
Ye shuld have warned me or I had gon
That he you had an hundred frankes paide
By redy token, and held him evil apaide
For that I to him spake of chevifance:
(Me femed so as by his contenance)
But natheles, by God our heaven king
I thoughte not to axe of him no thing.
I pray thee, wif, ne do thou no more so:
Tell me alway, er that I fro thee go.
If any dettour hath in min absence
Ypaid thee, lest thurgh thy negligence
I might him axe a thing that he hath paide.

This wif was not aferde ne affraide,
But boldely she said, and that anon,
Mary! I desie that false monk Dan John;
I kepe not of his tokenes never a del:
He toke me certain gold, I wote it wel.
What! evil thedome on his monkes snoute;
For God it wot I wend withouten doute
That he had yeve it me because of you,
To don therwith min honour and my prow.
For cosinage and eke for *belle chere*
That he hath had ful often times here:
But sith I see I stonde in swiche disjoint
I wol answer you shortly to the point.

Ye have mo flakke dettours than am I;
For I wol pay you wel and redily
Fro day to day; and if so be I faille,
I am your wif, score it upon my taile,
And I shal pay as sone as ever I may;
For by my trowth I have on min array,
And not in waste, bestowed it every del;
And for I have bestowed it so wel

For your honour, for Goddes sake I say
As beth not wrothe, but let us laugh and play :
Ye shal my joly body han to wedde ;
By God I n'ill not pay you but a-bedde ;
Foryeve it me, min owen spouse dere !
Turne hitherward, and maketh better chere.

This marchant saw ther was no remedy,
And for to chide it n'ere but a foly,

Sith that the thing may not amended be,
Now wif, he said, and I foryeve it thee ;
But by thy lif be he no more so large ;
Kepe bet my good ; this yeve I thee in charge,
Thus endeth now my Tale, and God us seade
Taling ynough unto our lives ende.

THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE.

Wel said, by *corpus Domini*, quod our Hoste;
 Now longe mote thou failen by the coste,
 Thou gentil maister, gentil marinere.
 God give the monke a thousand last quad yere.
 A ha! felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape.
 The monke put in the mannes hode an ape,
 And in his wifes eke, by Seint Austyn.
 Draweth no monkes more into your in.

But now passe over, and let us seek aboute
 Who shall now tellen first of all this route

Another Tale; and with that word he said,
 As curteisly as it had been a maid;

My Lady Priorelle, by your leve,
 So that I wist I shuld you not agreve,
 I wolde demen that ye tellen shold
 A Tale next, if so were that ye wold.
 Now wol ye vochesauf, may Lady dere?

Gladly, quod she; and laide as ye shul here,

THE PRIORESSES TALE*.

O Lord our Lord! thy name how merveillous
 Is in this large world ysprad! (quod she)
 For not al only thy laude precious
 Parfourmed is by men of dignitee,
 But by the mouth of children thy bountee
 Parfourmed is, for on the brest souking
 Sometime shewen they thin herying.

Wherefore in laude, as I can best and may,
 Of thee and of the white lily flour
 Which that thee bare, and is a maide alway,
 To tell a storie I will do my labour;
 Not that I may encrefen hire honour,
 For she herselfen is honour and rote
 Of bountee, next hire sone, and soules bote.

O mother maide! o maide and mother fre!
 O bushe unbrent! brenning in Moyse's sight,
 That ravishedest down fro the deitee,
 Thurgh thin humbleste, the gost that in the alight
 Of whos vertue, whan he thin herte light,
 Conceived was the fathers sapience,
 Helpe me to tell it in thy reverence.

Lady! thy bountee, thy magnificence,
 Thy vertue and thy gret humilitee,

Ther may no tongue expresse in no science;
 For somtime, Lady! or men pray to thee
 Thou gost befor of thy benignitee
 And getest us the light of thy prayere
 To giden us unto thy sone so dere.

My conning is so weke, o blisful Quene!
 For to declare thy grete worthinesse,
 That I ne may the weighte not sustene;
 But as a child of twelf moneth old or lesse,
 That can unnethes any word expresse,
 Right so fare I, and therefore I you pray
 Gideth my song that I shal of you say.

Ther was in Asie, in a gret citee,
 Amonges Cristen folk a Jewerie,
 Sustened by a lord of that contree,
 For foule usure and lucre of vilanie
 Hateful to Crist and to his compaignie,
 And thurgh the strete men mighten ride and wende,
 For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
 Doun at the ferther end, in which ther were
 Children an hepe comen of Cristen blood,
 That lerned in that scole yere by yere
 Swiche manere doctrine as men used there;

* A miracle of a Christian child murdered by the Jews.
 vry.

This is to say, to fingen and to rede,
As smale children don in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widewes sone,
A litel clergion, sevene yere of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eke also, wheras he sey the image
Of Cristes moder, had he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun, and say
Ave Marie as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widewe hire litel sone ytaught
Our blisful Lady, Cristes mother dere,
To worship ay, and he forgate it naught,
For fely childe wol away sone lere.

But aye whan I remembre on this matere
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist did reverence,

This litel childe his litel book lerning,
As he sat in the scole at his primere,
He *Alma Redemptoris* herde sing,
As children lered hir antiphonere,
And as he dorst he drow him nere and nere,
And herkened ay the words and the note,
Til he the firste vers coude al by rote.

Nought wist he what this Latin was to say,
For he so yonge and tendre was of age;
But on a day his felaw gan he pray
To expounden him this song in his language,
Or telle him why this song was in usage:
This prayde he him to construe and declare
Ful oft time upon his knees bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he,
Answered him thus; This song I have herd say,
Was maked of our blisful Lady fre,
Hire to salve, and eke hire for to prey
To ben our help and socour whan we dey.
I can no more expound in this matere:
I lerne song; I can but smal grammere.

And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes moder? said this innocent:
Now certes I wol don my diligence
To conne it all or Cristemasse be went,
Though that I for my primer shal be shent,
And shal be beten thries in an houre.
I wol it conne our Ladie for to honoure.

His felaw taught him homeward prively
Fro day to day til he coude it by rote,
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word according with the note:
Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward and homeward whan he wente;
On Cristes moder set was his entente.

As I have said, thurghout the Jewerie
This litel child, as he came to and fro,
Ful merily than wold he sing and crie
O Alma Redemptoris! ever mo.

The swetenesse hath his herte persed so
Of Cristes moder, that to hire to pray
He cannot flint of singing by the way,

Our firste so, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swale and said, O Ebraike peple, alas!
Is this to you a thing that is honest.
That swiche a boy shal walken as him leste
In your despit, and sing of swiche sentence,
Which is again our lawes reverence?

From thennesforth the Jewes han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chace:
And homicide thereto han they hired,
That in an aleye had a privee place,
And as the child gan forthby for to pace
This cursed Jew him hent and held him fast,
And cut his throte, and in a pit him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
Wher as thise Jewes purgen hir entraille.
O cursed folk! of Herodes alle-newe,
What may your evil entente you availle?
Mordre wol out, certain it wol not faille;
And namely ther the honour of God shal sprede
The blood out crieth on your cursed dede.

O martyr souted in virginitee!
Now maist thou singe and solwen ever in on
The white Lamb celestial, quod she,
Of which the gret evangelist Seint John
In Pathmos wrote, which sayth that they that gon
Beforn this Lamb, and sing a song al newe,
That never fleshy woman they ne knewe.

This poure widewe awaiteth al that night
After hire litel childe, and he came nought,
For which as sone as it was dayes light,
With face pale of drede and besy thought
She hath at scole and elles wher him sought,
Til finally she gan so fer asprie
That he last seen was in the Jewerie.

With modres pitee in hire brest enclosed
She goth, as she were half out of hire minde,
To every place wher she hath supposed
By likelihed hire litel child to finde;
And ever on Cristes moder meke and kinde
She cried, and at the laste thus she wrought,
Among the cursed Jewes she him sought.

She freyneth and she praieth pitoussly
To every Jew that dwelled in thilke place
To telle hire of hire child went ought forth by;
They sayden Nay; but Jesu of his grace
Yave in hire thought, within a little space,
That in that place after hire sone she cride
Ther he was casten in a pit beside.

O grete God, that parformest thy laude
By mouth of innocentes, lo here thy might!
This gem of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eke of martirdome the rubie bright,
Ther he with throte ycorven lay upright
He *Alma Redemptoris* gan to singe
So loude, that all the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk that thurgh the strete wente
In comen for to wondre upon this thing,
And hastily they for the provost sente:
He came anon withouten taryng,
And herieth Crist, that is of heven king,
And eke his moder, honour of mankind,
And after that the Jewes let he binde

This child with pitous lamentation
Was taken up, singing his song alway,
And with honour and gret procession
They carien him unto the next abbey;
His moder swouning by the bere lay:
Unnethes might the peple that was there
This newe Rachel bringen fro his bere.

With turment and with shameful deth eche on
This provost doth thise Jewes for to sterve

That of this moder wifte, and that anon :
He n'olde no swiche cursednesse observe :
Evil shal he have that evil wol deserve ;
Therfor with wild hors he did hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his bere ay lith this innocent
Beforn the auter while the masse last,
And after that the abbot with his covent
Han spedde hem for to berie him ful fast :
And whan they holy water on him cast
Yet spake this child, whan spreint was the holy water,
And sang, *O Alma Redemptoris Mater !*

This abbot, which that was an holy man,
As monkies ben, or elles ought to be,
This yonge child to conjure he began,
And said ; O dere child ! I haffe thee,
In vertue of the holy trinitee,
Tell me what is thy cause for to sing,
Sith that thy throte is cut to my feming.

My throte is cut unto my nekke bon,
Saide this child, and as by way of kinde
I shuld have deyed, ye longe time agon,
But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes finde,
Wol that this glory last and be in minde,
And for the worship of his moder dere.
Yet may I sing *O Alma* loude and clere.

This welle of mercie, Cristes moder fwete,
I loved alway, as after my conning ;
And whan that I my lif shulde forlete
To me she came, and bad me for to sing
This antem veraily in my dying,

As ye han herde ; and whan that I had songe
Me thought she laid a grain upon my tonge.

Wherfore I sing, and sing I mote certain,
In honour of that blisful maiden free,
Til fro my tonge of taken is the grain.

And after that thus saide she to me ;
My litel child, than wol I fetchen thee,
Whan that the grain is fro thy tongue ytake :
Be not agaste, I wol thee not forsake.

This holy monk, this abbot him mene I,
His tonge out caught, and toke away the grain,
And he yave up the gost ful softely.

And whan this abbot had this wonder sein
His salte teres trilled adoun as reyne,
And groff he fell al platte upon the ground,
And still he lay as he had ben ybound.

The covent lay eke upon the pavement
Weping and herying Cristes moder dere ;
And after that they risen, and forth ben went,
And toke away this martir fro his bere,
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his litel body fwete :
Ther he is now God lene us for to mete.

O young Hew of Lincoln ! slain also
With curfed Jewes, as it is notable,
For it n'is but a litel while ago,
Pray eke for us, we sinful folk unstable,
That of his mercie God so merciabie
On us his grete mercie multiplie,
For reverence of his moder Marie,

PROLOGUE TO SIRE THOPAS.

WHAN said was this miracle every man
As sober was that wonder was to see,
Til that our Hoste to jape he began,
And than at erst he loket upon me,
And saide thus; What man art thou? quod he:
Thou lokest as thou woldest find an hare,
For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.

Approche nere, and loke up merily.
Now ware you, Sires, and let this man have place;
He in the waffe is shapen as wel as I.
This were a popet in an arme to embrace
For any woman, smal and faire of face,

He semeth elvish by his contenance,
For unto no wight doth he daliance.

Say now somewhat, sin other folk han saide;
Tell us a Tale of mirthe, and that anon.
Hoste, quod I, ne be not evil apaide,
For other Tale certes can I non
But of a rime I lerned yore agon.
Ye, that is good, quod he; we shullen here
Som deintee thing me thinketh by thy chere.

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS*.

LISTENETH, Lordinges, in good entent,
And I wol tel you *veramant*
Of mirthe and of solas,
Al of a knight was faire and gent
In bataille and in turnament,
His name was Sire Thopas.

Yborne he was in fer contree,
In Flandres, al beyonde the see,
At Popering in the place:
His father was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddes grace.

Sire Thopas was a doughty swain,
White was his face as paindemaine,
His lippes red as rose:
His rudde is like scarlet in grain,
And I you tell in good certain
He had a femely nose.

His here, his berde, was like safroun,
That to his girdle raught adoun;
His shoon of Cordewane;
Of Brugges were his hosen broun;
His robe was of chekelatoun,
That coste many a Jane.

* A northern Tale of an outlandish knight, purposely
uttered by Chaucer in a rime and style differing from the
rest, as though he himself were not the author but only
the reporter of the other Tales. *Urry.*

He coude hunt at the wilde dere,
And ride on hauking for the rivere
With grey goshawk on honde;
Therto he was a good archere:
Of wraffling was ther non his pere
Ther ony ram shuld stonde.

Ful many a maide bright in bour
They mourned for him *par amour*
Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chaste and no lechour,
And swete as is the bramble flour
That bereth the red hepe.

And so it fell upon a day,
Forsoth, as I you tellen may,
Sire Thopas wold out ride;
He worth upon his stede gray,
And in his hond a launcegay,
A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a faire forest,
Therin is many a wilde best,
Ye both buck and hare;
And as he pricked north and est,
I telle it you, him had almeste
Betidde a fory care.

Ther springen herbes grete and smale,
The licoris and the fetewale,
And many a clove gilofre,
And notemuge to put in ale,
Whether it be moist or stale,
Or for to lain in cofre.

The briddes singen, it is no nay,
The sperhawk and the popingay,
That joye it was to here,
The throstel cok made eke his lay,
The wode dove upon the spray
He sang ful loude and clere.

Sire Thopas fell in love-longing
Al whan he herd the throstel sing,
And priked as he were wood;
His faire stede in his priking
So swatte that men might him wring,
His sides were al blood.

Sire Thopas eke so wery was
For priking on the softe gras,
So fiers was his corage,
That down he laid him in that place
To maken his stede som solace,
And yaf him good forage.

A, Seinte Mary, *benedicite*!
What aileth this Love at me
To binde me so fore?
Me dremed all this night parde
An elf quene shal my lemman be,
And slepe under my gore.

An elf quene wol I love ywis,
For in this world no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toun—
All other women I forsake,
And to an elf quene I me take
By dale and eke by doun.

Into his fadel he clombe anon,
And priked over stile and ston
An elf quene for to espie,
Til he so long had riden and gone
That he fond in a privee wone
The contree of Faerie.

Wherin he soughte north and south,
And oft he spied with his mouth
In many a forest wilde,
For in that contree n'as ther non
That to him dorst ride or gon,
Neither wif ne childe.

Til that ther came a gret geaunt,
His name was Sire Oliphaunt,
A perilous men of dede;
He sayde, Child, by Termagaunt
But if thou prike out of myn haunt
Anon I flee thy steed with mace—
Here is the Quene of Faerie,
With harpe, and pipe, and simphonie,
Dwelling in this place.

The child sayd, Al so mote I the
To morwe wol I meten thee,
Whan I have min armoure,
And yet I hope *per ma fay*
That thou shalt with this lancegay
Abien it ful soure: thy mawe
Shal I perce, if I may,
Or it be fully prime of the day,
For here thou shalt be slawe.

Sire Thopas drew abak ful fast;
This geaunt at him stones cast
Out of a fel staffe sling:
But faire escaped child Thopas,
And all it was thurgh Goddes grace,
And thurgh his faire bering.

Yet listeneth, Lordings, to my Tale,
Merier than the nightingale,
For now I wol you rounce
How Sire Thopas with sides smale,
Priking over hill and dale,
Is comen agein to tounce.

His mery men commandeth he
To maken him bothe game and gle,
For nedes must he fighte
With a geaunt with hedes three
For paramour and jolitee
Of on that shone ful brighte.

Do come, he sayd, my minestrales
And gestours for to tellen tales
Anon in min arming,
Of romaunces that ben reales,
Of popes and of cardinales,
And eke of love-longing.

They set him first the swete wine,
And mede eke in a maselin
And real spicerie,
Of ginger-bred that was ful fin,
And licoris and eke comin,
With sugar that is trie.

He didde next his white lere
Of cloth of lake fin and clere
A breche and eke a sherte,
And next his shert an haketon,
And over that an habergeon
For percing of his herte;

And over that a fin hauberk
Was all ywrought of Jewes werk,
Ful strong it was of plate,
And over that his cote-armoure,
As white as is the lily floure,
In which he wold debate.

His sheld was all of gold so red,
And therin was a bores hed,
A charboucle beside;
And ther he swore on ale and bred
How that the geaunt shuld be ded,
Betide what so betide.

His jambuix were of cuirbouly,
His swardes sheth of ivory,
His helme of latoun bright,
His fadel was of rewel bone,
His bridel as the sonne shone,
Or as the mone light.

His spere was of fin cypres,
That bodeth werre and nothing pees,
The hed ful sharpe yground:
His stede was all dapple gray,
It goth an aumble in the way
Ful softely and round in londe—
Lo, Lordes min, here is a fit,
If ye wol any more of it
To telle it wol I fond.

Now hold your mouth *pour charite*
Bothe knight and lady fre,

And herkeneth to my spell;
Of bataille and of chevalrie,
Of ladies love and druerie,
Anon I wol you tell.

Men speken of romaunces of pris,
Of Hornchild and of Ipotis,
Of Bevis and Sire Guy,
Of Sire Libeux and Pleindamour,
But Sire Thopas he bereth the flour
Of real chevalrie.

His goode stede he al bestrode,
And forth upon his way he glode

As sparcle out of bronde;

Upon his creft he bare a tour,

And therin stiked a lily flour;

God shilde his corps fro shonde!

And for he was a knight auntrous

He n'olde flepen in non hous,

But liggen in his hood;

His bright helm was his wanger,

And by him baited his destrer

Of herbes fin and good.

Himself drank water of the well,

As did the knight Sire Percivel

So worthy under wede,

Til on a day

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

No more of this for Goddes dignitee,
 Quod our Hoste, for thou makest me
 So wery of thy veray lewednesse,
 That al so wisly God my soule bleffe
 Min eres aken of thy draffy speche.
 Now swiche a rime the devil I beteche;
 This may wel be rime dogerel, quod he.

Why so? quod I; why wolt thou letten me
 More of my Tale than an other man,
 Sin that it is the beste rime I can?

By God, quod he, for plainly at o word
 Thy draffy riming is not worth a tord:
 Thou dost nought elles but dispendest time.
 Sire, at o word thou shalt no lenger rime.
 Let see wher thou canst tellen ought in geste,
 Or tellen in prose somewhat at the leste
 In which ther be som mirthe or som doctrine.

Gladly, quod I; by Goddesfwete pine
 I wol you tell a litel thing in prose
 That oughte liken you, as I suppose,
 Or elles certes ye be to dangerous.
 It is a moral Tale vertuous,
 Al be it told somtime in sondry wise
 Of sondry folk, as I shal you devise.

As thus; ye wot that every evangelist
 That telleth us the peine of Jesu Crist
 Ne saith not alle thing as his felaw doth;
 But natheles hir sentence is al soth,
 And alle accorden as in hir sentence,
 Al be ther in hir telling difference;
 For som of hem say more and som say lesse
 Whan they his pitous passion expresse:
 I mene of Mark and Mathew, Luke and John;
 But douteles hir sentence is all on.
 Therefore, Lordinges all, I you beseche,
 If that ye thinke I vary in my speche,
 As thus, though that I telle som del more
 Of proverbes than ye han herde before
 Comprehended in this litel tretise here,
 To enforcen with the effect of my matere,
 And though I not the same wordes say
 As ye han herde, yet to you alle I pray
 Blameth me not, for as in my sentence
 Shul ye nowher finden no difference
 Fro the sentence of thilke tretise lite
 After the which this mery Tale I write;
 And therfore herkeneth what I shal say,
 And let me tellen all my Tale I pray.

TALE OF MELIBEUS*.

A YONGE man called Melibeus, mighty and riche, begate upon his wif that called was Prudence a doughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a day befell that he for his disport is went into the feldes him to playe. His wif and eke his doughter hath he left within his hous, of which the dores weren fast yshette. Foure of his olde foos han it espied, and setten ladders to the walles of his hous, and by the windowes ben entred, and beten his wif, and wounded his doughter with five mortal woundes in five sondry places; this is to say, in hire feet, in hire hondes, in hire eres, in hire nose, and in hire mouth, and lesten hire for dede, and wenten away.

Whan Melibeus retorned was into his hous, and sey al this meschief, he like a madman rending his clothes gan to wepe and crie.

Prudence his wif, as fer forth as she dorste, be-fought him of his weping for to stinte: but not forthy he gan to crie and wepen ever lenger the more.

This noble wif Prudence remembered hire upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, wheras he saith, He is a fool that distourbeth the moder to wepe in the deth of hire childe til she have wept hire fille, as for a certain time; and than shal a man don his diligence with amiable wordes hire to reconforte, and preye hire of hire weping for to stinte. For which reson this noble wif Prudence suffred hire husbond for to wepe and crie as for a certain space, and whan she saw hire time she sayde to him in this wise: Alas! my Lord, quod she, why make ye yourself for to be like a fool? forsothe it apperteineth not to a wise man to maken swiche a forwe. Your doughter with the grace of God shal warish and escape. And al were it so that she right now were dede, ye ne ought not as for hire deth youreself to destroye. Senek saith, The wise man shal not take to gret discomfort for the deth of his children, but certes he shulde suffren it in patience, as wel as he abideth the deth of his owen propre persone.

* Prudence, the discreet wife of Melibeus, persuadeth her husband to patience, and to receive his enemies to merce and grace. A Tale full of moralitie, wherein both high and low may learne to governe their affections. Speght.

This Melibeus answered anon and saide; What man (quod he) shulde of his weping stinte that hath so gret a cause for to wepe? Jesu Crist our Lord himself wepte for the deth of Lazarus his frend. Prudence answerd; Certes wel I wote attempre weping is nothing defended to him that sorweful is among folk in sorwe, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. The apostle Poule unto the Romaines writeth, Man shal rejoyce with hem that maken joye, and wepen with swiche folk as wepen. But though attempre weping be granted, outrageous weping certes is defended. Mesure of weping shulde be considered after the lore that techeth us Senek: Whan that thy frend is dede (quod he) let not thin eyen to moiste ben of teres ne to muche drie; although the teres comen to thin eyen let hem not falle. And whan thou hast forgon thy frend do diligence to get agein another frend; and this is more wisdom than for to wepe for thy frende which that thou hast lorne, for therin is no bote. And therefore if ye governe you by sapience, put away sorwe out of youre herte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirak sayth, A man that is joyous and glad in herte it him conserveth flourishing in his age; but sothly a forweful herte maketh his bones drie. He saith eke thus, that surwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon sayth, that right as mouthes in the shepes fleefe anoieth to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anoieth sorwe to the herte of man; wherfore us ought as wel in the deth of oure children as in the losse of our goodes temporel have patience.

Remembre you upon the patient Job; whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance, and in his body endured and received ful many a grevous tribulation, yet sayde he thus, Oure Lord hath yave it to me, our Lord hath beraft it me; right as oure Lord hath wold right so it is don; yblest be the name of oure Lord. To thise foresaide thinges answered Melibeus unto his wif Prudence: All thy wordes (quod he) ben trewe, and therto profitable, but trewely min herte is troubled with this sorwe so grevously that I n'ot what to don. Let calle (quod Prudence) thy trewe frendes alle, and thy linage, which that ben wise, and telleth to hem your cas, and herkeneth what they saye in conseilling, and go-

verne you after hir sentence. Salomon saith, Werke all thinges by conseil and thou shalt never repente.

Than by conseil of his wif Prudence this Melibeus let callen a gret congregation of folk, as surgians, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and som of his olde enemies reconciled (as by hir semblant) to his love and to his grace; and therewithal ther comen some of his neighebores that diden him reverence more for drede than for love, as it happeth oft: ther comen also ful many subtil flatterers, and wise advocats lerned in the lawe.

And whan thise folk togeder assembled weren, this Melibeus in forweful wise shewed hem his cas, and by the manere of his speche it semed that in herte he bare a cruel ire, ready to don vengeance upon his foos, and sodeinly desired that the werre shulde beginne, but natheles yet axed he his conseil upon this matere. A surgien, by licence and assent of swiche as weren wise, up rose, and unto Melibeus sayde as ye moun here.

Sire, (quod he) as to us surgians apperteineth that we do to every wight the beste that we can, wher as we ben withholden, and to our patient that we do no damage, wherfore it happeth many time and ofte that whan twey men han everich wounded other o same surgien heleth hem both, wherfore unto our art it is not pertinent to norice werre, ne parties to supporte: but certes as to the warisshing of youre doughter, al be it so that perilously she be wounded, we shuln do so entent if besynesse fro day to night, that with the grace of God she shal be hole and sound as sone as is possible. Almost right in the same wise the phisiciens answerden, save that they saiden a fewe wordes more; that right as maladies ben cured by hir contraries, right so shal man warishe werre. His neighebores ful of envie, his feined frendes that semed reconciled, and his flaterers, maden semblant of weping, and empeired and aggregated muchel of this matere, in preysing gretly Melibee of might, of power, of riches, and of frendes, despising the power of his adversaries, and saiden outrely that he anon shulde wreken him on his foos, and begynnen werre.

Up rose than an advocat that was wise, by leve and by conseil of other that were wise, and sayde; Lordinges, the nede for the which we ben assembled in this place is a ful havie thing, and heigh matere, because of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be don, and eke by reason of the grete damages that in time coming ben possible to fallen for the same cause, and eke by reson of the gret riches and power of the parties bothe, for the which resons it were a ful gret peril to erren in this matere; wherfore, Melibeus, this is oure sentence: we conseil you, aboven alle thing, that right anon thou do thy diligence in keping of thy propre persone in swiche a wise that thoune want non espie ne watche thy body for to save: and after that we conseil that in thin hous thou sette suffisant garnison, so that they moun as wel thy body as thy hous defende; but certes for to meeven werre, ne sodeinly

for to do vengeance, we moun not deme in so litel time that it were profitable; wherfore we axen leiser and space to have deliberation in this as to deme; for the comune proverbe saith thus He that sone demeth sone shal repente; and eke men sain that thilke juge is wise that sone understondeth a matere and jugeth by leiser: for al be it so that al tarying be anoiful, algates it is not to repreve in yeving of jugement, ne in vengeance taking, whan it is suffisant and resonable: and that shewed our Lord Jesu Crist by ensample; for whan that the woman that was taken in advourtrie was brought in his presence, to knowen what shuld be don with hire persone, al be it that he wist wel himself what that he wolde answer, yet ne wolde he not answer so deinly, but he wolde have deliberation, and in the ground he wrote twies: and by thise causes we axen deliberation, and we shuln than by the grace of God conseil the thing that shal be profitable.

Up sterte than the yonge folk at ones, and the most partie of that compaignie han scorned this olde wise man, and begonnen to make noise and saiden, Right so as while that iren is hot men shulde smite, right so men shuln do wreken hir wronges while that they ben freshe and newe: and with loude voys they criden Werre! werre! Up rose tho on of thise old wise, and with his hand made countenance that men shuld holde hem stille and yeve him audience. Lordinges, (quod he) ther is ful many a man thet crieth Werre! werre! that wote ful litel what werre amounteth. Werre at his beginning hath so gret an entring and so large, that every wight may enter whan him liketh, and lightly find werre; but certes what end that shal befall it is not light to know; for sothly whan that werre is ones begonne there is ful many a child unborne of his moder that shal sterve yong by cause of thilke werre, other elles live in forwe, and dien in wretchednesse; and therfore or that any werre be begonne men must have gret conseil and gret deliberation. And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resons, wel nie alle at ones begonne they to rise for to breken his tale, and bidden him ful oft his wordes for to abregge; for sothly he that precheth to hem that listen not heren his wordes, his sermon hem anoie; for Jesus Sirak sayth that musike in weping is a noious thing: this is to sayn, as muche availleth to speke befor folk to which his speche anoie as to finge beforne him that wepeth. And whan this wise man saw that him wanted audience al shamefast he sette him down agein: for Salomon saith, Ther as thou ne mayst have non audience enforce thee not to speke. I see wel (quod this wise man) that the comune proverbe is soth, that good conseil wanteth whan it is most nede.

Yet had this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that prively in his ere conseilled him certain thing, and conseilled him the contrary in general audience. Whan Melibeus had herd that the grettest party of his conseil were accorded that he shulde make werre, anon he consented to hire conseil, and

and fully affirmed hir sentence. Than Dame Prudence, whan that she saw how that hire husbonde shope him for to awreke him on his foos, and to beginne werre, she in ful humble wise, whan she saw hiretime, sayde him these wordes: My Lord, (quod she) I you beseeche, as hertly as I dare and can, ne haste you not to faste, and for alle guerdonds as yeve me audience; for Piers Alphonse * sayth, Who so that doth to thee outhur good or harme haste thee not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and thin enemye shal the lenger live in drede. The proverbe sayth, He hasteth wel that wisely can abide; and in wikked hast is no profite.

This Melibee answered unto his wif Prudence; I purpose not (quod he) to werken by thy conseil for many causes and resons, for certes every wight wold hold me than a fool; this is to sayn, if I for thy conseilling wolde change thinges that bed ordained and affirmed by so many wise men. Secondly, I say that all women ben wicke, and non good of hem all; for of a thousand men, saith Salomon, I found o good man; but certes of alle women good found I never. And also, certes if I governed me by thy conseil it shulde seme that I had yeve thee over me the maistrie; and God forbode that it so were; for Jesus Sirak sayth, that if the wif have the maistrie she is contrarious to hire husbond; and Salomon sayth, Never in thy lif to thy wif, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend, ne yeve no power over thyself; for better it were that thy children axe of thee thinges that hem nedeth, than thou see thyself in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy conseilling, certes it must be somtime secree, til it were time that it be knowen, and this ne may not be if I shulde be conseilled by thee [For it is writen † The janglerie of women ne can no thing hide save that which they wote not; after the philosophre seyth, In wikked conseil women venquishen men: and for thise resons I ne owe not to be conseilled by thee.]

Whan Dame Prudence, ful debonairly, and with gret pacience, had herd all that hire husbonde liked for to say, than axed she of him licence for to speke, and sayde in this wise: My lord, (quod she) as to your first reson it may lightly ben answered, for I say that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged, or elles whan the thing semeth otherwise than it semed afore. And moreover, I say, though that ye have sworne and

behight to performe your emprise, and nevertheless ye weive to performe thilke same emprise by just cause, men shuld not say therfore ye were a lyer ne forsworn; for the book sayth that the wise man maketh no lesing whan he turneth his corage for the better. And al be it that your emprise be established and ordeined by gret multitude of folk, yet thar you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh, for the trouthe of thinges and the profit ben rather founden in fewe folk that ben wise and ful of reson, than by gret multitude of folk ther every man cryeth and clattereth what him liketh; sothly swiche multitude is not honest. As to the second reson, wheras ye say that all women ben wicke; save your grace, certes ye despise alle women in this wise, and he that all despiseth, as saith the book, all despleth. And Senek saith, that who so wol have sapience shall no man dispise, but he shal gladly teche the science that he can without presumption or pride, and swiche thinges as he nought can he shal not ben ashamed to lere hem, and to enquire of lesse folk than himself. And, Sire, that ther hath ben ful many a good woman may lightly be preved; for certes, Sire, our Lord Jesu Crist n'olde never han descended to be borne of a woman if all women had be wicked; and after that, for the gret bountee that is in women, our Lord Jesu Crist, whan he was risen from deth to lif, appeared rather to a woman than to his apostles. And though that Salomon sayde he founde never no good woman, it folweth not therfore that all women be wicked; for though that he ne found no good woman, certes many another man hath founde many a woman ful good and trewe: or elles, peraventure, the entent of Salomon was this, that in soveraine bountee he found no woman; this is to say, that ther is no wight that hath soveraine bountee save God alone, as he himself recordeth in his Evangelies; for ther is no creature so good that him ne wanteth somewhat of the perfection of God that is his maker. Yourre thridde reson is this; ye say that if that ye governe you by my conseil it shulde seme that ye had yeve me the maistrie and the lordship of your person. Sire, save your grace, it is not so; for if so were that no man shulde be conseilled but only of hem that han lordship and maistrie of his person, men n'olde not be conseilled so often; for sothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free chois whether he wol werke after that conseil or non. And as to your fourth reson, ther as ye sain that the janglerie of women can hide thinges that they wot not, as who so sayth that a woman can not hide that she wote; Sire, thise wordes ben understonde of women that ben jangleresses and wicked, of which women men sain that three thinges driven a man out of his hous, that is to say, smoke, dropping of raine, and wicked wives; and of swiche women Salomon sayth, that a man were better dwell in desert than with a woman that is riotous: and, Sire, by your leve, that am not I, for ye have ful often assaied my gret silence and my gret patience, and eke how wel that I can hide and hele

* He calls himself *Petrus Alfonsi* in his *Dialogus contra Judaeos*, ms. Harl. 3861. He there informs us, that he was himself originally a Jew, but converted and baptized in the year 1106, in July, *die natalis App. Petri et Pauli*, upon which account he took the name of *Peter*.

† What is included between hooks is wanting in all the mss. which I have examined: it is plainly necessary to the sense, as it shews us what the fourth and fifth reasons of Melibee were to which Prudence replies: I have therefore inserted as literal a translation as I imagine Chaucer might have made of the following passage in the Fr. Melibee, ms. Reg. 19. C. vii: "Car il est escript, la janglerie des femmes ne puet riens celer fors ce qu'elle ne scet: Apris le philosophre dit, en mauvais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes, et par ces raisons je ne dois point user de ton conseil." *Tyrwhitt*.

thinges that men oughten secretly to hiden. And sothly as to your fifthe reson, wheras ye say that in wicked conseil women venquished men, God wote that thilke reson stant here in no stede; for understondeth now ye axen conseil for to do wickednesse, and if ye wol werken wickednesse, and your wif restraineth thilke wicked purpos, and overcometh you by reson and by good conseil, certes your wif ought rather to be preised than to be blamed: thus shulde ye understonde the philosophre that sayth, in wicked conseil women venquishen hir husbondes. And ther as you blamen all women and hir resons, I shal shewe you by many ensamples that many women have ben ful good, and yet ben, and hir conseil holesome and profitable. Eke som men han sayd that the conseil of women is either to dere or elles to litel of pris: but al be it so that ful many a woman be bad, and hire conseil vile and nought worth, yet han men founden ful many a good woman, and discrete and wise in conseilling. Lo Jacob, thurgh the good conseil of his mother Rebecke, wan the benison of his father and the lordship over all his brethren; Judith by hire good conseil delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelt, out of the honde of Holoferne, that had it beseged, and wolde it al destroye; Abigail delivered Nabal hire housbond fro David the king, that wolde han slain him, and appeased the ire of the king by hire wit and by hire good conseilling; Hester by hire conseil enhaunced gretly the peple of God in the regne of Assuerus the king; and the same bountee in good conseilling of many a good woman moun men rede and tell. And further more, whan that oure Lord had created Adam oure forme father he sayde in this wise; It is not good to be a man allone; make we to him an helpe semblable to himself. Here moun ye see that if that women weren not good, and hir conseil good and profitable, oure Lord God of heven wolde neither han wrought hem ne called hem helpe of man, but rather confusio of man. And ther sayd a clerk ones in two vers, What is better than gold? jaspre; what is better than jaspre? wisdom; and what is better than wisdom? woman; and what is better than a good woman? nothing. And, Sire, by many other resons moun ye seen that many women ben good, and hir conseil good and profitable: and therefore, Sire, if ye wol troste to my conseil, I shall restore you your doughter hole and sound, and I wol don to you so muche that ye shuln have honour in this cas.

Whan Melibee had herd the wordes of his wif Prudence, he sayd thus; I se wel that the word of Salomon is soth, for he saith that wordes that ben spoken discretly by ordinaunce ben honiecombes, for they yeven swetenesse to the soule and holnesse to the body: and, wif, because of thy swete wordes, and eke for I have preved and assaied thy grete sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thing.

Now, Sire, (quod Dame Prudence) and for that ye vouchsafe to be governed by my conseil, I wol enforme you how that ye shuln governe yourself in chesing of youre conseilours. Ye shuln first

in alle your werkes mekely beseechen to the heigh God that he wol be your conseilour, and shapeth you to swiche entente that he yeve you conseil and comforte, as taught Tobie his sone; At alle times thou shalt blesse God, and preie him to dresse thy wayes; and loke that alle thy conseil ben in him for evermore. Seint James eke sayth, If any of you have nede of sapience, axe it of God. And afterwarde than shullen ye take conseil in yourself, and examine wel your owen thoughtes of swiche thinges as you thinketh that ben best for your profit; and than shuln ye drive fro your herte three thinges that ben contrarious to good conseil, that is to sayn, ire, coveitise, and hastinesse.

First, he that axeth conseil of himself, certes he must be withouten ire for many causes. The first is this; he that hath gret ire and wrath in himself, he weneth alway that he may do thing that he may not do. And, secondly, he that is irous and wroth he may not wel deme; and he that may not wel deme may not wel conseil. The thridde is this; he that is irous and wroth, as sayth Senek, ne may not speke but blameful thinges, and with his vicious wordes he stirreth other folk to anger and to ire. And eke, Sire, ye must drive coveitise out of your herte; for the apostle sayth, that coveitise is the rote of all harmes: and trosteth wel that a coveitous man ne can not deme, ne thinke, but only to fulfille the end of his coveitise, and certes that ne may never ben accomplished; for ever the more haboundance that he hath of riches, the more he desireth. And, Sire, ye must also drive out of youre herte hastinesse; for certes ye ne moun not deme for the beste a soden thought that falleth in your herte, but ye must avise you on it ful ofte; for, as ye have herde herebeforn, the commune proverbe is this, He that sone demeth sone repenteth.

Sire, ye ne be not alway in like disposition, for certes som thing that somtime semeth to you that it is good for to do, another time it semeth to you the contrarie.

And whan ye han taken conseil in yourself, and han demed by good deliberation swiche thing as you semeth beste, than rede I you that ye kepe it secrete. Bewreye not your conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen likerly that thurgh youre bewreying youre condition shal ben to you more profitable; for Jesus Sirak saith, Neither to thy foo ne to thy frend discover not thy secrete, ne thy folie; for they woln yeve you audience and loking, and supportation, in your presence, and scorne you in youre absence. Another clerk sayth, that scarsly shalt thou finden any persone that may kepe thy conseil secrete. The book saith, While that thou kepest thy conseil in thin herte thou kepest it in thy prison, and whan thou bewreyest thy conseil to any wight, he holdeth thee in his snare: and therefore you is better to hide your conseil in your herte than to preye him to whom ye han bewreyed youre conseil that he wol kepe it close and stille; for Seneca sayth, If so be that thou ne mayst not thin owen conseil hide, how dardest thou preyen any other wight thy conseil secrete to kepe? But natheles, if thou wene liker-

ly that thy bewreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condition to stonden in the better plight, than shalt thou telle him thy conseil in this wise. First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe him not thy will ne thin entente; for troste wel that comunly these conseilours ben flaterers, namely the conseilours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alway rather to speken pleasant wordes, enclining to the lordes lust, than wordes that ben trewe or profitable, and therefore men sayn that the riche man hath selde good conseil but if he have it of himself. And after that thou shalt consider thy frendes and thin enemies. And as touching thy frendes, thou shalt consider which of hem ben most feithful and most wise, and eldest and most appreved, in conseil, and of hem shalt thou axe thy conseil as the cas requireth.

I say, that first ye shuln clepe to youre conseil youre frendes that ben trewe; for Salomon saith, that right as the herte of a man deliteth in favour that is swote, right so the conseil of trewe frendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule: he sayth also, Ther may nothing be likened to the trewe frend, for certes gold ne silver ben not so much worth as the good will of a trewe frend: and eke he sayth, that a trewe frend is a strong defence; who so that it findeth, certes he findeth a gret tresor. Than shuln ye eke consider if that your trewe frendes ben discrete and wise; for the book saith, Axe alway thy conseil of hem that ben wise. And by this same reson shuln ye clepen to youre conseil youre frendes that ben of age, swiche as han seyn and ben expert in many thinges, and ben appreved in conseil; for the book saith, In olde men is al the sapience, and in longe time the prudence: And Tullius sayth, that grete thinges ne ben not ay accomplished by strengthe ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the which three thinges ne ben not feble by age, but certes they enforcen and encrefen day by day. And than shuln ye kepe this for a general reule; first, ye shuln clepe to your conseil a fewe of your frendes that ben especial; for Salomon saith, Many frendes have thou, but among a thousand chese thee on to be thy conseilour. For al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayest afterwarde tell it to mo folk if it be nede. But loke alway that thy conseilours have thilke three conditions that I have sayd before; that is to say, that they be trewe, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in every nede by on conseilour allone, for somtime behoveth it to be consailed by many; for Salomon sayth, Salvation of thinges is wher as ther ben many conseilours.

Now sith that I have told you of which folk ye shulde be consailed, now wol I teche you which conseil ye ought to eschue. First, ye shuln eschue the conseil of fooles; for Salomon sayth, Take no conseil of a fool, for he ne cannot consaille but after his owen lust and his affection: the book sayth, The propertee of a fool is this, he troweth lightly harme of every man, and lightly troweth

all bountee in himself. Thou shalt eke eschue the conseil of all flaterers, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preisen youre persone by flaterie, than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thinges.

Wherefore Tullius sayth, Among alle the pestilences that ben in frendship the gretest is flaterie; and therefore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flaterers than any other peple. The book saith, Thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flatering preisers than fro the egre wordes of thy frend that saith thee sothes: Salomon saith, that the wordes of a flaterer is a snare to cacchen innocentes: he sayth also, He that speketh to his frend wordes of swetenesse and of plesaunce, he setteth a net besorne his feet to cacchen him: and therefore sayth Tullius, Encline not thin eres to flaterers, ne take no conseil of wordes of flaterie: and Caton sayth, Avise thee wel, and eschue wordes of swetenesse and of plesaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the conseil of thin olde enemies that ben reconciled. The book sayth, that no wight retourneth safely into the grace of his olde enemy: and Ysop sayth, Ne trost not to hem to which thou hast somtime had werre or enmittee, ne telle hem not thy conseil: and Senek telleth the cause why; It may not be, sayth he, ther as gret fire hath long time endured that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse; and therefore saith Salomon, In thin olde foe trost thou never; for likerly though thin enemy be reconciled, and maketh thee chere of humiltee, and louteth to thee with his hed, ne trost him never, for certes he maketh thilke feined humiltee more for his profite than for any love of thy persone, because that he demeth to have victorie over thy persone by swiche feined contenance, the which victorie he might not have by strif of werre. And Peter Alphonse sayth, Make no felawship with thin olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountee they wollen perverten it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschue the conseil of hem that ben thy servaunts, and beren thee gret reverence, for paraventure they fein it more for drede than for love; and therefore saith a philosophe in this wise, Ther is no wight parfitly trewe to him that he to fore dredeth. And Tullius sayth, Ther n'is no might so gret of any emperour that longe may endure, but if he have more love of the peple than drede. Thou shalt also eschue the conseil of folk that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no conseil hide; for Salomon sayth, Ther n'is no privetee ther as regneth dronkenesse. Ye shuln also have in suspect the conseil of swiche folk as consaille you o thing prively, and consaille you the contrarie openly; for Cassiodore sayth, that it is a manere sleighte to hinder his enemy whan he sheweth to don a thing openly, and werketh prively the contrary. Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseil of wicked folk, for hir conseil is alway ful of fraude. And David sayth, Blisful is that man that hath not folwed the conseil of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the conseil of yonge folk, for hir conseil is not ripe, as Salomon saith.

Now, Sire, sith I have shewed you of which

folk ye shullen take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shullen eschue the conseil, now wol I teche you how ye shuln examine your conseil after the doctrine of Tullius. In examining than of your conseilours, ye shuln confidre many thinges. Alder first, thou shalt confidre that in thilke thing that thou purposest, and upon what thing that thou wolt have conseil, that veray trouthe be said and conserved; this is to say, telle trewely thy tale; for he that sayth false may not wel be consailed in that cas of which he lieth. And after this thou shalt confidre the thinges that accorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy conseilours, if reson accord therto, and eke if thy might may atteine therto, and if the more part and the better part of thin conseilours accorden therto or no. Than shalt thou confidre what thing shal folwe of that conseil, as hate, pees, werre, grace, profite, or damage, and many other thinges, and in alle thinges thou shalt chese the beste, and weive all other thinges. Than shalt thou confidre of what roote is engendred the matere of thy conseil, and what fruit it may conceive and engendre. Thou shalt eke confidre alle the causes from whennes they ben sprongen. And whan thou hast examined thy conseil, as I have said, and which partie is the better and more profitable, and hast apprevd it by many wise folk and olde, than shalt thou confidre if thou mayst performe it and maken of it a good ende; for certes reson wol not that any man shulde beginne a thing but if he mighte performe it as him oughte, ne no wight shulde take upon him so hevy a charge that he might not beren it, for the proverbe sayth, He that to muche embraceth distreineth litel; and Caton saith, Assay to do swiche thinges as thou hast power to don, lest the charge oppresse thee so sore that thee behoveth to weive thing that thou hast begonne. And if so be that thou be in doute whether thou mayst performe a thing or non, chese rather to suffre than to beginne. And Peter Alphonse sayth, If thou hast might to don a thing of which thou must repente, it is better nay than ya; this is to sayn, that thee is better to holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. Than mayst thou understonde by stronger resons, that if thou hast power to performe a werk of which thou shalt repente, than is thee better that thou suffre than beginne. Wel sayn they that defenden every wight to assaye a thing of which he is in doute whether he may performe it or non. And after whan ye han examined your conseil as I have said before, and knowen wel that ye moun performe your emprise, conferme it than sadly til it be at an ende. Now is it reson and time that I shewe you whan and wherfore that you maun chaunge your conseil withouten repreve. Sothly a man may change his purpos and his conseil if the cause ceseth, or whan a newe cas betideth; for the lawe saith, that upon thinges that newly betiden behoveth newe conseil; and Seneca sayth, If thy conseil is comen to the cres of thin enemies chaunge thy conseil. Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil, if so be that thou find that by error or by other cause,

harne or damage may betide: also if thy conseil be dishoneste, other elles come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil; for the lawes sain that all behestes that ben dishoneste ben of no value; and eke if so be that it be impossible, or may not goodly be performed or kept.

And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affermed so strongly that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I say that thilke conseil is wicked.

This Melibeus, whan he had herd the doctrine of his wif Dame Prudence, answered in this wise: Dame, quod he, as yet unto this time ye han wel and covenantly taught me, as in general, how I shal governe me in the chesing and in the withholding of my conseilours; but now wold I fain that you wold condescend in especial, and telle me how liketh you or what semeth you by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.

My Lord, quod she, I beseche you in alle humbleste that ye wol not wilfully replie agein my resons, ne distempre your herte, though I speke thing that you displese, for God wote that as in min entente I speke it for your beste, for youre honour and for youre profit eke, and sothly I hope that youre benignitee wol taken it in patience. And trosteth me wel, quod she, that youre conseil as in this cas ne shulde not (as to speke proprely) be called a conseil, but a motion or a-moeving of folie, in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

First and forward, ye han erred in the assembling of youre conseilours, for ye sholde first han cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk if it hadde ben nede; but certes ye han sodeinly cleped to your conseil a gret multitude of peple, ful chargeant, and ful anoyous for to here. Also ye han erred, for ther as ye shulde han only cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise, ye han cleped straunge folk, yonge folk, false flaterers, and enemies reconciled, and folk that don you reverence withouten love. And eke ye han erred, for ye han brought with you to youre conseil ire, coveitise, and hastifnesse, the which three thinges ben contrary to every conseil honest and profitable, the which three thinges ye ne han not anientified or destroyed neither in youreself ne in youre conseilours as you ought. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affections to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance, and they han espied by youre wordes to what thing ye ben enclined, and therefore han they consailed you rather to youre talent than to youre profite. Ye han erred also, for it semeth that you sufficeth to han ben consailed by thise conseilours only, and with litel avis, wheras in so high and so gret a nede it had ben necessarie mo conseilours and more deliberation to performe youre emprise. Ye han erred also, for ye han not examined your conseil in the foresaid manere, ne in due manere as the cas requireth. Ye han erred also, for ye han maked no division betwix youre conseilours; this is to

sayn, betwix youre trewe frendes and youre feined conseillours; ne ye han not knowe the wille of youre trewe frendes olde and wise, but ye han cast alle hir wordes in an hochepot, and enclined your herte to the more part and to the greter nombre, and ther be ye condescended: and sith ye wot wel that men shuln alway finde a greter nombre of fooles than of wise men, and therefore the conseillings that ben at congregations and multitudes of folk, ther as men take more regard to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, ye seen wel that in swiche conseillings fooles han the maistrie. Melibeus answered and said agein; I graunte wel that I have erred, but ther as thou hast told me herebefore that he n'is not to blame that chaungeth his conseil in certain cas, and for certain and just causes, I am al ready to chaunge my conseil right as thou wolt devise. The proverbe sayth, For to don finne is mannish, but certes for to persevere in sinne is werke of the devil.

To this sentence answered anon Dame Prudence, and saide; Examineth (quod she) wel your conseil, and let us see the which of hem han spoken most resonably, and taught you best conseil; and for as muche as the examination is necessarie, let us beginne at the surgiens and at the physiciens that first spoken in this mater. I say that physiciens and surgiens han sayde you in youre conseil discretly as hem oughte, and in hir speche saiden ful wisely that to the office of hem apperteineth to don to every wight honour and profite, and no wight to anoye, and after hir craft to don gret diligence unto the cure of hem which that they han in hir governaunce. And, Sire, right as they han answered wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they be highly and soverainly guerdoned for hir noble speche, and eke for they shulden do the more ententif besinesse in the curation of thy dere doughter: for al be it so that they ben youre frendes, therefore shullen ye not suffren that they serve you for nought, but ye oughte the rather guerdene hem, and shewe hem youre largesse. And as touching the proposition which the physiciens entreteden in this cas, this is to fain, that in maladies that a contrarie is warished by another contrarie, I wold fain knowe how ye understonde thilke text, and what is your sentence. Certes, quod Melibeus, I understond it in this wise, that right as they han don me a contrarie, right so shulde I don hem another; for right as they han venged hem upon me and don me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem and don hem wrong, and than have I cured a contrarie by another.

Lo, lo! quod Dame Prudence, how lightly is every man enclined to his owen desire and his owen plesance! Certes (quod she) the wordes of the physiciens ne shulden not han ben understonden in that wise, for certes wickednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeance to vengeance, ne wrong to wrong, but they ben semblable, and and therefore a vengeance is not warished by another vengeance, ne a wrong by another wrong, but everich of hem encreseth and aggreggeth o-

ther. But certes the wordes of the physiciens shulden ben understonde in this wise, for good and wickednesse ben two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeance and suffraunce, discord and accord, and many other thinges; but certes wickednesse shal be warished by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of other thinges. And hereto accordeth Seint Poule the apostle in many places; he sayth, Ne yelde not harme for harme, ne wicked speche for wicked speche, but do wel to him that doth to thee harme, and blesse him that faith to thee harme; and in many other places he amonesteth pees and accord. But now wol I speke to you of the conseil which that was yeven to you by the men of lawe, and the wise folk and old folke, that sayden alle by on accord as ye han herd before, that over alle thinges ye shuln do your diligence to kepe your persone, and to warne store your house; and saiden also, that in this cas you oughte for to werchen ful avisely and with gret deliberation. And, Sire, as to the first point, that toucheth the keping of youre persone, ye shuln understond that he that hath werre shal ever more devoutly and mekely preien before alle thinges that Jesu Crist of his mercie wol han him in his protection, and ben his soveraine helping at his nede; for certes in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept sustauntly withoute the keping of oure Lord Jesu Crist. To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that sayth, If God ne kepe the citee in idel waketh he that kepeth it. Now, Sire, than shuln ye committe the keping of youre persone to youre trewe frendes that ben apprevd and yknowe, and of hem shuln ye axen helpe youre persone for to kepe; for Caton faith, If thou have nede of helpe, axe it of thy frendes, for ther n'is non so good a physicien as thy trewe frend. And after this than shuln ye kepe you fro alle straunge folk, and fro lieres, and have alway in suspect hir compaignie; for Piers Alphonse sayth, Ne take no compaignie by the way of a straunge man, but if so be that thou have knowen him of lenger time; and if so be that he falle into thy compaignie paraventure withouten thin assent, enquire than as subtilly as thou maist of his conversation, and of his lif before, and feine thy way, saying thou wolt go thider as thou wolt not go; and if he bere a spere hold thee on the right side, and if he bere a swerd hold thee on his left side. And after this than shuln ye kepe you wisely from all swiche manere peple as I have sayed before, and hem and hir conseil eschue. And after this than shuln ye kepe you in swiche manere that for any presumption of youre strengthe that ye ne despise not ne account not the might of your adversary so lite that ye let the keping of youre persone for your presumption, for every wise man dredeth his enemye; and Salomon sayth, Welful is he that of alle hath drede; for certes he that thurgh the hardinesse of his herte, and thurgh the hardinesse of himself, hath to gret presumption, him shal evil betide. Than shuln ye evermo countrewaite emboyssements and alle espiaile; for Senek sayth, that the wise man that dredeth harmes eschuet harmes, ne he ne falleth into perils that

perils eschue. And al be it so that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shalt thou alway do thy diligence in keping of thy persone; this is to sayn, ne be not negligent to kepe thin persone not only fro thy grettest enemy but also fro thy leste enemy. Senek sayth, A man that is wel avised he dredeth his leste enemy; Ovide sayth, that the litel wessel wol flee the gret boll and the wilde hart; and the book sayth, A litel thorne may prikke a king ful fore; and a litel hound wol hold the wilde bore. But natheles I say not thou shalt be so coward that thou doute wher as is no drede. The book saith that * som men [han taught he hir deceivour, for they han to much dreded] to be deceived. Yet shalt thou drede to be empoysoned and [therfore shalt thou] kepe thee fro the compaignie of scornors; for the book sayth, With scornors ne make no compaignie, but flee hir wordes as venime.

Now as to the second point, wheras youre wise conseilours conseilled you to warnestore your hous with gret diligence, I wolde fain knowe how that ye understonde thilke wordes, and what is your sentence.

Melibeus answered and saide; Certes I understond it in this wise, that I shal warnestore min hous with toures, swiche as han castelles and other manere edifices, and armure, and artelries, by which thinges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden that min enemies shuln ben in drede min hous for to approche.

To this sentence answered anon Prudence: Warnestoring (quod she) of heighe toures and of gret edifices, is with grete costages and with grete travaille, and whan that they ben accomplished yet ben they not worth a stre, but if they ben defended by trewe frendes that ben olde and wise. And understonde wel that the gretteste and strongeste garneson that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as his goodes, is, that he be beloved with his subgetts and with his neighbores; for thus sayth Tullius, that ther is a maner garneson that no man may venquish ne discomfite, and that is a lord to be beloved of his citizeins and of his peple.

Now, Sire, as to the thridde point, wheras youre olde and wise conseilours sayden that you ne oughte not sodeinly ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that you oughte purveyen and appareilen you in this cas with gret diligence and gret deliberation, trewely I trowe that they sayden right wisely and right soth; for Tullius sayth, In every nede er thou beginne it appareile thee with gret diligence. Than say I that in vengauce taking in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoring, er thou beginne I rede that thou appareile thee therto, and do it with gret deliberation; for Tullius sayth

that longe appareiling tofore the bataille maketh short victorie; and Cassiodorus sayth, The garneson is stronger whan it is longe time avised.

But now let us speken of the conseil that was accorded by youre neighbores swiche as don you reverence withouten love, youre olde enemies reconciled, your flaterers, that conseilled you certain thinges prively, and openly conseilled you the contrarie, the yonge folk also, that conseilled you to venge you and to make werre anon. Certes, Sire, as I have sayde beforne, ye han gretly erred to han cleped swiche maner folk to youre conseil, which conseilours ben ynough reproved by the resons aforesaid: but natheles, let us now descende to the special. Ye shul first proceden after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth not diligently to enquire, for it is wel wist which they ben that han don to you this trespas and vilanie, and how many trespasours, and in what manere, they han don to you all this wrong and all this vilanie. And after this than shuln ye examine the second condition which that the same Tullius addeth in this matere; for Tullius putteth a thing which that he clepeth Consenting; this to sayn, who ben they, and which ben they, and how many, that consenten to thy conseil in thy wilfulness to don hastif vengauce. And let us confidre also who ben they, and how many ben they, and which ben they, that consenteden to youre adversaries. As to the first point, it is wel known which folk they be that consenteden to youre wilfulness, for trewely all tho that conseilleden you to maken sodein werre ne ben not youre frendes. Let us now confidre which ben they that ye holden so gretly youre frendes as to youre persone, for al be it so that ye be mighty and riche, certes ye ne ben but allone; for certes ye ne han no child but a doughter, ne ye ne han no brethren, ne cosins germains, ne non other nigh kinrede, wherfore that your enemies for drede shulde stinte to plede with you or to destroye youre persone. Ye knowen also that your richesses moten ben dispended in diverse parties, and whan that every wight hath his part they ne wollen taken but litel regard to venge youre deth. But thin enemies ben three, and they han many brethren, children, cosins, and other nigh kinrede; and though so were that thou haddest slain of hem two or three, yet dwel- len ther ynow to wreken hir deth, and to flee thy persone. And though so be that youre kinrede be more stedfast and siker than the kin of your adversaries, yet natheles youre kinrede is but a fer kinrede; they ben but litel sibbe to you, and the kin of youre enemies ben nigh sibbe to hem; and certes as in that hir condition is better than yours. Than let us confidre also of the conseil- ling of hem that conseilled you to take sodein vengauce, whether it accorde to reson; and certes ye knowe wel nay; for as by right and re- son ther may no man taken vengauce on no wight but the juge that hath the jurisdiction of it, whan it is ygraunted him to take thilke ven- geauce hastily or attemprely as the law requireth.

* This passage, which is defective in all the mss. I have patched up as well as I could, by adding the words between hooks from the French Melibee, where it stands thus: "Au . . . les gens ont enseigne leur decevoir, car ils ont trop doute que on ne les deceust. Apres tu te dois garder de venin, et si te dois garder de compaignie de moqueurs, car il est escript, Avec les moqueurs n'aies compaignie, et suy leurs paroles comme le venin."—*Tyrwhitt.*

And moreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth Consenting, thou shalt considere if thy might and thy power may consente and suffice to thy wilfulnesse and to thy conseilours; and certes thou mayest wel say that Nay; for likerly, as for to speke proprely, we moun do nothing but only swiche thing as we moun don rightfully; and certes rightfully ye ne mowe take no vengeance, as of your propre auctorite. Than mowe ye sen that your power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not to your wilfulnesse. Now let us examine the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth Consequent. Thou shalt understonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent, and theroffolweth another vengeance, peril, and werre, and other damages without nombre, of which we ben not ware as at this time. And as touching the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth Engendering, thou shalt consider that this wrong which that is don to thee is engendred of the hate of thin enemies, and of the vengeance taking upon that wold engender another vengeance, and muchel sorwe and wasting of richesles, as I sayde ere.

Now, Sire, as to the point that Tullius clepeth Causes, which that is the last point, thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast received hath certaine causes which that clerkes clepen *oriens* and *eficiens*, and *causa longinqua*, and *causa propinqua*; this is to sayn, the fer cause and the nigh cause. The fer cause is almighty God, that is cause of alle thinges; the ner cause is thin three enemies; the cause accidental was hate; the cause material ben the five woundes of thy doughter; the cause formal is the maner of hir werking, that broughten ladders and clomben in at thy windowes; the cause final was for to flee thy doughter: it letted not in as muche as in hem was. But for to speke of the fer cause, as to what ende they shuld come, or what shal finally betide of hem in this cas, ne can I not deme but by conjecting and supposing; for we shuln suppose that they shuln come to a wicked ende, because that the book of Decrees sayth, Selden or with gret peine ben causes ybrought to a good ende whan they ben badly begonne.

Now, Sire, if men wold axen me why that God suffred men to do you this vilanie, certes I can not wel answer as for no sothfastnesse; for the apostle sayth that the sciences and the jugements of oure Lord God Almighty ben ful depe; ther may no man comprehend ne serche hem suffisantly; na-theles, by certain presumptions and conjectings I hold and beleve that God, which that is ful of justice and of rightwisenesse, hath suffered this betide by just cause resonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to sayn, a man that drinketh hony. Thou hast dronke so muche hony of swete temporel richesles, and delices, and honours of this world, that thou art dronken, and hast forgotten Jesu Crist thy creatour: thou ne hast not don to him swiche honour and reverence as thee ought, ne thou ne hast wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that sayth, Under the honey of the goodes of thy body is hid the venime that sleth the soule; and Salomon sayth, If thou hast

founden hony, etc of it that sufficeth; for if thou etc of it out of mesure thou shalt spewe, and be nedy and poure. And peraventure Crist hath thee in despit, and hath tourned away fro thee his face and his eres of misericorde, and also he hath suffred that thou hast ben punished in the manere that thou hast ytrespased. Thou hast don sinne again oure Lord Crist, for certes the three enemies of mankind, that is to sayn, the flesh, the fend, and the world, thou hast suffred hem entre into thin herte wilfully by the windowes of thy body, and hast not defended thyself suffisantly agein hir assautes and hir temptations, so that they han wounded thy soule in five places; this is to sayn, the dedly sinnes that ben entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes: and in the same manere our Lord Crist hath wold and suffred that thy three enemies ben entred into thyn hous by the windowes, and han ywounded thy doughter in the foresayd manere.

Certes, quod Melibee, I see wel that ye enforce you muchel by wordes to overcomen me in swiche manere that I shal not venge me on min enemies, shewing me the perils and the evils that mighten falle of this vengeance; but who so wolde considere in all vengeancees the perils and evils that mighten sue of vengeance taking a man wold never take vengeance, and that were harme; for by the vengeance taking ben the wicked men dissevered fro the goode men, and they that han will to do wickednesse restreinen hir wicked purpos whan they sen the punishing and the chastising * of the trespasours. [To this answered Dame Prudence: Certes, quod she, I graunte you that of vengeance taking cometh muche evil and muche good; but vengeance taking apperteineth not to everich on, but only to juges, and to hem that han the jurisdiction over the trespasours.] And yet say I more, that right as a singuler persone sinneth in taking vengeance of another man, right so sinneth the juge if he do no vengeance of hem that it han deserved; for Senek sayth thus. That master (he sayth) is good that preveth shrewes; and Cassiodore sayth, A man dredeth to do outrages whan he wot and knoweth that it displeth to the juges and soveraines; and another sayth, The juge that dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes; and Seint Poule the apostle sayth in his epistle, whan he writeth unto the Romaines, that the juges beren not the spere withouten cause, but they beren it to punishe the shrewes and misdours, and for to defende the goode men. If ye wiln than take vengeance of youre enemies, ye shuln retourne or have your recours to the juge that hath the jurisdiction upon hem, and he shal punishe hem as the lawe axeth and requireth.

A! sayd Melibee, this vengeance liketh me nothing. I bethink me now and take hede how

* The following passage, which the reader will see to be very material to the sense, I have translated from the French, and inserted between crotchets, as before. Et "a ce respont Dame Prudence: Certes, dist elle, le pot-trove que de vengeance vient molt de maulx et de biens, mais vengeance n'appartient pas a un chascun, fors seulement aux juges et a ceulx qui ont la juridicion sur les malfaiteurs"---Tyrrwhitt.

that Fortune hath nourished me from my childhede, and hath holpen me to passe many a stronge pas: now wol I assayen hire, trowing with Goddes helpe that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.

Certes, quod Prudence, if ye wol werke by my conseil ye shuln not assaye Fortune by no way, ne ye ne shuln not lene or bowe unto hire, after the wordes of Senek; for thinges that ben folily don, and tho that ben don in hope of Fortune, shuln never come to good ende. And as the same Senek sayth, The more clere and the more shining that Fortune is, the more brotel and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in hire, for she n'is not stedfast ne stable, for whan thou trowest to be most liker and seure of hire helpe, she wol faille and deceive thee. And wheras ye sayn that Fortune hath nourished you fro youre childhede, I say that in so muchel ye shuln the lesse truste in hire and in hire wit; for Senek saith, What man that is nourished by Fortune she maketh him a gret fool. Now than sin ye desire and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that is don after the lawe and before the juge ne liketh you not, and the vengeance that is don in hope of Fortune is perilous and uncertain, than have ye non other remedie but for to have your recours unto the soveraine juge that vengeth alle vilanies and wronges, and he shal venge you; after that himself witnesseth wheras he saith, Leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal do it.

Melibeus answered, If I ne venge me of the vilanie that men han don to me, I sompne or warne hem that has don to me vilanie, and alle other, to do me another vilanie; for it is written, If thou take no vengeance of an olde vilany, thou sompnest thin adversaries to do thee a newe vilanie: and also for my suffraunce men wolden do me so muche vilanie, that I might neither bere it ne susteine, and so shulde ben put and holden over lowe; for som men sain, In muchel suffering shal many thinges falle unto thee which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes, quod Prudence, I graunte you wel that overmuchel suffraunce is not good, but yet ne folweth it not therof that every persone to whom men don vilanie shuld take of it vengeance, for that apperteineth and longeth all only to the juges, for they shul venge the vilanies and injuries; and therefore tho two auctoritees that ye han sayd above ben only understonden in the juges, for whan they suffren overmuchel the wronges and vilanies to be don withouten punishing, they sompne not a man all only for to do newe wronges, but they commaunden it; al so as a wise man sayth, that the juge that correcteth not the sinner commaundeth and biddeth him do sinne; and the juges and soveraines mighten in hir lond so muche suffre of the shrewes and misdoers, that they shulden by swiche suffraunce by proces of time wexen of swiche power and might, that they shulde putte out the juges and the soveraines from hir places, and atte laste maken him lese hir lordshippes.

But now let us putte that ye have leve to venge you: I say ye be not of might and power as now

to venge you; for if ye wol maken comparison unto the might of youre adversaries, ye shuln finde in many thinges that I have shewed you er this that hir condition is better than youre, and therefore say I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be patient.

Forthermore, ye knowen wel that after the commune saw it is a woodnesse a man to strive with a stronger or a more mighty man than he is himself; and for to strive with a man of even strengthe, that is to say, with as strong a man as he is, it is peril; and for to strive with a weaker man it is folie; and therefore shulde a man flee striving as muchel as he mighte; for Salomon sayth, It is a gret worship to a man to kepe him fro noise and strif. And if it so happe that a man of greter mighte and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and besie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce than for to venge thee; for Senek sayth, That he putteth him in a grete peril that striveth with a greter man than he is himself; and Caton sayth, If a man of higher estat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoye or grevance, suffre him; for he that ones hath greved thee may another time releve thee and helpe thee. Yet sette I cas ye have bothe might and licence for to venge you; I say that ther ben ful many thinges that shuln restraine you of vengeance taking, and make you for to encline to suffre and for to han patience in the wronges that han ben don to you. First and forward, if ye wol considere the defautes that ben in youre owen persone, for which defautes God hath suffred you have this tribulation, as I have sayd to you herebefore; for the poete sayth, that we oughten patiently taken the tribulations that comen to us, whan that we thinken and consideren that we han deserved to han hem; and Seint Gregorie sayth, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his sinnes, the peines and the tribulations that he suffereth semen the lesse unto him; and in as muche as him thinketh his sinnes more hevy and grevous, in so muche semeth his peine the lighter and the esier unto him. Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte to take the patience of oure Lord Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Crist (he sayth) hath suffred for us, and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sue him, for he did never sinne, ne never came ther a vilains word out of his mouth. Whan men cursed him he cursed hem nought, and whan men beten him he manaced hem nought. Also the gret patience which seintes that ben in Paradis han had in tribulations that they han suffred withouten hir desert or gilt, oughte muchel stirre you to patience. Forthermore, ye shulde enforce you to have patience, considering that the tribulations of this world but litel while endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and the joye that a man seketh to han by patience in tribulations is perdurable; after that the apostle sayth in his epistle, The joye of God, he sayth, is perdurable, that is to sayn, everlasting. Also troweth and beleveth stedfastly that he n'is not wel ynourished ne wel ytaught that cannot have patience, or wol not receive pa-

tiencie; for Salomon sayth, that the doctrine and wit of a man is knowen by patience; and in another place he sayth, that he that is patient governeth him by gret prudence: and the same Salomon sayth, The angrie and wrathful man maketh noises, and the patient man attempteth and stilleth hem: he saith also, It is more worth to be patient than to be right strong; and he that may have the lordshipe of his owen herte is more to preise than he that by his force or strengthe taketh gret citees: and therefore sayth Seint James in his epistle, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you, Dame Prudence, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection, but every man may not have the perfection that ye seken; ne I am not of the nombre of the right parfit men, for min herte may never be in pees unto the time it be venged. And al be it so that it was gret peril to min enemies to do me a vilanie in taking vengeance upon me, yet token they non hede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wicked will and hir corage; and therefore me thinketh men oughten not reprove me though I put me in a litel peril for to venge me, and though I do a gret excesse, that is to sayn, that I venge on outrage by another.

A! quod Dame Prudence, ye sayn your will and as you liketh; but in no cas of the world a man shulde not don outrage ne excesse for to vengen him; for Cassiodore sayth, that as evil doth he that vengeth him by outrage as he that doth the outrage; and therefore ye shuln venge you after the ordre of right, that is to sayn, by the lawe, and not by excesse ne by outrage. And also if ye wol venge you of the outrage of youre adversaries in other manere than right commaundeth ye sinnen; and therefore sayth Senek, that a man shal never venge shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye say that right axeth a man to defende violence by violence, and fighting by fighting, certes ye say soth, whan the defence is don withouten intervalle, or withouten tarying or delay, for to defende him, and not for to venge: and it behoveth that a man putte swiche attemperaunce in his defence that men have no cause ne mater to reprove him that defendeth him of outrage and excesse, for elles were it againe reson. Parde ye knowen wel that ye maken no defence as now for to defende you, but for to venge you, and so sheweth it that ye han no will to do your dede attemprely; and therefore me thinketh that patience is good; for Salomon sayth, that he that is not patient shal have gret harme.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you that whan a man is impatient and wrothe of that that toucheth him not, and that apperteineth not unto him, though it harme him, it is no wonder; for the lawe saith that he is coupable that entremeteth or medleth with swiche thing as apperteineth not unto him; and Salomon saith, that he that entremeteth of the noise or strif of another man is like to him that taketh a straunge hound by the eres; for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eres is other while biten with the hound, right in

the same wise it is reson that he have harme that by his impatience medleth him of the noise of another man, wheras it apperteineth not unto him. But ye knowe wel that this dede, that is to sayn, my greif and my disese, toucheth me right nigh; and therefore though I be wroth and impatient it is no mervaile: and (saying your grace) I cannot see that it might gretly harme me though I took vengeance, for I am richer and more mighty than min enemies ben; and wel knowe ye that by money and by having grette possessions ben alle thinges of this world governed; and Salomon sayth that alle thinges obeye to money.

Whan Prudence had herd hire husbond avaunte him of his richesse and of his money, dispreising the power of his adversaries, she spake and sayd in this wise: Certes, dere Sire! I graunte you that ye ben riche and mighty, and that richesles ben good to hem that han wel ygeten hem, and that wel conne usen hem; for right as the body of a man may not liven withouten soul, no more may it liven withouten temporel goodes, and by richesles may a man gete him grette frendes; and therefore sayth Pamphilus, If a netherdes doughter (he sayth) be riche, she may chese of a thousand men which she wol take to hire husbond; for of a thousand men on wol not forsaken hire ne refusen hire. And this Pamphilus saith also, If thou be right happy, that is to sayn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt finde a gret nombre of felawes and frendes; and if thy fortune chaunge, that thou wexe poure, farewell frendshipe and felawshipe, for thou shalt be al allone withouten any compaignie, but if it be the compaignie of poure folk. And yet sayth this Pamphilus moreover, that they that ben bond and thralle of linage shuln be made worthy and noble by richesles. And right so as by richesles ther comen many goodes, right so by povertie come ther many harmes and eviles, for gret povertie constreinet a man to do many eviles: and therefore clepeth Cassiodore povertie the moder of ruine, that is to sayn, the moder of overthrowing or falling down; and therefore sayth Piers Alfonse, On of the grettest adversitees of this world is whan a free man by kinde, or of birthe, is constreined by povertie to eten the almesse of hisemie. And the same sayth Innocent in on of his bookes: he sayth, that sorweful and mishappy is the condition of a poure begger, for if he axe not his mete he dieth for hunger, and if he axe he dieth for shame; and algates necessitee constreinet him to axe; and therefore sayth Salomon, that better it is to die than for to have swiche povertie; and, as the same Salomon sayth, Better it is to die of bitter deth than for to liven in swiche wise. By thisse resons that I have said unto you, and by many other resons that I coude saye, I graunte you that richesles ben good to hem that wel geten hem, and to hem that wel usen tho richesles; and therefore wol I shewe you how ye shuln behave you in gadering of your richesles, and in what manere ye shuln usen hem.

First, ye shuln geten hem withouten gret desir, by good leiser, sokingly, and not over hastily, for a man that is to desiring to get riches aban-doneth him firste to thieste and to alle other eviles; and therfore sayth Salomon, He that hasteth him to besily to wexe riche he shal be non innocent: he sayth also, that the riches that hastily cometh to a man sone and lightly goeth and passeth from a man, but that riches that cometh litel and litel wexeth alway and multiplieth. And, Sire, ye shulen gete riches by youre wit and by youre travaille, unto youre profite, and that withouten wrong or harme doing to any other persone; for the lawe sayth, Ther maketh no man himself riche if he do harme to another wight; this is to say, that Nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make himself riche unto the harme of another persone. And Tullius sayth, that no sorwe, ne no drede of deth, ne nothing that may falle unto a man, is so muchel ageins nature as a man to encrese his owen profite to harme of another man. And though the grete men and the mighty men geten riches more lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not ben idel ne slowe to do thy profite, for thou shalt in alle wise flee idleness; for Salomon sayth, that idleness techeth a man to do many eviles: and the same Salomon sayth, that he that travailleth and besith him to tillen his lond shal ete bred, but he that is idel, and casteth him to no besynesse ne occupation, shal falle into povertie, and die for hunger. And he that is idel and slow can never find covenable time for to do his profite; for ther is a versifiour sayth, that the idel man excuseth him in winter because of the grete cold, and in sommer they by encheson of the hete. For thise causes, sayth Caton, Waketh, and enclineth you not over muchel to slepe, for over muchel reste norisheth and causeth many vices; and therfore sayth Seint Jerome, Doeth som good dedes, that the devil which is oure enemye ne finde you not unoccupied, for the devil he taketh not lightly unto his working swiche as he findeth occupied in goode werkes.

Than thus in geting riches ye musten flee idleness; and afterward ye shuln usen the riches which ye han geten by youre wit and by youre travaille in swiche manere than men holde you not to scarce ne to sparing, ne fool-large, that is to say, over large a spender; for right as men blamen an avaricious man because of his scarcitee and chincherie, in the same wise is he to blame that spendeth over largely; and therfore saith Caton, Use (sayth he) the riches that thou hast ygeten in swiche manere that men have no matere ne cause to calle thee nother wretche ne chince, for it is a gret shame to a man to have a poure herte and a riche purse: he sayth also, The goodes that thou hast ygeten use hem by mesure, that is to sayn, spende mesurably, for they that folily wasten and dispenden the goodes that they han whan they han no more propre of hir owen that they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man. I say than that ye shuln flee avarice, using youre

richesses in swiche manere that men sayn not that youre riches ben yberied, but that ye have hem in youre might and in youre welding; for a wise man repreveth the avaricious man, and sayth thus in two vers, Wherto and why berieth a man his goodes by his gret avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes must he die, for deth is the end of every man as in this present lif? and for what cause or encheson joineth he him, or knitteth he him so fast unto his goodes, that alle his wittes mown not disleveren him or departen him from his goodes, and knoweth wel, or oughte to know, that whan he is ded he shal nothing bere with him out of this world? and therfore sayth Seint Augustien, that the avaricious man is likened unto helle, that the more it swalweth the more desir it hath to swalwe and devoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschue to be called an avaricious man or chince, as wel shulde ye kepe you and governe you in swiche a wise that men calle you not fool-large; therfore saith Tullius, The goodes of thin hous ne shulde not ben hid ne kept so close but that they might ben opened by pitee and debonairetee, that is to sayn, to yeve hem part that han gret nede; ne thy goodes shulden not ben so open to be every mannes goodes. Afterward, in getting of youre riches, and in using of hem, ye shuln alway have three thinges in youre herte, that is to say, oure Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shuln have God in youre herte, and for no riches ye shuln do nothing which may in any manere displese God that is youre creator and maker; for, after the word of Salomon, It is better to have a litel good, with love of God, than to have muchel good and lese the love of his Lord God: and the prophete sayth, that better it is to ben a good man and have litel good and tresor than to be holden a shrewe and have grete riches. And yet I say forthermore, that ye shulden alway do youre besynesse to gete you riches, so that ye gete hem with good conscience. And the apostle sayth, that there n'is thing in this world of which we shulden have so gret joye as whan oure conscience bereth us good witnesse; and the wise man sayth, The substance of a man is ful good whan sinne is not in mannes conscience. Afterward, in geting of youre riches and in using of hem, ye must have gret besynesse and gret diligence that youre good name be alway kept and conserved; for Salomon sayth, that beter it is and more it availeth a man to have a good name than for to have grete riches; and therfore he sayth in another place, Do gret diligence (saith Salomon) in keping of thy frendes and of thy good name, for it shal lenger abide with thee than any tresor, be it never so precious; and certes he shulde not be called a Gentilman that after God and good conscience alle thinges left ne doth his diligence and besynesse to kepen his good name; and Cassiodore sayth, that it is a signe of a gentil herte whan a man loveth and desireth to have a good name; and therfore sayth Seint Augustine, that ther ben two thinges that arn right necessarie and nedeful, and that is good conscience and good

los; that is it to sayn, good conscience to thin owen persone inward, and good los for thy neighebour outward. And he that trosteth him so muchel in his good conscience that he despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or los, and recketh not though he kepe not his good name, n'is but a cruel cherl.

Sire, now have I shewed you how ye shulden do in geting riches, and how ye shulen usen hem; and I see wel that for the trust that ye han in youre riches, ye wiln meverre and bataille. I conseilte you that ye beginne no bataille ne werre in trust of youre riches, for they ne sufficen not werres to mainteine; and therefore sayth a philosophre, That man that desireth and wol algates han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer that he is the greter dispences must he make, if he will have worship and victorie; and Salomon faith, that the greter riches that a man hath the mo dispendours he hath. And, dere Sire! al be it so that for youre riches ye moun have muchel folk, yet behoveth it not ne it is not good to beginne werre, wheras you moun in other manere have pees unto youre worship and profite: for the victorie of batailles that ben in this world lith not in gret nombre or multitude of peple, ne in the vertue of man, but it lith in the will and in the hond of oure Lord God Almighty; and therefore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knight, whan he shulde fighte again his adversarie that hadde a greter nombre and a greter multitude of folk, and strengre than was the peple of this Machabee, yet he recomforted his litel compaignie, and sayde right in this wise; Al so lightly (sayde he) may our Lord God Almighty yeve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille cometh not by the gret nombre of peple, but it cometh from oure Lord God of heaven. And, dere Sire! for as muchel as ther is no man certaine if it be worthy that God yeve him victorie or not, after that Salomon sayth, Therefore every man shulde gretly drede werres to beginne; and because that in batailles fallen many perils, and it happeth other while that as sone is the gret man slain as the litel man; and, as it is ywritten in the second book of Kinges, The dedes of batailles ben adventurous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is on hurt with a spere as another; and for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore shulde a man flee and eschue werre in as muchel as a man may goodly; for Salomon seyth, He that loveth peril shal falle in peril.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this manere, Melibee answerd and saide: I see wel, Dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes and by youre resons that ye han shewed me that the werre liketh you nothing; but I have not yet herd your conseil how I shal do in this nede.

Certes, quod she, I conseilte you that ye acorde with youre adversaries, and that ye have pees with hem; for Seint James sayth in his epistle that by concorde and pees the smale riches wexen grete, and by debat and discorde grete riches fallen down: and ye knowen wel that on

of the gretest and moste soveraine thing that is in this world is unitee and pees; and therefore sayde oure Lord Jesu Crist to his apostles in this wise, Wel happy and blessed ben they that loven and purchasen pees, for they ben called the children of God. A! quod Melibee, now see I wel that ye loven not min honour ne my worshipec. Ye knowen wel that min adversaries han begonne this debat and brige by hir outrage, and ye see wel that they ne requeren ne prayen me not of pees, ne they axen not to be reconciled; wol ye than that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem, and crie hem mercie? forsoth that were not my worshipec; for right as men sayn that overgret homlinesse engendreth dispreising, so fareth it by to gret humiltee or mekenesse.

Than began Dame Prudence to make semblaunt of wrathe, and sayde, Certes, Sire, (sauf your grace) I love youre honour and youre profite as I do mine owen, and ever have don, ye ne non other seyn never the contrary; and if I had sayde that ye shuld han purchased the pees and the reconciliation, I ne hadde not muchel mistake me ne sayde amis; for the wise man sayth, The diffention beginneth by another man, and the reconciling beginneth by thyself: and the prophete faith, Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse: seke pees and folwe it, in as muchel as in thee is. Yet say I not that ye shuln rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to you, for I know wel that ye ben so hard-herted that ye wol do nothing for me; and Salomon sayth, He that hath over hard an herte atte laste he shal mishappe and mistide.

Whan Melibee had herd Dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrath he sayde in this wise: Dame, I pray you that ye be not displefed of things that I say, for I knowe wel that I am angry and wroth, and that is no wonder, and they that ben wroth woten not wel what they don ne what they sayn; therefore the prophet sayth, that troubled eyen han no clere sighte. But sayth and conseilte me as you liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire; and if ye repreve me of my folie I am the more holden to love you and to preise you; for Salomon faith, that he that repreveth him that doth folie he shal find greter grace than he that deceiveth him by swete wordes.

Than sayde Dame Prudence, I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger but for youre grete profite; for Salomon faith, He is more wroth that repreveth or chideth a fool for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and preiseth him in his misdoing, and laugheth at his folie; and this same Salomon faith afterward, that by the forweful visage of a man, that is to sayn, by the fory and hevy countenance of a man, the fool correcteth and amendeth himself.

Than said Melibee, I shal not conne answer unto so many faire resons as ye putten to me and shewen: sayth shortly youre will and youre conseil, and I am al redy to performe and fulfille it.

Than Dame Prudence discovered all hire will unto him, and saide, I conseille you, quod she, above alle thinges that ye make pees betwene God and you, and be reconciled unto him and to his grace, for as I have sayde you herebeforen, God hath suffered yon to have this tribulation and disese for youre sinnes: and if ye do as I say you, God wol sende youre adversaries unto you, and make hem falle at youre feet, redy to do youre will and youre commandements; for Salomon sayth, Whan the condition of man is plesaunt and liking unto God, he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries, and constreyneth him to besechen him of pees and of grace. And I pray you let me speke with your adversaries in prevee place, for they shuln not knowe that it be of youre will or youre assent, and than whan I knowe hir will and hir entente I may conseille you the more seurely.

Dame, quod Melibeus, doth youre will and youre liking, for I putte me wholly in youre disposition and ordinance.

Than Dame Prudence, whan she sey the good will of hire husbond, delibered unto hire, and toke avis in hire self, thinking how she might bring this nede unto goode ende; and whan she sey hire time she sent for thise adversaries to come unto hire in to a privee place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, and the grete harmes and perils that ben in werre; and saide to hem in a goodly manere how that hem oughte have gret repentance of the injuries and wronges that they hadden don to Melibeus hire lord, and unto hire and to hire doughter.

And whan they herden the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence they weren so surpised and ravished, and hadden so gret joye of hire, that wonder was to telle. A Lady! quod they, ye have shewed unto us the blessing of swetenesse, after the saying of David the prophet; for the reconciling which we be not worthy to have in no manere, but we oughten requeren it with grete contrition and humilitee, ye of your grete goodnesse have presented unto us. Now see we wel that the science and conning of Salomon is ful trewe; for he saith, that swete wordes multiplien and encrefen frendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes, quod they, we putten oure dede and all our matere and cause al holly in youre good will, and ben redy to obeye unto the speche and commandement of my Lord Melibeus; and therefore, dere and benigne Lady! we praye you and beseeche you, as mekely as we conne and moun, that it like unto your grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede youre goodly wordes; for we consideren and knowelechen that we han offended and greved my Lord Melibeus out of mesure, so fer forth that we ben not of power to maken him amendes, and therefore we oblige and binde us and oure frendes for to do all his will and his commandements; but peraventure he hath swiche hevynesse and swiche wrath to us ward, because of our offence, that he wol enjoynen us swiche

a peine as we moun not bere ne susteine; and therefore, noble Ladie! we beseeche youre womanlyto pittee to take swiche a visement in this nede that we ne oure frendes ben not disherited and destroyed thurgh oure folie.

Certes, quod Prudence, it is an hard thing and right perilous that a man putte him all outrely in the arbitration and jugement and in the might and power of his enemy; for Salomon sayth, Leveth me and yeveth credence to that that I shal say; To thy sone, to thy wif, to thy frend, ne to thy brother, ne yeve thou never might ne maistrise over thy body while thou livest. Now sith he defendeth that a man shulde not yeve to his brother ne to his frend the might of his body, by a strengre reson he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeve himself to his enemy. And natheles I conseille you that ye mistruste not my lord, for I wot wel and know veraily that he is debonaire and meke, large, curteis and nothing desirous ne covetous of good ne richesse, for ther is nothing in this world that he desireth save only worshipec and honour. Forthermore, I know wel and am right sure that he shal nothing do in this nedie withouten my conseil, and I shal so werken in this cas that by the grace of our Lord God ye shuln be reconciled unto us.

Than saiden they with o vois, Worshipful Lady! we putten us and our goodes al fully in youre will and disposition, and ben redy to come what day that it like unto youre noblesse to limite us or assigne us for to make oure obligation and bond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we moun fulfille the will of you and of my Lord Melibee.

Whan Dame Prudence had herd the answer of thise men, she bad hem go agein prively, and she retourned to hire Lord Melibee, and told him how she found his adversaries ful repentant knowleching ful lowly hir sinnes and trespas, and how they weren redy to suffren all peine, requering and preying him of mercy and pittee.

Than saide Melibee, He is wel worthy to have pardon and foryevenesse of his sinne that excuseth not his sinne, but knowletheth and repenteth him, axing indulgence; for Senek saith, Ther is the remission and foryevenesse wher as the confession is, for confession is neighebour to innocence: and therefore I assente and conferme me to have pees: but it is good that we do nought withouten the assent and will of oure frendes.

Than was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and saide, Certes, Sire, ye han wel and goodly answered; for right as by the conseil, assent, and helpe, of your frendes ye han be stired to venge you and make werre, right so withouten hir conseil shul ye not accord you ne have pees with youre adversaries; for the lawe saith, Ther is nothing so good by way of kinde as a thing to be unbounde by him that it was ybounde.

And than Dame Prudence, withouten delay or tarying, sent anon hire messageres for hir kin and for hir olde frendes which that were trewe and wise, and told hem by ordre in the presence of Meli-

bee all the matere as it is above expressed and declared, and preied hem that they wold yeve hir avis and conseil what were best to do in this nede. And whan Melibeus frendes hadden taken hir avis and deliberation of the foresaid matere, and hadden examined it by gret besinesse and gret diligence, they yaven ful conseil for to have pees and reste, and that Melibee shulde receive with good herte his adversaries to foryevenesse and mercy.

And whan Dame Prudence had herd the assent of hire Lord Melibee, and the conseil of his frendes accord with hire will and hire entention, she was wonder glad in hire herte, and sayde, Ther is an old proverbe, quod she, sayth, that the goodnesse that thou maist do this day do it, and abide not ne delay it not till to morwe: and therefore I conseille that ye sende youre messageres, swiche as ben discret and wise, unto youre adversaries, telling hem on youre behalf, that if they wol trete of pees and of accord, that they shape hem withouten delay or tarying to come unto us. Which thing parfourned was indede. And whan thise trespassours and repenting folk of hir folies, that is to sayn, the adversaries of Melibee, hadden herd what thise messageres sayden unto hem they weren right glade and joyeful, and answerden ful mekely and benignely, yelding graces and thankinges to hir Lord Melibee and to all his compaignie, and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messageres, and obeie to the commandement of hir Lord Melibee.

And right anon they token hir way to the court of Melibee, and token with hem som of hir trewe frendes to make feith for hem and for to ben hir borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee he saide hem thise wordes. It stant thus quod Melibee, and soth it is that ye causeles and withouten skill and reson han don grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wif Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye han entered into myn hous by violence, and have don swiche outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye han deserved the deth; and therefore wol I know and wete of you whether ye wol put the punishing and chastising, and the vengeance, of this outrage in the will of me and of my wif, or ye wol not.

Than the wisest of hem three answered for hem alle, and saide; Sire, quod he, we knowen wel that we ben unworthy to come to the court of so gret a lord and so worthy as ye ben, for we han so gretly mistaken us, and han offended and agilte in swiche wise agein your high lordshipe, that trewely we han deserved the deth; but yet for the grete goodnesse and dobonairetee that all the world witnesseth of youre persone we submitten us to the excellence and benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and ben redy to obeie to alle youre comandements, beseching you that of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure grete repentance and lowe submission, and graunte us foryevenesse of our outrageous trespass and offence; for wel we knowen that youre liberal grace and mercie stretchen hem forther into goodnesse than

don oure outrageous giltes and trespass into wickednesse, al be it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilte again youre highe lordshipe.

Then Melibee toke hem up fro the ground ful benignely, and received hir obligations and hir bondes by hir othes upon hir plegges and borwes, and assigned hem a certain day to retourne unto his court for to receive and accept sentence and judgement that Melibee wolde commande to be don on hem by the causes aforesaid; which thinges ordeined every man retourned to his hous.

And whan that Dame Prudence saw hire time she freined, and axed hire Lord Melibee what vengeance he thoughte to taken of his adversaries?

To which Melibee answerd and saide; Certes, quod he, I think and purpose me fully to disherite hem of all that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exile for ever.

Certes, quod Dame Prudence, this were a cruel sentence, and muchel agein reson, for ye ben riche ynough, and han no nede of other mennes good; and ye might lightly in this wise gete you a covetous name, which is a vicious thing, and oughte to be eschewed of every good man, for after the sawe of the apostle, covetise is rote of alle harmes; and therefore it were better for you to lese muchel good of your owen, than for to take of hir good in this manere: for better it is to lese good with worship than to winne good with vilanie and shame: and every man ought to do his diligence and his besinesse to get him a good name; and yet shal he not only besie him in keeping his good name, but he shal also enforcen him alway to do som thing by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is written that the olde good los or good name of a man is sone gon and passed whan it is not newed. And as touching that ye sayn, that ye wol exile your adversaries, that thinketh me muchel agein reson and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeven you upon hemself; and it is written, that he is worthy to lese his privilege that misuseth the might and the power that is yeven him. And I sette cas ye might enjoin hem that peine by right and by lawe, (which I trowe ye mowe not do) I say ye might not putte it to execution peraventure, and than it were like to retourne to the werre as it was befor: and therefore if you wol that men do you obeisance ye must deme more curteisly, that is to sayn, ye must yeve more esie sentences and jugements; for it is written, he that most curteisly commandeth to him men most obeyen. And therefore I pray you that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste you to overcome your herte; for Senek sayth, that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies; and Tullius saith, Ther is nothing so commendable in a gret lord as whan he is debonaire and meke, and appeseth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol now forbere to do vengeaunce in swiche a manere that your good name may be kept and conserved, and that men mown have cause and matere to preise you of pitee and of mercy, and that ye

have no cause to repente you of thing that ye don; for Seneke saieth, He overcometh in an evil manere that repenteth of his victorie. Wherefore I pray you let mercy be in your herte, to the effect and entent that God Almighty have mercy upon you in his last judgement; for Seint James faith in his epistle, Jugement withoute mercy shal be do to him that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibee had herd the grete skilles and resons of Dame Prudence, and hire wise informations and techinges, his herte gan encline to the will of his wif, considering hire trewe entente, enforced him anon, and assented fully to werken after hire conseil, and thanked God, of whom procedeth all goodnesse and all vertue, that him sent a wif of so gret discretion. And whan the day came that his adversaries shulde appere in his presence, he spake to hem ful goodly, and saide

in this wise: Al be it so that of youre pride and high presumption and folie, and of youre negligence and unconning, ye have misborne you and trespassed unto me, yet for as muchel as I see and behold your grete humilitee, and that ye ben sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constreinet me to do you grace and mercy; wherfor I receive you into my grace, and foryeve you outrely alle the offences, injuries, and wronges, that yet have don agein me and mine, to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endeles mercie wol at the time of oure dying foryeve us oure giltes that we han trespassed to him in this wretched world; for douteles if we be sory and repentant of the sinnes and giltes which we han trespassed in the sight of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciable that he wol foryeven us oure giltes, and bringen us to the blisse that never hath ende. *Amen.*

THE MONKES PROLOGUE.

WHAN ended was the Tale of Melibee
And of Prudence and hire benigneite
Our Hoste faide, As I am faithful man,
And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
I hadde lever than a barell of ale
That goode lese my wif had herde this Tale,
For she n'is no thing of swiche patience
As was this Melibeus wif Prudence.

By Goddes bones whan I bete my knaves
She brineth me the grete clobbed staves,
And cryeth, Slee the dogges everich on,
And breke hem bothe bak and every bon.

And if that any neighebour of mine
Wol not in chirche to my wif encline,
Or be so hardy to hire to trespase,
Whan she cometh home she rampeth in my face,
And cryeth, Falso coward! wreke thy wif:
By *corpus Domini* I wol have thy knif,
And thou shalt have my distaf and go spinne.
Fro day til night right thus she wol beginne.

Alas! she faith, that ever I was yshape
To wed a milkop or a coward ape,
That wol ben overladde with every wight:
Thou darst not stonden by the wives right.

This is my lif but if that I wol fight,
And out at dore anon I mote me dight,
Or elles I am lost, but if that I
Be like a wilde leon fool-hardy.

I wote wel she wol do me flee som day
Som neighebour, and thanne go my way,
For I am in perilous with knif in honde
Al be it that I dare not hire withstonde,
For she is bigge in armes by my faith,
That shal he finde that hire misdooth or faith.
But let us passe away fro this matere.

My Lord the Monk, quod he, be mery of chere
For ye shul telle a Tale trewely.
Lo! Rouchester stondeth here faste by;
Ride forth, min owen Lord, breke not our game.
But by my trouthe I can no telle youre name;
Whether shal I call you my Lord Dan John.
Or Dan Thomas, or elles Dan Albon?
Of what hous be ye by your fader kin?
I vow to God thou hast a ful faire skin.
It is a gentil pasture ther thou gost;
Thou art not like a penaunt or a gost.

Upon my faith thou art som officer,
Som worthy sextein, or som celerer,

For by my fadres soule, as to my dome,
Thou art a maister whan thou art home;
No poure cloisterer, ne non novice,
But a governour bothe ware and wise,
And therwithal of braunes and of bones
A right wel faring persone for the nonce.
I pray to God yeve him confusion
That first thee brought into religion.
Thou woldest han ben a trede-foul a right
Haddest thou as grete leve as thou hast might
To parfourme all thy lust: in engendrure
Thou haddest begeten many a creature.
Alas! why werest thou so wide a cope?
God yeve me forwe but and I were pope
Not only thou but every mighty man,
Though he were shore ful high upon his part,
Shuld have a wif, for al this world is lorn,
Religion hath take up all the corn
Of treading, and we borel men ben shrimpes;
Of feble trees ther comen wretched impes.
This maketh that our heires ben so sclendre
And feble that they monn not wel engendre;
This maketh that our wives wol assaye
Religious folk, for they moun better paye
Of Venus payements than mowen we;
God wote no Lusheburgees payen ye.
But be not wroth, my Lord, though that I play;
Ful oft in game a sothe have I herd say.

This worthy Monke toke all in patience,
And faide, I wol don all my diligence,
As fer as founeth into honestee,
To tellen you a Tale, or two or three;
And if you list to herken hiderward
I wol you sayn the lif of Seint Edward,
Or elles tragedies first I wol telle,
Of which I have an hundred in my celle.

Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in gret prosperitee,
And is yfallen out of high degree
In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly;
And they ben versified communly
Of six feet, which men clepen Exametron:
In prose eke ben endited many on,
And eke in metre in many a sondry wise.
Lo this declaring ought ynough suffice.

Now herkeneth if you liketh for to here,
But first I you beseeche in this matere,

Though I by ordre telle not thise thinges,
Be it of popes, emperoures, or kinges,
After hir ages, as men written finde,
But telle hem som before and som behinde,

As it now cometh to my remembrance,
Have me excused of min ignorance.

THE MONKES TALE*.

I wol bewaile in manere of tragedie
The harm of hem that stode in high degree,
And fellen so that ther n'as no remedie
To bring hem out of hir adversitee;
For certain whan that Fortune list to flee
Ther may no man of hire the cours withholde:
Let no man trust on blinde prosperitee;
Beth ware by thise ensamples trewe and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And not a man, at him I wol beginne;
For though Fortune may non angel dere,
From high degree yet felle he for his sinne
Doun into helle, wheras he yet is inne.
O Lucifer! brightest of angels alle,
Now art thou Sathanas, that maist not twinne
Out of miserie in which that thou art falle.

Adam.

Lo! Adam in the feld of Damascene
With Goddes owen finger wrought was he,
And not begeten of mannes sperme unclene,
And welre all Paradis saving o tree.
Had never worldly man so high degree
As Adam, til he for misgovernance
Was driven out of his prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meschance.

Sampson.

Lo! Sampson, which that was annunciat
By the angel long or his nativitee,
And was to God Almighty consecrat,
And stode in nobleffe while he mighte see:
Was never swiche another as was he,
To speke of strength and therto hardinesse;
But to his wives tolde he his secree,
Thurgh which he slow himself for wretchednesse.

Sampson, this noble and mighty champion,
Withouten wepen save his handes twey
He slow and all to-rente the leon,
Toward his wedding walking by the wey.
His false wif coude him so plesse and pray
Til she his conseil knewe, and she untrew
Unto his foos his conseil gan bewray,
And him forfoke, and toke another newe.

Three hundred foxes toke Sampson for ire,
And all hir tayles he togeder bond,
And set the foxes tayles all on fire,
For he in every tayl had knit a brond,
And they brent all the cornes in that lond,
And all hir olivres and vines eke.
A thousand men he slow eke with his hond,
And had no wepen but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slain so thurstid him that he
Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to preye
That God wold on his peine han som pitee,
And send him drinke, or elles mooste he deye;
And of this asses cheke that was so dreye
Out of a wang toth sprang anon a welle,
Of which he drank ynough, shortly to seye.
Thus halp him God, as *Judicum* can telle.

By veray force at Gaza on a night,
Maugre the Philistins of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath up plight,
And on his bak yecarried hem hath he
High on an hill, wher as men might hem se.
O noble mighty Sampson, lese and dere!
Haddest thou not told to women thy secree,
In all this world ne had ther ben thy pere.

This Sampson never sider dranke ne wine,
Ne on his hed came rasour non ne shere.
By precept of the messager divine,
For all his strengthes in his heres were:
And fully twenty winter yere by yere
He hadde of Israel the governance;
But sone shal he wepen many a tere,
For women shuln him bringen to meschance.

* A tragical discourse of many who have fallen from
high estate into extreme misery. Urry.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told
That in his heres all his strengthe lay,
And falsely to his fomen she him sold;
And sleping in hire barme upon a day
She made to clip or shere his here away,
And made his fomen al his craft espie;
And whan that they him fond in this array
They bond him fast, and putten out his eyen.

But or his here was clipped or yshave,
Ther was no bond with which men might him
But now is he in prison in a cave, [bind,
Wheras they made him at the querne grinde.
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind,
O whilom juge in glory and richesse!
Now mayest thou wepen with thin eyen blind
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wretchednesse.

The ende of this caitif was as I shal seye:
His fomen made a feste upon a day,
And made him as hir fool before hem pleye,
And this was in a temple of gret array:
But at the last he made a foule affray,
For he two pillers shoke and made hem falle,
And down fell temple and all, and ther it lay,
And flow himself, and eke his fomen alle.

This is to sayn, the princes everich on,
And eke three thousand bodies, were ther slain
With falling of the gret temple of ston
Of Sampson now wol I no more fain:
Beth ware by this ensample old and plain
That no men tell hir conseil to hir wives
Of swiche thing as they wold han secree fain,
If that it touch hir limmes or hir lives.

Hercules.

Of Hercules the soveraine conquerour
Singen his werkes laude, and high renoun,
For in his time of strength he was the flour.
He flow and raft the skinne of the leon;
He of Centaures laid the boft adoun;
He Harpies flow, the cruel briddes felle;
He golden apples raft fro the dragon;
He drow out Cerberos, the hound of helle.

He flow the cruel tirant Busirus,
And made his hors to fret him flesh and bon;
He flow the firy serpent venomous;
Of Achelous two hornes brake he on;
And he flow Cacus in a cave of ston;
He flow the geaunt Anteus the strong;
He flow the grisely bore, and that anon;
And bare the hevenc on his nekke long

Was never wight sith that the world began
That flow so many monstres as did he;
Thurghout the wide world his name ran,
What for his strength and for his high bountee;
And every reuame went he for to see.
He was so strong that no man might him let;
At bothe the worldes endes, faith Trophce,
In stede of boundes he a pillar set.

A lemman had this noble champion
That highte Deianire, as fresh as May:
And, as thise clerkes maken mention,
She hath him sent a sherte fresh and gay:

Alas! this sherte, alas and wala wa!
Envenimed was sotilly withalle,
That or that he had wered it half a day
It made his flesh all from his bones falle.

But natheles som clerkes hire excusen
By on that highte Nessus, that it maked:
Be as may be, I wol hire not accusen;
But on his bak this sherte he wered al naked,
Til that his flesh was for the venim blaked;
And whan he saw non other remedie
In hote coles he hath himselfen raked,
For with no venime deigned him to die.

Thus starf this worthy mighty Hercules.
Lo! who may trust on Fortune any throw?
For him that solweth all this world of pres
Or he be ware is oft ylaide ful lowe:
Ful wise is he that can himselfen knowe.
Beth ware, for whan that Fortune list to glose
Than waiteth she hire man to overthrowe
By swiche a way as he wold lest suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
The glorious sceptre, and real majestee,
That hadde the King Nabuchodonosor,
With tonge unnethes may descrived be:
He twies wan Jerusalem the citee,
The vessell of the temple he with him ladde;
At Babiloine was his soveraine see,
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The fayrest children of the blood real
Of Israel he did do gelde anon,
And maked eche of hem to ben his thral.
Amonges other Daniel was on,
That was the wisest child of everich on,
For he the dremes of the king expounded,
Wher as in Caldee clerk he was ther non
That wiste to what fin his dremes souned.

This proude king let make a statue of gold
Sixty cubites long and seven in brede,
To which image both yonge and old
Commanded he to loute and have in drede,
Or in a fourneis ful of flames rede
He shuld be brent that wolde not obeye;
But never wold assenten to that dede,
Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elat;
He wend that God that sit in majestee
Ne might him nat bereve of his estat:
But sodenly he lost his dignitee,
And like a best him femed for to be,
And ete heye as an oxe, and lay therout:
In rain with wilde bestes walked he
Til certain time was ycome about.

And like an egles fethers wex his heres,
His neyles like a briddes clawes were,
Til God relefed him at certain yeres,
And yaf him wit, and than with many a tere
He thanked God, and ever his lif in sere
Was he to don amis, or more trespace:
And til that time he laid was on his bere
He knew that God was ful of might and grace.

Balthasar.

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
That held the regne after his fadres day,
He by his fader coulde not beware,
For proude he was of herte and of array;
And eke an ydolaster was he ay.
His high estat assured him in pride;
But Fortune cast him down (and ther he lay)
And sodenly his regne gan deuide.

A feste he made unto his lordes alle
Upon a time, and made hem blithe be,
And than his officers gan he calle;
Goth bringeth forth the vessels, quod he,
Which that my fader in his prosperitee
Out of the temple of Jerusalem beraft,
And to our highe gooddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us laft.

His wif, his lordes, and his concubines,
Ay dronken, while hir appetites last,
Out of thise noble vessels sondry wines.
And on a wall this king his eyen cast,
And saw an hand armles that wrote ful fast,
For fere of which he quoke and fiked fore:
This hand that Balthasar so fore agast,
Wrote *Mane teebel Phares* and no more.

In al that lond magicien was non
That coud expounen what this lettre ment,
But Daniel expouned it anon,
And said, O King! God to thy fader lent
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour and rent,
And he was proud and nothing God ne dradde,
And therefore God gret wreche upon him sent,
And him beraft the regne that he hadde.

He was out cast of mannes compaignie.
With asses was his habitation,
And ete, hey as a best in wete and drie,
Til that he knew by grace and by reson
That God of heven hath domination
Over every regne and every creature,
And than had God of him compassion,
And him restored his regne and his figure.

Eke thou that art his sone art proud also
And knowest all thise thinges veraily,
And art rebel to God and art his fo:
Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldely;
Thy wif eke and thy wenches sinfully
Dranke of the same vessels sondry wines,
And heried false goddes cursedly,
Therefore to thee yshapen ful gret pine is.

This hand was sent fro God that on the wall
Wrote *Mane teebel Phares*, trusteth me.
Thy regne is don; thou wayest nought at all:
Divided is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medes and to Perfes yeven, quod he.
And thilke same night this king was slawe,
An Darius occupied his degree,
Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, ensample hereby moun ye take
How that in lordship is no sikernesse,
For whan that Fortune wol a man forsake
She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
And eke his frendes, bothe more and lesse;
For what man that hath frendes thurgh Fortune
Mishap wol make hem enemies I gesse.
This proverbe is ful soth, and fule commune.

Zenobia.

Zenobia, of Palmerie the queene,
(As writen Perfiens of hire noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, and so kene,
That no wight passed hire in hardinesse;
Ne in linege, ne in other gentillesse.
Of kinges blood of Perse is she descended;
I say not that she hadde most fairenesse,
But of hire shape she might not ben amended.

From hire childhode I finde that she fledde
Office of woman, and to wode she went,
And many a wilde hartes blood she shedde
With arwes brode that she to hem sent;
She was so swift that she anon hera hent:
And whan that she was elder she wolde kille
Leons, lepard, and beres al to-rent,
And in hire armes weld hem at hire wille.

She dorst the wilde bestes dennies seke,
And rennen in the mountaignes all the night,
And slepe under the bush; and she coude eke
Wrahtlen by veray force and veray might
With any yong man, were he never so wight;
Ther mighte nothing in hire armes stonde:
She kept hire maidenhode from every wight;
To no man deigned hire for to be bonde.

But at the last hire frendes han hire married
To Odenat, a prince of that contree,
Al were it so that she hem longe taried,
And ye shul understonden how that he
Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she;
But natheles whan they were knit in fere
They lived in joye and in felicitee,
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere;

Save o thing, that she n'olde never assente
By no way that he shulde by hire lie
But ones, for it was hire plaine entente
To have a childe the world to multiplie;
And al so sone as that she might espie
That she was not with childe with that dede,
Than wold she suffer him don his fantasie
Eftsoone, and not but ones out of drede.

And if she were with child at thilke cast
No more shuld he playen thilke game
Till fullen fourty days weren past,
Than wold she ones suffre him do the same.
Al were this Odenate wild or tame
He gate no more of hire, for thus she sayde,
It was to wives lecherie and shame
In other cas if that men with hem playde.

Two sones by this Odenate had she,
The which she kept in vertue and lettrure.
But now unto our Tale turne we.
I say so worshipful a creature,
And wise therwith, and large with mesure,
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in werre endure,
Was non, though all this world men shulden seke.

Hire riche array ne mighte not be told,
As wel in vessell as in hire clothing;
She was all clad in pierrie and in gold;
And eke she leste not for non hunting

To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leifer had, and for to entend
To lernen bookes was all hire liking,
How she in vertue might hire lif despend.

And shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hire husbond, and eke she,
That they conquered many regnes grete
In the orient, with many a faire citee
Appertenaunt unto the majestee
Of Rome, and with strong hand held hem ful fast,
Ne never might hir fomen don hem flee
Ay while that Odenates dayes last.

Hire batailles, who so list hem for to rede,
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,
And how that all this proceffe fell in dede,
Why she conquered, and what tittle therto,
And after of hire mischefe and hire wo,
How that she was beseged and ytake,
Let him unto my maister Petrark go,
That writeth ynough of this I undertake.

Whan Odenate was ded she mightily
The regnes held, and with hire propre hond
Agains hir foos she fought so cruelly
That ther n'as king ne prince in all that lond
That he n'as glad if he that grace fond
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye;
With hire they maden alliaunce by bond
To ben in pees and let hire ride and pleye.

The Emperour of Rome Claudius,
Ne him befor the Romain Galien,
Ne dorste never be so corageous,
Ne non Ermin ne non Egiptien,
Ne Surrien ne non Arabien,
Within the feld ne dorste with hire fight,
Lest that she wold hem with hire hondes slen,
Or with hire meinie putten hem to flight.

In kinges habite wente hire sones two
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
And Heremanno and Timolao
Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
But ay Fortune hath in hire hony galle:
This mighty quene may no while endure;
Fortune out of hire regne made hire falle
To wretchednesse and to misaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governance
Of Rome came into his hondes twey,
He shope upon this quene to do vengeance,
And with his legions he toke his way
Toward Zenobie; and, shortly for to say,
He made hire flee, and atte last hire hent,
And fettred hire and eke hire children tway,
And wan the lond, and home to Rome he went.

Amonges other thinges that he wan
Hire char, that was with gold wrought and pierrie,
This grete Romain, this Aurelian,
Hath with him lad for that men shuld it see.
Beforen his triumphe walketh she,
With gilte chaines on hire necke honging,
Crowned she was, as after hire degree,
And ful of pierrie charged hire clothing.

Alas, Fortune! she that whilom was
Dredeful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth all the peple on hire, alas!
And she that helmed was in starke stoures,

And wan by force tounes stronge and toures,
Shal on hire hed now were a vitremite,
And she that bare the sceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf, hire cost for to quite.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious
As any fend that lieth ful low adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Suetonius,
This wide world had in subiectioun,
Both est and west, south and septentrion.
Of rubies, saphires, and of perles white,
Were al his clothes brouded up and doun,
For he in gemmes gretly gan delite.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
More proude, was never emperour than he,
That ilke cloth that he had wered o day
After that time he n'olde it never see:
Nettes of gold threde had he gret plentee
To fish in Tiber whan him list to play:
His lustes were as law in his degree,
For Fortune as his frend wold him obay.

He Rome brente for his delicacie;
The Senatours he slow upon a day
To heren how that men wold wepe and crie,
And slow his brother, and by his fuster lay.
His moder made he in pitous array,
For he hire wombe let flitten, to behold
Wher he conceived was, so wala wa!
That he so litel of his moder told.

No tere out of his eyen for that fight
Ne came, but sayd a faire woman was she.
Gret wonder is how that he coud or might
Be domesman of hire dede beautee.
The wine to bringen him commanded he,
And dranke anon: no other wo he made.
Whan might is joined unto crueltee,
Alas! to depe wol the venime wade.

In youthe a maister had this emperour
To techen him lettrure and curtesie:
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his time, but if bookes lie;
And while this maister had of him maistrice
He made him so conning and so souple
That longe time it was or tyrannie
Or any vice dorst in him uncouple.

This Seneka, of which that I devise,
Because Nero had of him swiche drede,
For he fro vices wold him ay chastise
Discretly, as by word and not by dede;
Sire, he wold say, an emperour mote nede
Be vertuous, and haten tyrannie;
For which he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes till he must die.

This Nero had eke of a custumaunce
In youth ageins his maister for to rise,
Which afterward him thought a gret grevaunce,
Therefore he made him dien in this wise.
But natheles this Seneka the wise
Chees in a bathe to die in this manere
Rather than han another turmentise:
And thus hath Nero slain his maister dere.

Now fell it so that Fortune list no lenger
The highe pride of Nero to cherice,
For though that he were strong yet was she streng-
She thoughte thus: by God I am to nice [er.
To set a man that is fulfilled of vice
In high degree, and Emperour him calle:
By God out of his fete I wol him trice;
Whan he left weneth sonest shal he falle.

The peple rose upon him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it espied
Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and ther he wend han had ben allied
He knocked fast, and ay the more he cried
The faster shetten they hir dores alle;
Tho wist he wel he had himself misgied,
And went his way; no lenger dorst he calle.

The peple cried and rombled up and down,
That with his eres herd he how they sayde,
Wher is this false tyrant, this Neroun?
For fere almost out of his wit he brayde,
And to his goddes pitously he preide
For socour, but it mighte not betide:
For drede of this him thoughte that he deide,
And ran into a gardin him to hide.

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
That faten by a fire gret and red,
And to thise cherles two he gan to preye
To slen him, and to girden of his hed,
That to his body whan that he were ded
Were no despit ydon for his defame.
Himself he slow, he coud no better rede,
Of which Fortune lough and hadde a game.

Holofernes.

Was never capitaine under a king
That regnes mo put in subiectioun,
Ne strengier was in feld of alle thing
As in his time, ne greter of renoun,
Ne more pompous in high presumptioun,
Than Holoferne, which that Fortune ay kist
So likerously, and lad him up and down,
Til that his hed was of or that he wist.

Not only that this world had him in awe
For lesing of richesse and libertee,
But he made every man reneie his lawe.
Nabuchodonosor was God, sayd he;
Non other god ne shulde honoured be.
Ageins his heste ther dare no wight trespase
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee,
Wher Eliachim a preest was of that place.

Put take kepe of the deth of Holoferne:
Amid his host he dronken lay a night
Within his tente, large as is a berne;
And yet for all his pompe and all his might
Judith, a woman, as he lay upright
Sleping, his hed of smote, and fro his tente
Ful prively she stole from every wight,
And with his hed unto hire toun she wente.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of King Antiochus
To tell his high and real majestee,
His gret pride, and his werkes venomous?
For swiche another was ther non as he:

Redeth what that he was in Machabe,
And redeth the proud wordes that he seid,
And why he fell from his prosperitee,
And in an hill how wretchedly he deid.

Fortune him had enhaunfed so in pride
That veraily he wend he might attaine
Unto the sterres upon every side,
And in a balaunce weyen eche mountaine,
And all the floodes of the see restraine:
And Goddes peple had he most in hate,
Hem wold he sleen in turment and in peine,
Wening that God ne might his pride abate.

And for that Nichanor and Timothee
With Jewes were venquished mightily,
Unto the Jewes swiche an hate had he
That he bad greithe his char ful hastily,
And swore and sayde ful despitously
Unto Jerusalem he wold eftsoone,
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly;
But of his purpos was he let ful sone.

God for his manace him so fore smote
With invisable wound, ay incurable,
That in his guttes carfe it so and bote
Thatte his peines weren importable;
And certainly the wreche was resonable,
For many a mannes guttes did he peine;
But from his purpos cursed and damnable,
For all his smerte, he n'olde him not restraine;

But bade anon apparailen his host.
And sodenly, or he was of it ware,
God daunted all his pride and all his host;
For he so fore fell out of his chare
That it his limmes and his skinne to-tare,
So that he neither mighte go ne ride,
But in a chaire men about him bare,
Alle forbrused bothe bak and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly
That thurgh his body wicked wormes crept,
And therwithal he stanke so horribly
That non of all his meinie that him kept,
Whether so that he woke or elles slept,
Ne mighte not of him the stinke endure.
In this mischiefe he wailed and eke wept,
And knew God lord of every creature.

To all his host and to himself also
Ful wlatson was the stinke of his careine;
No man ne mighte him beren to ne fro;
And in this stinke and this horrible peine
He starf ful wretchedly in a mountaine.
Thus hath this robbour and this homicide,
That many a man made to wepe and pleine,
Swiche guerdon as belongeth unto pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexandre is so commune
That every wight that hath discretioun
Hath herd somwhat or all of his fortune.
This wide world, as in conclusioun,
He wan by strength, or for his high renoun
They weren glad for pees unto him sende,
The pride of man and boht he layd adoun,
Wher so he came, unto the worldes ende.

Comparison might never yet be maked
Betwix him and another conquerour,
For al this world for drede of him hath quaked;
He was of knighthode and of fredome flour;
Fortune him maked the heir of hire honour.
Save wine and women nothing might asswage
His high entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of leonin corage.

What pris were it to him though I you told
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo
Of kinges, princes, dukes, erles bold,
Which he conquered, and brought hem into wo?
I say as fer as man may ride or go
The world was his; what shuld I more devise?
For though I wrote or told you ever mo
Of his knighthode it mighte not suffice.

Twelf yere he regned, as faith Machabe:
Philippus sone of Macedoine he was,
That first was king in Greece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alexandre! alas
That ever shuld thee fallen swiche a cas!
Enpoisoned of thyn owen folke thou were;
Thy sis Fortune hath turned into an as,
And yet for thee ne wept she never a tere.

Who shal me yeven teres to complaine
The deth of gentillesse and of fraunchise,
That all this world welded in his demaine,
And yet him thought it mighte not suffice?
So ful was his corage of high emprise.
Alas! who shal me helpen to endite
Falso Fortune, and poison to despise?
The which two of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisdome, manhode, and by gret labour,
From humblehede to real majestee
Up rose he Julius the conquerour,
That wan all the occident by lond and see
By strengthe of hond, or elles by trettee,
And unto Rome made hem tributarie,
And sith of Rome the Emperour was he
Til that Fortune wexe his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar! that in Thessalie
Ageins Pompeius, father thin in lawe,
That of the orient had all the chivalrie
As fer as that the day beginneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem take and
Save few folk that with Pompeius fledde, [flawe,
Thurgh which thou put all the orient in awe,
Thanke Fortune that so wel thee spedde.

But now a litel while I wol bewaile
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
I say on of his men, a false traitour,
His hed of smote, to winnen him favour
Of Julius, and him the hed he brought:
Alas, Pompeie! of the orient conquerour,
That Fortune unto swiche a sin thee brought.

To Rome again repaireth Julius
With his triumphe laureat ful hie,
But on a time Brutus and Cassius,
That ever had of his high estat envie,

Ful prively had made conspiracie
Ageins this Julius in sotil wise,
And cast the place in which he shulde die
With bodekins, as I shal you devise.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to gon,
And in the Capitolie anon him hente
This false Brutus and his other foon,
And stiked him with bodekins anon
With many a wound, and thus they let him lie.
But never gront he at no stroke but on,
Or elles at two, but if his storie lie.

So manly was this Julius of herte,
And so wel loved estatly honestee,
That though his dedly woundes fore smerte
His mantel over his hippes caste he,
For no man shulde seen his privetee;
And as he lay of dying in a trance,
And wiste veraily that ded was he,
Of honestee yet had he remembrance.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
And to Sueton and Valerie also,
That of this storie written word and ende,
How that to thise gret conqueroures two
Fortune was first a frend and sith a fo.
No man ne trust upon hire favour long,
But have hire in await for evermo,
Witnesse on all thise conqueroures strong.

Crefus.

The riche Crefus, whilom King of Lide,
Of whiche Crefus Cirus fore him dradde,
Yet was he caught amidde all his pride,
And to be brent men to the fire him ladde,
But swiche a rain down from the welken shadde
That slow the fire, and made to him escape;
But to beware no grace yet he hadde
Til Fortune on the galwes made him gape.

Whan he escaped was he can not stint
For to beginne a newe werre again:
He wened wel for that Fortune him sent
Swiche hap that he escaped thurgh the rain
That of his foom he mighte not be slain;
And eke a sweven upon a night he mette
Of which he was so proud and eke so fain,
That in vengeance he all his herte sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that him thought,
Ther Jupiter him weshe both bak and side,
And Phebus eke a faire towail him brought
To drie him with, and therefore wex his pride.
And to his doughter that stood him beside,
Which that he knew in high science habound,
He bad hire tell him what it signified,
And she his dreame began right thus expound.

The tree, (quod she) the galwes is to mene,
And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rain,
And Phebus with his towail clere and clene,
Tho ben the sonnes stremes, soth to fain:
Thou shalt anhangd be, fader, certain;
Rain shal thee wash, and sonne shal thee drie,
Thus warned him ful plat and eke ful plain
His doughter, which that called was Phanie.

Anhanged was Cresus the proude king;
His real trone might him not availle:
Tragedie is non-other maner thing,
Ne can in finging crien ne bewaile,
But for that Fortune all day wol assaille
With unware stroke the regnes that ben proude;
For whan men trusten hire than wol she faille,
And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

Peter of Spaine.

O noble, o worthy, Petro, glorie of Spaine!
Whom Fortune held so high in majestee,
Wel oughten men thy pitous deth complaine:
Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee,
And after at a sege by sotiltee
Thou were betraied and lad unto his tent,
Wher as he with his owen hond flow thee,
Succeeding in thy regne and in thy rent.

The feld of snow, with th' egle of blak therin;
Caught with the limerod, coloured as the glede,
He brewed this cursednesse and all this sinne;
The wicked neste was werker of this dede,
Not Charles Oliver, that toke ay hede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorique
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,
Broughte this worthy king in swiche a brike.

Petro King of Cypre.

O worthy Petro! King of Cypre also,
That Alexandrie wan by high maistrie,
Ful many an Hethen wroughtest thou ful wo,
Of which thin owen lieges had envie,
And for nothing but for thy chivalrie
They in thy bed han slain thee by the morwe.
Thus can Fortune hire whele governie and gie,
And out of joye bringen men to forwe.

Barnabo Viscount.

Of Milane grete Barnabo Viscount,
God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardie,
Why shuld I not thin infortune account,
Sith in estat thou clomben were so high?
Thy brothers sone, that was thy double allie,
For he thy nevew was and sone in lawe,
Within his prison made he thee to die,
But why ne how n'ot I that thou were slawe.

Hugelin of Pise.

Of the Erl Hugelin of Pise the langour
Ther may no tonge tellen for pitee.
But litel out of Pise stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prison yput was he,

And with him ben his litel children three,
The eldest (carfely five yere was of age:
Alas! Fortune, it was gret crueltee
Swiche briddes for to put in swiche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison,
For Roger which that Bishop was of Pise
Had on him made a false suggestion,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon him rise,
And put him in a prison in swiche a wise
As ye han herd; and mete and drinke he had
So smale, that wel unnethe it may suffise,
And therwithal it was ful poure and bad.

And on a day befell that in that houre
Whan that his mete wont was to be brought
The gailer shette the dores of the toure;
He herd it wel, but he spake right nought:
And in his herte anon ther fell a thought
That they for hunger wolden do him dien:
Alas! quod he, alas that I was wrought!
Therwith the teres fellen fro his eyen.

His yonge sone, that three yere was of age,
Unto him said, Fader, why do ye wepe?
Whan will the gailer bringen our potage?
Is ther no morsel bred that ye do kepe?
I am so hungry that I may not slepe.
Now wold God that I might slepen ever,
Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe;
Ther n'is no thing sauf bred that me were lever.

Thus day by day this childe began to crie,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay,
And saide, Farewel, fader, I mote die;
And kist his fader, and dide the same day.
And whan the woful fader did it sey
For wo his armes two he gan to bite,
And saide, Alas! Fortune, and wala wa!
Thy false whele my wo all may I wite.

His children wenden that for hunger it was
That he his armes gnawe, and not for wo,
And sayden, Fader, do not so, alas!
But rather ete the flesh upon us two:
Our flesh thou yaf us, take our flesh us fro,
And ete ynough. Right thus they to him seide,
And after that, within a day or two,
They laide hem in his lappe adoun and deide.

Himself dispeired eke for hunger starf.
Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pise:
From high estat Fortune away him carf.
Of this tragedie it ought ynough suffice;
Who so wol here it in a longer wise
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille
That highte Dante, for he can it devise
Fro point to point; not o word wol he faille.

K iijj

THE NONNES PREESTES PROLOGUE.

Ho! quod the Knight, good Sire, no more of this;
That ye han said is right ynough ywis,
And mochel more; for litel heviness
Is right ynough to mochel folk I gesse.
I say for me it is a gret disese

Wher as men have ben in gret wealth and ese
To heren of hir soden fail, alas!

And the contrary is joye and gret solas,
As whan a man hath ben in poure estat,
And climbeth up and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abideth in prosperitee;

Swich thing is gladfom as it thinketh me,
And of swiche thing were goodly for to telle.

Ye, quod our Hoste, by Seint Poules belle,
Ye say right soth: this Monk hath clapped loude;
He spake how Fortune covered with a cloude
I wote not what, and als of a tragedie
Right now ye herd; and parde no remedie
It is for to bewailen ne complaine
That that is don, and als it is a paine,
As ye han said, to here of heviness.

Sire Monk, no more of this, so God you blesse;
Your Tale annoyeth all this compaignie;
Swiche talking is not worth a boterflie,
For therin is ther no disport ne game;
Therefore Sire Monk, Dan Piers by your name,
I pray you hertely tell us somwhat elles,
For fikerly n'ere of your belles

That on your bridel hange on every side,
By heven king, that for us alle dide,
I shuld er this have fallen doun for slepe,
Although the slough had ben never so depe,
Than hadde your Tale all ben told in vain:
For certainly, as that thise clerkes fain,
Wher as a man may have non audience
Nought helpeth it to tellen his sentence;
And wel I wote the substance is in me
If any thing shal wel reported be.

Sire, say somewhat of hunting I you pray.

Nay, quod this Monk, I have not lust to play;
Now lette another telle as I have told.

Than spake our Hoste with rude speche and bold,
And sayd unto the Nonnes Preeft anon,
Come nere, thou Preeft, come hither, thou Sire John;
Telle us swiche thing as may our hertes glade:
Be blithe although thou ride upon a jade.
What though thin horse be both foule and lene?
If he wol serve thee recke thee not a bene:
Loke that thyn herte be mery evermo.

Yes, Hoste, quod he, so mote I ride or go
But I be mery ywis I wol be blamed.
And right anon his Tale he hath attamed;
And thus he said unto us everich on,
This swete Preeft, this goodly man, Sire John.

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE*.

A poure widewe, somdel stoupen in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a narwe cotage
Beside a grove stonding in a dale.
This widewe, which I tell ou of my Tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wif
In patience led a ful simple lif,
For litel was hire catel and hire rente;
By husbondry of swiche as God hire sente

* Of a cock and a hen; the moral whereof is to embrace true friends, and to beware of flatterers. Urry.

She found hireself and eke hire doughtren two.
Three large fowes had she, and no mo,
Three kine, and eke a sheep that highte Malle:
Ful footy was hire boure and eke hire halle,
In which she ete many a slender mele;
Of poinant fauce ne knew she never a dele:
No deintee morsel passed thurgh hire throte;
Hire diete was accordant to hire cote:
Repletion ne made hire never fike;
Attempre diete was all hire physike,

And exercise, and hertes suffisance :
 The goute let hire nothing for to dance,
 Ne apoplexie shente not hire hed :
 No win ne dranke she nyther white ne red :
 Hire bord was served most with white and black,
 Milk and broun bred, in which she fond no lack,
 Seinde bacon, and somtime an eye or twey,
 For she was as it were a maner dey.

A yerd she had enclosed all about
 With stickes, and a drie dicke without,
 In which she had a cok highte Chaunteclere,
 In all the land of crowing n'as his pere :
 His vois was merier than the mery orgon
 On masse daies that in the chirches gon :
 Wel liker was his crowing in his loge
 Than is a klok or any abbey orloge :
 By nature he knewe eche ascentioun
 Of the equinoctial in thilke toun,
 For whan degrees fiftene were ascended
 Than crew he that it might not ben amended.

His combe was redder than the fin corall,
 Enbattelled as it were a castel wall;
 His bill was black, and as the jet it shone,
 Like asure were his legges and his tone,
 His nailes whiter than the lily flour,
 And like the burned gold was his colour.

This gentil cok had in his governance
 Seven hennes for to don all his plesance,
 Which were his susters and his paramoures,
 And wonder like to him as of coloures,
 Of which the fairest, hewed in the throte,
 Was cleped faire Damofelle Pertelote.
 Curteis she was, discrete, and debonaire,
 And compenable, and bare hireself so faire,
 Sithen the day that she was sevennight old,
 That trowelich she hath the herte in hold
 Of Chaunteclere, loken in every lith ;
 He loved hire so that wel was him therwith :
 But swiche a joye it was to here hem sing,
 Whan that the brighte sonne gan to spring,
 In swete accord, My lefe is fare in lond.

For thilke time, as I have understond,
 Bestes and briddes couden speke and sing.

And so befell that in a dawening
 As Chaunteclere among his wives alle
 Sate on his perche that was in the halle,
 And next him fate his faire Pertelote,
 This Chaunteclere gan gronnen in his throte
 As man that in his dreame is dretched fore ;
 And whan that Pertelote thus herd him rore
 She was agast, and faide, Herte dere !
 What aileth you to grone in this manere ?
 Ye ben a veray sleper, fy for shame !

And he answered and sayde thus ; Madame,
 I pray you that ye take it not agrese ;
 By God me mete I was in swiche mischese
 Right now, that ye min herte is fore afright.
 Now God (quod he) my sweven recche aright,
 And kepe my body out of foule prisoun.

My mete how that I romed up and doun
 Within our yerde, wher as I saw a beste
 Was like an hound, and wold han made areste
 Upon my body, and han had me ded :
 His colour was betwix yelwe and red,

And tipped was his tail and both his eres
 With black, unlike the remenant of his heres :
 His snout was smal, with glowing eyen twey ;
 Yet for his loke almost for fere I dey :
 This caused me my groning douteles.

Away, quod she; fy on you herteles!
 Alas! quod she, for by that God above
 Now han ye lost myn herte and all my love :
 I cannot love a coward by my faith ;
 For certes, what so any woman faith,
 We al desiren, if it mighte be,
 To have an husbond hardy, wise, and free,
 And secree, and non niggard ne no fool,
 Ne him that is agast of every tool,
 Ne non avantour by that God above.
 How dorsten ye for shame say to your love
 That any thing might maken you aferde ?
 Han ye no mannes herte and han a berde ?
 Alas ! and con ye ben agast of swevenis ?
 Nothing but vanitee, God wote, in sweven is.

Swevenes engendren of repletions,
 And oft of fume, and of complexions,
 Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight.
 Certes this dreame which ye han met to-night
 Cometh of the gret superfluitee
 Of youre rede colera parde,
 Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
 Of arwes, and of fire with rede lemes,
 Of rede bestes that they wol hem bite,
 Of conteke, and of waspes gret and lite,
 Right as the humour of melancolie
 Causeth ful many a man in slepe to crie
 For fere of bolles and of beres blake,
 Or elles that blake devils wol hem take.

Of other humours coud I telle also,
 That werken many a man in slepe and wo ;
 But I wol passe as lightly as I can.

Lo Caton, which that was so wise a man,
 Said he not thus ? Ne do no force of dremes.

Now, Sire, quod she, whan we flee frothe bemes
 For Goddes love as take som laxatif :
 Up peril of my soul and of my lif
 I conseil you the best, I wol not lie,
 That both of coler and of melancolie
 Ye purge you; and for ye shul not tarie,
 Though in this toun be non apotecarie,
 I shal myself two herbes techen you
 That shal be for your hele and for your prow.
 And in our yerde the herbes shal I finde,
 The which han of hir propretee by kinde
 To purgen you benethe and eke above.
 Sire, forgete not this for Goddes love ;
 Ye ben ful colerike of complexion ;
 Ware that the sonne in his ascencion
 Ne finde you not replete of humours hote ;
 And if it do I dare wel lay a grote
 That ye shul han a fever tertiane,
 Or elles an ague, that may be your hane.
 A day or two ye shul han degestitives
 Of wormes or ye take your laxatives,
 Of laureole, centaurie, and fumetere,
 Or elles of ellebor that groweth there,
 Of catapuce or of gaitre beries,
 Or erbe ive growing in our yerde that mery is ;

Picke hem right as they grow, and ete hem in.
Beth mery, husbond; for your fader kin
Dredeth no dreame: I can say you no more.

Madame, quod he, *grand mercy* of your lore;
But natheles as touching Dan Caton,
That hath of wifdome swiche a gret renoun,
Though that he bade no dremes for to drede,
By God men moun in olde bookes rede
Of many a man more of auctoritee
Than ever Caton was, so mote I the,
That all the revers fayn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience
That dremes ben significations
As wel of joye as tribulations
That folk endure in this lif present:
Ther nedeth make of this non argument;
The veray preve sheweth it indede.

On of the grettest auctours that men rede
Saith thus, that whilom tway felawes wente
On pilgrimage in a ful good entente,
And happed so they came into a toun
Wher ther was swiche a congregatioun
Of peple, and eke so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as moche as a cotage
In which they bothe might ylogged be,
Wherfore they musten of necessitee;
As for that night, departen compaignie,
And eche of hem goth to his hostellerie,
And toke his logging as it wolde falle.

That on of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yard, with oxen of the plough,
That other man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure or his fortune,
That us governeth all, as in commune.

And so befell that long or it were day
This man met in his bed ther as he lay
How that his felaw gan upon him calle,
And said, Alas! for in an oxes stalle
This night shal I be mordred ther I lie;
Now help me, dere brother! or I die:
In alle haste come to me, he saide.

This man out of his slepe for fere abraide;
But whan that he was waked of his slepe
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe;
Him thought his dreame was but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his sleping dremed he.

And at the thridde time yet his felaw
Came, as him thought, and said, I now am slaw;
Behold my bloody woundes depe and wide:
Arise up erly in the morwe tide,
And at the west gate of the toun (quod he)
A carte ful of donge ther shalt thou see,
In which my body is hid prively;
Do thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, soth to sain;
And told him every point how he was slain
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe;
And trusteth wel his dreame he found ful trewe;
For on the morwe sone as it was day
To his felawes inne he toke his way,
And whan that he came to this oxes stalle
After his felaw he began to calle.

The hosteler answered him anon,
And saide, Sire, your felaw is agon;

As sone as day he went out of the toun.

This man gan fallen in suspecion,
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he lette, *ae. lette*
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong carte as it went for to dong lond,
That was arraied in the same wise
As ye han herde the dede man devise,
And with an harde herte he gan to crie
Vengeance and justice of this felonie; *rd*
My felaw mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lith gaping upright.
I crie out on the ministers, quod he,
That shulden kepe and reulen this citee:
Harow! alas! here lith my felaw slain.

What shuld I more unto this tale sain?
The peple out stert, and cast the cart to ground,
And in the middel of the dong they found
The dede man that mordred was all newe.

O blisful God! that art so good and trewe,
Lo, how that thou bewreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that see we day by day:
Mordre is so wlatom and abhominable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol not suffre it hyllid be:
Though it abide a yere, or two or thre,
Mordre wol out; this is my conclusioun.

And right anon the ministres of the toun
Han hent the carter, and so fore him pined,
And eke the hosteler so fore engined,
That they beknewe hir wickednesse anon,
And were anghed by the necke bon.

Here moun ye see that dremes ben to drede.
And certes in the same book I rede,
Right in the next chapitre after this,
(Lgabbe not, so have I joye and blis)
Two men that wold han passed over the see,
For certain cause, in to a fer contree,
If that the winde ne hadde ben contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie
That stood ful mery upon a haven side:
But on a day, agein the even tide,
The wind gan change, and blew right ashemlest:
Jolif and glad they wenten to hir rest,
And casten hem ful erly for to faile;
But to that o man fel a gret mervaille.

That on of hem in sleping as he lay
He mette a wonder dreame again the day:
Him thought a man stood by his beddes side,
And him commanded that he shuld abide,
And said him thus; If thou to-morwe wende
Thou shalt be dreint; my tale is at an ende.

He woke, and told his felaw what he met,
And praied him his viage for to let;
As for that day he prayd him for to abide.

His felaw, that lay by his beddes side,
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste:
No dreame, quod he, may so my herte agaste
That I wol leten for to do my thinges:
I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,
For swevens ben but vanitees and japes:
Men dreame al day of oules and of apes,
And eke of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreame of thing that never was ne shal.

But sith I see that thou wol there abide,
And thus forslouthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it reweth me; and have good day:
And thus he took his leye, and went his way.

But or that he had half his cours yfailed,
N'ot I not why ne what meschance it ailed,
But casuelly the shippes bottom rente,
And ship and man under the water wente:
In sight of other shippes ther beside
That with him failed at the same tide.

And therefore, faire Pertelote so dère,
By swiche ensamples olde maist thou lere:
That no man shulde be to reccheles
Of dremes, for I say thee douteles
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede.

Lo, in the lif of Seint Kenelme I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble King
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing.
A litel or he were mordred on a day,
His mordre in his avision he say;
His norice him expounded every delo
His sweven, and bade him for to kepe him wel
Fro trefon; but he n'as but seven yere old,
And therefore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreme, so holy was his herte.
By God I hadde lever than my sherte
That ye had red his legend as have I.

Dame Pertelote, I say you trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the avision
In Affrike of the worthy Scipion,
Affirmeth dremes, and sayth that they ben
Warning of thinges that men after seen.

And forthermore, I pray you loketh wel
In The Olde Testament of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.

Rede eke of Joseph, and ther shuln ye see
Wher dremes ben somtime (I say not alle)
Warning of thinges that shuln after falle.

Loke of Egypt the king, Dan Pharao,
His baker and his boteler also,
Wheder they ne felten non effect in dremes.
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.

Lo Cresus, which that was of Lydie king,
Mette he not that he sat upon a tree?
Which signified he shuld anhangd be.

Lo hire Adromacha, Hectors wif,
That day that Hector shulde lese his lif,
She dremed on the same nighte beforene
How that the lif of Hector shuld be lorne
If thilke day he went into bataille;
She warned him, but it might not availle;
He went forth for to fighten natheles,
And was yslain anon of Achilles.

But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eke it is nigh day, I may not dwelle.
Shortly I say, as for conclusion,
That I shal han of this avision
Adversitee; and I say forthermore,
That I ne tell of laxatives no store,
For they ben venomous, I wot it wel:
I hem despie; I love hem never a del.

But let us speke of mirthe, and stinte all this.
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,

Of o thing God hath sent me large grace,
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet red about your eyen,
It maketh all my drede for to dien;
For al so liker as *In principio*
Mulier est hominis confusio,
(Madame, the sentence of this Latine is,
Woman is mannes joye and mannes blis;)
For whan I sefe a-night your softe side,
Al be it that I may not on you ride
For that our perche is made so narwe, alas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas
That I despie bothe sweven and dreme.

And with that word he flew down fro the beme,
For it was day, and eke his hennies alle,
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had found a corn lay in the yerd.
Real he was, he was no more aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty time,
And trade hire eke as oft, er it was prime:
He loketh as it were a grim leoun,
And on his toos he rometh up and down;
Him deigned not to set his feet to ground:
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn yfound,
And to him rennen than his wives alle.

Thus real as a prince is in his halle
Leve I this Chaunteclere in his pasture,
And after wol I till his aventure.

Whan that the month in which the world began,
That highte March, whan God first maked man,
Was complete, and ypassed were also
Sithen March ended thritty dayes and two,
Befell that Chaunteclere in all his pride,
His seven wives walking him beside,
Cast up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde yronne
Twenty degrees and on, and somwhat more:
He knew by kind, and by non other lore,
That it was prime, and crew with blisful fleven.
The sonne, he said, is clomben up on heven
Twenty degrees and on, and more ywis;
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkeneth thise blisful briddes how they sing,
And see the freshe floures how they spring;
Ful is min herte of revel and of solas.

But sodenly him fell a sorweful cas,
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo;
God wote that worldly joye is sone ago;
And if a rethor coude faire endite
He in a chronicle might it saufly write
As for a soveraine notabilitee.

Now every wise man let him herken me:
This story is al so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot du Lake,
That women holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I turne agen to my sentence.

A col fox, ful of sleigh iniquitee,
That in the grove had wonned yeres three,
By high imagination forecast,
The same night thurghout the hegges braft
Into the yerd ther Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont, and eke his wives, to repaire,
And in a bedde of wortes stille he lay
Till it was passed undern of the day,

Waiting his time on Chaunteclere to falle,
As gladly don thise homicides alle
That in await liggen to mordre men.

O false morderour! rucking in thy den,
O newe Scariot, newe Genelon!
O false dissimulour, o Greek Sinon!
That broughtest Troye al utterly to sorwe,
O Chaunteclere! accursed be the morwe
That thou into thy yerd flew fro the bemes;
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
That thilke day was perilous to thee:
But what that God forewote most nedes be,
After the opinion of certain clerkes,
Witnesse on him that any parfit clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercation
In this matere and gret disputison,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men:
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy Doctour Augustin,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Goddes worthy foreweting
Streineth me nedely for to don a thing,
(Nedely clepe I simple necessitee)
Or elles if free chois be granted me
To do that same thing or do it nought,
Though God forewot it or that it was wrought,
Or if his weting streineth never a del
But by necessitee condicionel.

I wol not han to don of swiche matere;
My Tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his conseil of his wif with sorwe
To walken in the yerd upon the morwe
That he had met the dreme, as I you told.
Womennes conseiles ben ful often cold;
Womennes conseil brought us first to wo,
And made Adam fro Paradis to go,
Ther as he was ful mery and wel at ese:
But for I n'ot to whom I might displese
If I conseil of women wolde blame,
Passe over, for I said it in my game.
Rede auctours where they trete of swiche matere,
And what they sayn of women ye mown here.
Thise ben the Cokkes wordes and not mine;
I can non harme of no woman devine.

Faire in the sond, to bath hire merily,
Lith Pertelote, and all hire susters by,
Agein the sonne, and Chaunteclere so free
Sang merrier than the mermaid in the see,
For Phisiologus sayth likerly
How that they singen wel and merily.

And so befell that as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a boterflie
He was ware of this fox that lay ful low:
Nothing ne list him thaune for to crow,
But cried anon Cok, cok, and up he sterte
As man that was affraied in his herte;
For naturally a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie if he may it see,
Though he never erst had seen it with his eye.

This Chaunteclere, whan he gan him espie,
He wold han fled, but that the fox anon
Said, Gentil Sire, alas! what wol ye don?
Be ye affraid of me that am your frend?
Now certes I were werse than any fend

If I to you wold harme or vilanie.
I n'am not come your conseil to espie,
But trewely the cause of my coming
Was only for to herken how ye sing,
For trewely ye han as mery a steven
As any angel hath that is in heven,
Therwith ye han of musike more feling
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My Lord, your fader (God his foule bleffe)
And eke your moder of hire gentilleffe
Han in myn hous yben, to my gret ese,
And certes, Sire, ful fain wold I you plesse.
But for men speke of singen, I wol sey,
So mote I brouken wel min eyen twey,
Save you ne herd I never man so sing
As did your fader in the morwening:
Certes it was of herte all that he song:
And for to make his nois the more strong
He wold so peine him, that with both his eyen
He muste winke, so loude he walde crien,
And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And stretchen forth his necke long and smal.
And eke he was of swiche discretion,
That ther n'as no man in no region
That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
I have wel red in Dan Burnel the asse
Among his vers, how that ther was a cok
That for a preestes sone yave him a knock
Upon his leg, while he was yonge and nice,
He made him for to lese his benefice;
But certain ther is no comparison
Betwix the wisdom and discretion
Of your fader and his subtilitee.
Now singeth, Sire, for Seint Charitee:
Let see, can ye your fader counterfete?

This Chaunteclere his winges gan to bete,
As man that coud not his treson espie,
So was he ravished with his flaterie.

Alas! ye lordes, many a false flatour
Is in your court, and many a losengeour,
That pleseth you wel more, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastnesse unto you saith,
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterie:
Beth ware, ye lordes, of hire trecherie.

This Chaunteclere stood high upon his toos
Streching his necke, and held his eyen cloos
And gan to crowen loude for the nones;
And Dan Ruffel the fox stert up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chaunteclere,
And on his back toward the wood him bere,
For yet ne was ther no man that him sued.

O destinee! that maist not ben eschued,
Alas that Chaunteclere flew fro the bemes!
Alas, his wif ne raughte not of dremes!
And on a Friday fel all this meschance.

O Venus! that art goddesse of Plesance,
Sin that thy servant was this Chaunteclere,
And in thy service did all his powere,
More for delit than world to multiplie,
Why wolt thou suffre him on thy day to die?

O Gaufride, dere maister soverain!
That whan thy worthy King Richard was slain
With shot complainedst his deth so fore,
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore

The Friday for to chiden as did ye?
 (For on a Friday sothly slain was he)
 Then wold I shew you how that I coud plaine
 For Chauntecleres drede and for his paine.

Certes swiche cry ne lamentation
 N'as never of ladies made whan Ilion
 Was wonne, and Pirrus with streite sward,
 When he had hen King Priam by the berd
 And slain him, (as faith us *Enidos*)
 As maden all the hennes in the cloos
 Whan they had seen of Chaunteclere the sight;
 But soverainly Dame Pertelote shright
 Ful louder than did Hafdruballes wif
 Whan that hire husbond hadde ylost his lif,
 And that the Romaines hadden brent Cartage;
 She was so ful of turment and of rage
 That wilfully into the fire she sterte,
 And brent hire selven with a stedfast herte.

O woful hennes! right so criden ye
 As whan that Nero brente the citee
 Of Rome cried the Senatoures wives
 For that hir husbonds losten alle hir lives,
 Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slain.

Now wol I turne unto my Tale again.
 The sely widewe and hire doughtren two
 Harden these hennes crie and maken wo,
 And out at the dores sterten they anon,
 And saw the fox toward the wode is gon,
 And bare upon his back the cok away:
 They crieden out Harow and wala wa!
 A ha the fox! and after him they ran,
 And eke with staves many an other man;
 Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot and Gerlond,
 And Malkin, with hire distaf in hire hond;
 Ran cow and calf; and eke the veray hogges
 So fered were for barking of the dogges,
 And shouting of the men and women eke,
 They ronnan so hem thought hir hertes breke;
 They yelleden as fendes don in helle;
 The dokes crieden as men wold hem quelle:
 The gees for fere flew over the trees,
 Out of the hive came the swarme of bees,
 So hidous was the noise, a *benedicite*!
 Certes he Jakke Straw and his meinie
 Ne maden never shoutes half so shrille,
 Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,
 As thilke day was made upon the fox.
 Of bras they broughten beemes and of box,
 Of horn and bone, in which they blew and pouped,
 And therwithal they shrieked and they houped;
 It semed as that the heven shulde falle.

Now, goode men, I pray you herkeneth alle:
 Lo how Fortune turneth sodenly
 The hope and pride eke of hire enemy!
 This cok that lay upon the foxes bake,
 In all his drede unto the fox he spake,
 And sayde; Sire, if that I were as ye
 Yet wold I sain, (as wisly God help me)

Turneth agein, ye proude cherles alle,
 A very pestilence upon you falle:
 Now I am come unto the wodes side,
 Maugre your hed the cok shal here abide;
 I wol him ete in faith, and that anon.

The fox answered, in faith it shal be don;
 And as he spake the word al sodenly
 The cok brake from his mouth deliverly,
 And high upon a tree he flew anon.

And whan the fox saw that the cok was gon,
 Alas! quod he, o Chaunteclere, alas!
 I have (quod he) ydon to you trespas,
 In as moche as I maked you aferd
 Whan I you hente and brought out of your yerd
 But, Sire, I did it in no wikke entente:
 Come down, and I shal tell you what I mente:
 I shal say sothe to you, God helpe me so.

Nay than quod he, I shrewe us bothe two;
 And first I shrewe myself bothe blood and bones
 If thou begile me oftener than ones:
 Thou shalt no more thurgh thy flaterie
 Do me to sing and winken with mine eye,
 For he that winketh whan he shulde see,
 Al wilfully, God let him never the.

Nay, quod the fox, but God yeve him meschance
 That is so indiscrete of governance
 That jangleth whan that he shuld hold his pees.

Lo, which it is for to be reccheles
 And negligent, and trust on flaterie.
 But ye that holden this Tale a folie,
 As of a fox, or of a cok or hen,
 Taketh the moralitee therof, good men;
 For Seint Poule sayth, that all that writen is
 To our doctrine it is ywriten ywis.
 Taketh the fruit, and let the chaf be stille.

Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
 As sayth my Lord, so make us all good men,
 And bring us to thy high blisse. *Amen*

Sire Nonnes Preeft, our Hoste sayd anon,
 Yblessed be thy breche and every ston;
 This was a mery Tale of Chaunteclere:
 But by my trouthe if thou were seculere
 Thou woldest ben a tredefoule a right,
 For if thou have corage as thou hast might
 Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
 Ye mo than seven times seventene.
 Se whiche braunes hath this gentil Preeft,
 So gret a neck, and swiche a large breest
 He loketh as a sparhawk with his eyen:
 Him nedeth not his colour for to dien
 With Brasil ne with grain of Portingale,

But, Sire, faire falle you for your Tale.
 And after that he with ful mery chere
 Sayd to another as ye shulen here.

THE SECOND NONNES TALE*.

THE minstre and the norice unto vices,
Which that men clepe in English Idelnesse,
That porter at the gate is of Delices,
To eschuen, and by hire contrary hire oppresse,
That is to sayn, by lesful besinesse.

Wel oughte we to don al our entente.
Lest that the fend thurgh idelnesse us hente:

For he that with his thousand cordes flie
Continuelly us waiteth to be clappe,
Whan he may man in idelnesse espie,
He can so lightly cacche him in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe
He n'is not ware the fend hath him in hond:

Wel ought us werche and idelnesse withstonde.

And though men dradden never for to die,
Yet see men wel by reson douteles
That idelnesse is rote of flogardie,
Of which ther never cometh no good enerees,
And see that slouth holdeth hem in a lees,
Only to slepe and for to ete and drinke,
And to devouren all that other swinke.

And for to put us from swiche idelnesse,
That cause is of gret confusoun,
I have here don my feithful besinesse,
After the legende, in translation
Right of thy glorious lif and passion,
Thou with thy gerlond wrought of rose and lillie,

Thee mene I, maid and martir, Seinte Cecilie,
And thou, that arte floure of virgines all,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write,
To thee at my beginning first I call,
Thou comfort of us wretches, do me endite
Thy maidens deth, that wan thurgh hire merite
The eternal lif, and over the fend victorie,
As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thou maide and mother, doughter of thy son,
Thou wel of mercy, finful soules cure,
In whom that God of bountee chees to won;
Thou humble and high over every creature,
Thou nobledest so fer forth our nature,
That no disdaine the maker had of kinde
His son in blood and flesh to clothe and winde.

Within the cloystre blisful of thy sides
Toke mannes shape the eternal Love and Pees,

That of the trine compas Lord and guide is,
Whom erthe, and see, and heven, out of relleece
Ay herien; and thou virgine wemmeles
Bare of thy body (and dweltest maiden pure)
The Creatour of every creature.

Assembled in thee magnificence
With mercy goodnesse, and with swiche pitee,
That thou that art the sonne of excellence,
Not only helpest hem that praien thee,
But ostentime of thy benignitee
Ful freely, or that men thin helpe beseche,
Thou goest beforne and art hir lives leche.

Now helpe, thou meke and blisful faire maide;
Me flamed wretch, in this desert of galle;
Thinke on the woman Cananee, that saide
That whelpes eten som of the cromes alle
That from hir lordes table been yfalle;
And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,
Be sinful, yet accepteth my beleve.

And for that feith is ded withouten werkes,
So for to werken yeve me wit and space
That I be quit from thennes that most derke is:
O thou! that art so faire and ful of grace,
Be thou min advocat in that high place,
Ther as withouten ende is songe Ofanne,
Thou Cristes mother, doughter dere of Anne.

And of thy light my soule in prison light,
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and also by the wight
Of erthly lust and false affection:
O haven of refute! o salvation
Of hem that ben in sorwe and in distresse!
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet pray I you that reden that I write
Foryeve me that I do no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endite;
For both have I the wordes and sentence
Of him that at the seintes reverence
The storie wrote, and folowed hire legende,
And pray you that ye wol my werk amende.

First wol I you the name of Seinte Cecilie
Expoune, as men may in hire storie see;
It is to sayn in English, Hevens lillie,
For pure chastnesse of virginitee,
Or for she whitnesse had of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The fwote favour, Lillie was hire name.

* The life and death of Saint Cecily. Sp.

Or Cecile is to sayn, The way to blinde,
For she ensample was by good teching,
Or elles Cecilie, as I writen finde,
Is joined by a maner conjoining
Of heven and *Lia*, and here in figuring
The heven is set for thought of holinesse,
And *Lia* for hire lasting besinesse.

Cecilie may eke be sayd in this manere,
Wanting of blindnesse, for hire grete light
Of sapience, and for hire thewes clere;
Or elles lo this maidens name bright
Of heven and *Leos* cometh, for which by right
Men might hire wel the heven of peple calle,
Insample of good and wise werkes alle.

For *Leos* peple in English is to say:
And right as men may in the heven see
The sonne and mone, and sterres, every way,
Right so men gostly, in this maiden free
Sawen of faith the magnanimitee,
And eke the clerenesse hole of sapience,
And sondry werkes bright of excellence.

And right so as thise pholosophres write,
That heven is swift and round, and eke brenning,
Right so was faire Cecilie the white
Ful swift and besy in every good working,
And round and hole in good persevering,
And brenning ever in charitee ful bright.
Now have I you delcared what she hight.

This maiden bright Cecile, as hire life faith,
Was come of Romaines and noble kind,
And from hire cradle fostred in the faith
Of Crist, and bare his gospel in hire mind:
She never cefed, as I writen find,
Of hire prayere, and God to love and drede,
Beseching him to kepe hire maidenhede.

And whan this maiden shuld until a man
Ywedded be that was ful yonge of age,
Which that yelepied was Valerian,
And day was comen of hire marriage,
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hire robe of gold, that sat ful faire
Had next hire flesh yclad hire in an haire.

And while that the organs maden melodie
To God alone thus in hire hert song she;
O Lord! my soule and eke my bodie gie
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be.
And for his love that died upon the tree
Every second or thridde day she fast,
Ay bidding in hire orisons ful fast.

The night came, and to bed must she gon
With hire husbond, as it is the manere,
And prively she said to him anon;
O swete and wel beloved spouse dere!
Ther is a conseil, and ye wol it here,
Which that right sayn I wold unto you saie,
So that ye swere ye wol it not bewraie.

Valerian gan fast unto hire swere
That for no cas ne thing that mighte be
He shulde never to non bewraien here;
And than at erst thus to him saide she;
I have an angel which that loveth me,
That with gret love wher so I wake or slepe
Is redy ay my body for to kepe:

And if that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touch or love in vilanie,

He right anon wol fleen you with the dede,
And in your youthe thus ye shulden die;
And if that ye in clene love me gie,
He wol you love as me for your clenenesse,
And shew to you his joye and his brightnesse.

This Valerian, corrected as God wold,
Answered again; If I shal trusten thee
Let me that angel seen and him behold,
And if that it a veray angel be,
Than wol I don as thou hast prayed me;
And if thou love another man, forsothe
Right with this swerd then wol I flee you bothe.

Cecile answerd anon right in this wise:
If that you list the angel shul you see,
So that ye trowe on Crist, and you baptise:
Go forth to Via Apia, (quod she)
That fro this toun ne stant but miles three,
And to the poure folkes that ther dwellen
Say hem right thus as that I shal you tellen.

Tell hem that I Cecile you to hem sent
To shewen you the good Urban the old,
For secree nedes and for good entent;
And whan that ye Seint Urban han behold,
Tell him the wordes whiche I to you told:
And whan that he hath purged you fro sinne
Than shal ye seen that angel ere ye twinne.

Valerian is to the place gon,
And right as he was taught by hire lerning
He fond this holy old Urban anon
Among the seintes buriels louting;
And he anon withouten tarying
Did his message, and whan that he it tolde
Urban for joye his hondes gan upholde.

The teres from his eyen let he falle;
Almighty Lord, o Jesu Crist! quod he,
Sower of chaste conseil, hierde of us alle,
The fruit of thilk seede of chastitee
That thou hast sow in Cecile take to thee:
Lo, like a besy bee withouten gile
Thee serveth ay thin owen thral Cecile.

For thilk spouse that she toke but newe,
Ful like a fiers leon, she sendeth here
As meke as ever was any lamb or ewe.
And with that word anon ther gan apere
An old man clad in white clothes clere,
That had a book with letters of gold in hond,
And gan beforne Valerian to stond.

Valerian as ded fell down for drede
Whan he him saw, and he up hent him tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede:
On Lord, on faith, on God withouten mo,
On Cristendom, and fader of all also
Aboven all, and over all every wher.
Thise wordes all with gold ywriten were.

Whan this was red, than said this olde man,
Levest thou this thing or no? say ye or nay.
I leve all this thing, quod Valerian,
For sother thing than this I dare wel say
Under the heven no wight thinken may.
Tho vanished the olde man he n'iste wher,
And Pope Urban him cristened right ther.

Valerian goth home, and sint Cecilie
Within his chambre with an angel stonde:
This angel had of roses and of lilie
Corones two, the which he bare in honde,
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,

He yaf that on; and after gan he take
That other to Valerian hire make,

With body clene and with unwemmed thought
Kepeth ay wel thise corones two, quod he,
From Paradis to you I have hem brought,
Ne never mo ne shul they roten be,
Ne lese hir swete favour, trusteth me,
Ne never wight shal seen hem with his eye,
But he be chaste and hate vilanie,

And thou, Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good conseil, also
Say what thee list and thou shalt han thy bone.
I have a brother, quod Valerian tho,
That in this world I love no man so,
I pray you that my brother may have grace
To know the trouthe, as I do in this place.

The angel sayd, God liketh thy request,
And bothe with the palme of martirdome
Ye shullen come unto this blisful rest;
And with that word Tiburce his brother come.
And whan that he the favour undernome,
Which that the roses and the lilies cast,
Within his herte he gan to wonder fast,

And said; I wonder this time of the yere
Whenes that swete favour cometh so
Of roses and lilies that I smelle here,
For though I had hem min hondes two
The favour might in me no deper go:
The swete smel that in min herte I find
Hath changed me all in another kind.

Valerian said, Two corones han we
Snow-white and rose-red, that shinen clere,
Which that thin eyen han no might to see,
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my praier,
So shalt thou seen hem, leve brother dere,
If it so be thou wolt withouten flouthe
Beleve aright, and know the veray trouthe.

Tiburce answered; Saieft thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreame herken I this?
In dremes, quod Valerian, han we be
Unto this time, brother min, ywis;
But now at erst in trouthe our dwelling is.
How wost thou this, quod Tiburce, in what wise?
Quod Valerian, That shal I thee devise.

The angel of God hath me the trouthe ytaught,
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wilt reney
The idoles, and be clene, and elles naught.
And of the miracle of thise corones twey
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to sey;
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and faith in this manere:

The palme of martirdome for to receive
Seint Cecilie, fulfilled of Goddes yeft,
The world and eke hire chambre gan she weive,
Witnesse Tiburces and Ceciles shrift,
To which God of his bountee wolde shifft
Corones two, of floures wel smelling,
And made his angel hem the corones bring.

The maid hath brought thise men to blisse
above;
The world hath wist what it is worth certain,
Devotion of chastitee to love.
Though shewed him Cecile all open and plain
That all idoles n'is but a thing in vain,

For they ben dombe, and therto they ben deve;
And charged him his idoles for to leve.

Who so that troweth not this, a best he is,
Quod this Tiburce, if that I shal not lie.
And she gan kisse his brest whan she herd this,
And was ful glad he coude trouthe espie:
This day I take thee for min allie,
Saide this blisful faire maiden dere;
And after that she said as ye may here:

Lo, right so as the love of Crist (quod she)
Made me thy brothers wif, right in that wise
Anon for min allie here take I thee,
Sithen that thou wolt thin idoles despise.
Goth with thy brother now and thee baptise,
And make thee clene, so that thou maist behold
The angels face of which thy brother told.

Tiburce answered, and saide, Brother dere,
First tell me whither I shal, and to what man.
To whom, quod he, Come for with goode chere,
I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban.
To Urban? brother min, Valerian,
Quod tho Tiburce, wilt thou me thider lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menest thou not Urban (quod he tho)
That is so often damned to be ded,
And woneth in halkes alway to and fro,
And dare not ones putten forth his hed?
Men shold him brennen in a fire so red
If he were found, or that men might him spie,
And we also, to bere him compaignie.

And while we seken thilke divinitee
That is yhid in heven prively,
Algate ybrent in this world shuld we be.
To whom Cecile answered boldely;
Men mighten dreden wel and skilfully
This lif to lese, min owen dere brother!
If this were living only and non other.

But ther is better lif in other place
That never shal be lost, ne drede thee nought,
Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace,
That fadres sone which alle thinges wrought;
And all that wrought is with a skilful thought,
The gost that from the fader gan procede
Hath souled hem withouten any drede.

By word and by miracle he Goddes sone,
Whan he was in this world, declared here
That ther is other lif ther men may wone.
To whom answerd Tiburce; O suster dere!
Ne saideft thou right now in this manere,
Ther n'is but o God Lord in sothfastnesse,
And now of three how mayst thou bere witnesse?

That shal I tell, quod she, or that I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engine, and intellect also,
So in o being of divinitee
Three persones mowen ther righte wel be.
Tho gan she him ful besily to preche
Of Cristes sonde, and of his peines teche,

And many pointes of his passion,
How Goddes sone in this world was withhold
To don mankinde pleine remission,
That was ybound in sinne and kares cold.
All this thing she unto Tiburce told,

And after this Tiburce in good entent
With Valerian to Pope Urban he went,
That thanked God, and with glad herte and
light

He cristened him, and made him in that place
Parfite in his lerning, and Goddes knight;
And after this Tiburce gat swiche grace
That every day he saw in time and space
The angel of God and every maner bone
That he God axed it was sped ful sone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to fain
How many wonders Jesus for hem wrought:
But at the last, to tellen short and plain,
The sergeaunts of the toun of Rome hem fought,
And hem before Almache the Prefect brought,
Which hem apposed, and knew all hir entent,
And to the image of Jupiter hem sent.

And said, Who so wol nought do sacrifice
Swap of his hed; this is my sentence here.
Anon thise martyrs that I you devise
On Maximus, that was an officere
Of the Prefectes, and his Corniculere
Hem hent, and whan he forth the seintes lad
Himself he wept for pitee that he had.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes lore
He gate him of the turmentoures leve,
And lad hem to his hous withouten more;
And with hir preching or that it were eve
They gonnen fro the turmentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk eche on,
The false faith, to trowe in God alone.

Cecilie came, whan it was waxen night,
With preestes that hem cristened all yfere;
And afterward whan day was waxen light
Cecilie hem said with a ful stedfast chere,
Now, Cristes owen knightes leve and dere,
Casse all away the werkes of derkenesse,
And armeth you in armes of brightnesse.

Ye han forsoth ydon a gret bataille;
Your cours is don; your faith hath you conserved;
Goth to the croune of lif that may not faille;
The rightful juge, which that ye han served,
Shal yeve it you, as ye han it deserved.
And whan this thing was said as I devise
Men ledde hem forth to don the sacrifice.

But whan they weren to the place ybrought,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They n'olde encense ne sacrifice right nought,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun,
With humble herte and sad devotioun,
And losten both hir hedes in the place:
Hir soules wenten to the King of grace.

This Maximus, that saw this thing betide,
With pitous teres told it anon right
That he hir soules saw to heaven glide
With angels, ful of clerenesse and of light,
And with his word converted many a wight,
For which Almachius did him to-bete
With whip of led til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile him toke and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softly,
Within hir burying place, under the ston;
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad his ministres fetchen openly

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Cecile, so that she might in his presence
Don sacrifice, and Jupiter encense.

But they, converted at hire wise lore,
Wepten ful sore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and crieden more and more
Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference,
Is veray God, this is all our sentence,
That hath so good a servant him to serve:
Thus with o vois we trowen though we sterve.

Almachius, that herd of this doing,
Bad fetchen Cecile, that he might hire see:
And alderfirst, lo, this was his axing;
What maner woman art thou? quod he.
I am a gentilwoman borne, quod she.
I axe thee, quod he, though it thee greve,
Of thy religion and of thy beleve.

Why than began your question folily,
Quod she, that woldest two answers conclude
In o demand? Ye axen lewedly.

Almache answered to that similitude,
O! whennes cometh thin answering so rude?
Of whennes? (quod she, whan that she was friened)
Of conscience, and of good faith unfeined.

Almachius said; Ne takest thou non hede
Of my power? And she him answerd this;
Your might (quod she) ful litel is to drede,
For every mortal mannes power n'is
But like a bladder ful of wind ywis,
For with a nedles point whan it is blow
May all the boft of it be laid ful low.

Ful wrongfully begonnest thou, (quod he)
And yet in wrong is all thy perseverance:
Wost thou not how our mighty princes free
Have thus commanded and made ordinance
That every Cristen wight shal han penance
But if that he his Cristendome withseye,
And gon al quite if he wol it reneye?

Your princes erren, as your nobley doth,
Quod tho Cecile, and with a wood sentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is not soth;
For ye, that knowen wel our innocence,
For as moche as we don ay reverence
To Crist, and for we bere a Cristen name,
Ye put on us a crime and eke a blame.

But we, that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.
Almache answered; Chese on of thise two,
Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye,
That thou mow now escapen by that wey,
At which this holy blisful fayre maid
Gan for to laughe, and to the juge said;

O juge! confuse in thy nicetee,
Woldest thou that I reneye innocence?
To maken me a wicked wight (quod she)
Lo, he dissimuleth here in audience,
He stareth and wodeth in his advertence.
To whom Almachius said, Unfely wretch!
Ne wost thou not how far my might may stretch?

Han not our mighty princes to me yeven
Ya bothe power and eke auctoritee
To maken folk to dein or to liven?
Why spekest thou so proudly than to me?
I ne speke nought but stedfastly, quod she.

L

Not proudly, for I say, as for my side
We haten dedly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou drede not a soth for to here
Than wol I shewe al openly by right
That thou hast made a ful gret lesing here.
Thou saist thy princes han thee yeven might
Both for to slee and for to quicken a wight.
Thou that ne maist but only lif bereve
Thou hast non other power ne no leve.

But thou maist sayn thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of Deth, for if thou speke of mo
Thou liest, for thy power is ful naked.
Do way thy boldnesse, said Almachius tho,
And sacrifice to our goddes er thou go.
I recke not what wrong that thou me proffre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre.

But thilke wronges may I not endure
That thou spekest of our goddes here, quod he.
Cecile answerd; O nice creature!
Thou faidest no word sin thou spake to me.
That I ne knew therwith thy nicetee,
And that thou were in every maner wise
A lewed officer, a vain justice.

Ther lacketh nothing to thin utter eyen
That thou n'art blind; for thing that we seen alle,
That is a ston, that men may wel espie,
That ilke ston a god thou wolt it calle:
I rede thee let thin hond upon it falle,
And tast it wel, and ston thou shalt it find,
Sin that thou seeest not with thin eyen blind.

It is a shame that the peple shal
So scornen thee, and laugh at thy folie,
For comunly men wot it wel over al
That mighty God is in his heavens hie;
And thise images, wel maist thou espie,
To thee ne to hemself may not profite,
For in effect they be not worth a mite.

Thise and twiche other wordes said she,
And he wex wroth, and bade men shulde hire lede

I

Home til hire hous, and in hire hous (quod he)
Brenne hire right in a bath with flames rede.
And as he bade right so was don the dede,
For in a bathe they gonne hire faste shetten,
And night and day gret fire they under betten.

The longe night, and eke a day also,
For all the fire, and eke the bathes hete,
She sate al cold, and felt of it no wo;
It made hire not a drope for to swete;
But in that bath hire lif she muste lete,
For he Almache with a ful wicke entent
To fleen hire in the bath his sonde sent.

Three strokes in the nekke he smote hire tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chance
He mighte not smite all hire nekke atwo:
And for ther was that time an ordinance
That no man shulde don man swiche penance
The fourthe stroke to smiten soft or fore,
This turmentour ne dorste do no more;

But half ded, with hire nekke ycorven ther
He left hire lie, and on his way is went:
The Cristen folk which that about hire were
With shetes han the blood ful faire yhent:
Three dayes lived she in this turment,
And never cesed hem the faith to teche,
That she had fostred hem she gan to preche.

And hem she yaf hire mebles and hire thing,
And to the Pope Urban betoke hem tho,
And said, I axed this of heven King
To have respit three dayes and no mo,
To recommend to you or that I go
Thise soules, lo, and that I might do werche
Here of min house perpetuellich a cherche.

Seint Urban with his dekenes prively
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other seintes honestly.
Hire hous The Cherche of Seint Cecile hight;
Seint Urban halowed it as he wel might,
In which unto this day in noble wise
Men don to Crist and to his seinte servise.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES PROLOGUE.

WHAN that tolde was the lif of Seinte Cecile,
 Er we had ridden fully five mile,
 At Boughton-under-Blee us gan atake
 A man that clothed was in clothes blake,
 And undernethe he wered a white surplis.
 His hakeney, which that was al pomelee gris,
 So swatte that it wonder was to see;
 It semed as he had priked miles three.
 The horse eke that his Yeman rode upon
 So swatte that unnethes might he gon:
 About the peytrel stood the some ful hie;
 He was of some as flecked as a pie.
 A male tweifold on his croper lay,
 It semed that he caried litel array;
 Al light for sommer rode this worthy man.
 And in my herte wondren I began
 What that he was, til that I understode
 How that his cloke was fowed to his hode,
 For which whan I had long avised me
 I demed him some chanon for to be.
 His hat heng at his back down by a las,
 For he had ridden more than trot or pas;
 He had ay priked like as he were wode.
 A clote lese he had laid under his hode
 For swete, and for to kepe his hed fro hete;
 But it was joye for to seen him swete;
 His forched dropped as a stillatorie
 Were ful of plantaine or of paritorie.
 And whan that he was come he gan to crie,
 God save (quod he) this joly compaignie!
 Fast have I priked (quod he) for your sake,
 Because that I wolde you atake,
 To riden in this mery compaignie.

His Yeman was eke ful of curtesie,
 And faide, Sires, now in the morwe tide
 Out of your hostelrie I saw you ride,
 And warned here my lord and soverain,
 Which that to riden with you is ful fain
 For his disport; he loveth daliance.
 Frend, for thy warning God yeve the good chance.
 Than said our Hoste: certain it wolde seme
 Thy lord were wise, and so I may wel deme;
 He is ful joconde also dare I leye:
 Can he ought tell a mery tale or tweie,
 With which he gladen may this compaignie?
 Who, Sire? my lord? Ye, Sire, withouten lie,
 He can of mirth and eke of jolitee
 Not but ynough; also, Sire, trusteth me

And ye him knew al so wel as do I
 Ye wolden wondre how wel and craftily
 He coude werke, and that in sondry wise:
 He hath take on him many a gret emprise,
 Which were ful harde for any that is here
 To bring about but they of him it lere.
 As homely as he rideth amonges you
 If ye him knew it wold be for your prow:
 Ye wolden not forgon his acquaintance
 For mochel good, I dare lay in balance
 All that I have in my possession.
 He is a man of high discreffion;
 I warne you wel he is a passing man.

Wel, quod our Hoste, I pray thee tell me than
 Is he a clerk or non? Tell what he is.

Nay, he is greter than a clerk ywis,
 Saide this Yeman, and in wordes fewe,
 Hoste, of his craft somwhat I wol you shewe.

I say my lord can swiche a subtiltee,
 (But all his craft ye moun not wete of me,
 And somwhat help I yet to his werking)
 That all the ground on which we ben riding,
 Til that we come to Canterbury toun,
 He coud al clene turnen up so down,
 And pave it all of silver and of gold.

And whan this Yeman had this tale ytolde
 Unto our Hoste, he said *Benedicite!*

This thing is wonder mervailous to me,
 Sin that thy lord is of so high prudence,
 Because of which men shulde him reverence,
 That of his worship rekketh he so lite;
 His overest flospe it is not worth a mite,
 As in effect, to him, so mote I go;
 It is all baudy and to-tore also.

Why is thy lord so fluttish I thee preye,
 And is of power better cloth to beye,
 If that his dede acorded with thy speche!
 Telle me that, and that I thee beseche.

Why? quod this Yeman, wherto axe ye me?
 God helpe me so, for he shal never the:
 (But I wol not avowen that I say,
 And therefore kepe it secree I you pray)
 He is to wise in faith, as I beleve:
 Thing that is overdon it wol not preve
 Aright, as clerkes fain; it is a vice;
 Wherefore in that I hold him lewed and nice;
 For whan a man hath overgret a wit
 Ful oft him happeth to misusen it;

So doth my lord, and that me greveth sore:
God it amende; I can say now no more.

Therof no force, good Yeman, quod our Host;
Sin of the conning of thy lord thou wost
Telle how he doth, I pray thee hertily,
Sin that he is so crafty and so fly.
Wher dwellen ye, if it to tellen be?

In the subarbes of a toun, quod he,
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blinde,
Wheras thise robbours and thise theves by kinde
Holden hir privee fereful residence,
As they that dare not shewen hir presence;
So faren we, if I shal say the sothe.

Yet, quod our Hoste, let me talken to the;
Why art thou so discoloured of thy face?

Peter, quod he, God yeve it harde grace;

I am so used the hote fire to blow

That it hath changed my colour I trow:

I n'am not wont in no mirrour to prie,

But fwinke fore, and lerne to multiplie.

We blundren ever and poren in the fire,

And for all that we faille of our desire;

For ever we lacken our conclusion.

To mochel folk we don illusion,

And borwe gold be it a pound or two,

Or ten or twelve, or many sommes mo,

And make hem wenen at the leste wey

That of a pound we connen maken twey;

Yet it is false; and ay we han good hope

It for to don, and after it we grope;

But that sciense is so fer us beforne,

We mowen not, although we had it sworne,

It overtake, it slit away so fast;

It wol us maken beggers at the last.

While this Yeman was thus in his talking

This chanon drow him nere and herd all thing

Which this Yeman spake, for suspencion
Of mennes speche ever had this chanon;
For Caton sayth, that he that gilty is
Demeth all thing be spoken of him ywis:

That was the cause he gan so nigh him drawe

To his Yeman, to herken all his sawe;

And thus he saide unto his Yemain tho:

Hold thou thy pees, and speke no wordes mo,

For if thou do thou shalt it dere abie:

Thou sclaundrest me here in this compaignie,

And eke discoverest that thou shuldest hide.

Ye, quod our Hoste, tell on, what so betide;

Of all his threthning recke not a mite.

In faith, quod he, no more I do but lite.

And whan this chanon saw it wold not be

But his Yeman wold tell his privetee,

He fled away for veray forwe and shame.

A! quod the Yeman, here shal rise a game:

All that I can anon I wol you telle,

Sin he is gon: the foule fend him quelle,

For never hereafter wol I with him mete

For peny ne for pound, I you behete.

He that me broughte first unto that game,

Er that he die forwe have he and shame,

For it is ernest to me by my faith;

That fele I wel, what that any man faith;

And yet for all my smert and all my grief,

For all my forwe, labour, and meschief,

I coude never leve it in no wise.

Now wolde God my wit mighte suffice

To tellen all that longeth to that art;

But natheles yet wol I tellen part:

Sin that my lord is gon I wol not spare;

Swiche thing as that I know I wol declare.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES TALE*.

With this chanon I dwelt have seven yere,

And of his sciense am I never the nere;

All that I had I have ylost therby,

And God wot so han many mo than I.

Ther I was wont to be right fresh and gay

Of clothing, and of other good array,

Now may I were an hofe upon min hed;

And wher my colour was both fresh and red

Now is it wan and of a leden hewe;

(Who so it useth so shal he it rewe)

And of my fwinke yet blered is min eye;

Lo which avantage is to multiplie!

That fliding sciense hath me made so bare

That I have no good wher that ever I fare;

And yet I am endetted so therby,

Of gold that I have borwed trewely,

That while I live I shal it quiten never;

Let every man beware by me for ever.

What maner man that casteth him therto,

If he continue, I hold his thrift ydo;

So helpe me God, therby shal he nat winne,

But empte his purse, and make his wittes thinne.

* A priest of London, more covetous than wise, is deceived by a chanon professing the art of alchymye. Urry.

And whan he thurgh his madnesse and folie,
 Hath lost his owen good thurgh jupartie,
 Than he exciteth other folk therto,
 To lese hir good as he himself hath do,
 For unto shrewes joye it is and ese
 To have hir felawes in peine and disese.
 Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk.
 Of that no charge; I wol speke of our werk.
 Whan we be ther as we shuln exercise
 Our elvish craft we semen wonder wise,
 Our termes ben so clerghal and queinte.
 I blow the fire til that myn herte feinte.
 What shuld I tellen eche proportion
 Of thinges whiche that we werchen upon,
 As on five or six unces, may wel be,
 Of silver, or som other quantitee?
 And besie me to tellen you the names,
 As orpiment, brent bones, yren squames,
 That into poudre grounden ben ful smal?
 And in an erthen pot how put is al,
 And salt yput in and also pepere,
 Beforn thise poudres that I speke of here,
 And wel ycovered with a lampe of glas?
 And of moche other thing which that ther was?
 And of the pottes and glasses engluting,
 That of the aire might passen out no thing?
 And of the esy fire, and smert also,
 Which that was made? and of the care and wo
 That we had in our materes subliming,
 And in amalgaming and calcening
 Of quicksilver, ycleped Mercurie crude?
 For all our sleighes we can not conclude.
 Our orpiment and sublimed mercurie,
 Our grounden litarge eke on the porphurie,
 Of eche of thise of unces a certain
 Not helpeth us; our labour is in vain.
 Ne, neyther our spirites ascencioun,
 Ne our materes that lien al fix adoun,
 Mown in our working nothing us availle,
 For lost is all our labour and travaille,
 And all the cost a twenty devil way
 Is lost also which we upon it lay.

Ther is also ful many another thing
 That is unto our craft appertaining,
 Though I by ordre hem nat rekerfen can;
 Because that I am a lewed man,
 Yet wol I telle hem as they come to minde,
 Though I ne cannot set hem in hir kinde,
 As bole armoniak, verdegrefe, boras,
 And sondry vessels made of erthe and glas,
 Our urinales, and our descensories,
 Viols, croslettes and sublimatories,
 Cucurbites and alembikes eke,
 And other swiche ger, dere ynough a leke,
 What nedeth it for to reherse hem alle?
 Wateres rubifying, and bolles galle,
 Arsenik, sal armoniak, and brimston,
 And herbes coude I tell eke many on,
 As egremoine, valerian, and lunarie,
 And other swiche, if that me list to tarie,
 Our lampes brenning bothe night and day,
 To bring about our craft if that we may,
 Our fourneis eke of calcination,
 And of wateres albification,

Unflekke lime, chalk, and gleire of an ey,
 Poudres divers, ashes, dong, pisse, and cley,
 Sered pokettes, sal peter, and vitriole,
 And divers fires made of wode and cole,
 Sal tartre, alcaly, and salt preparat,
 And combust materes and coagulat,
 Cley made with hors and mannes here, and oile
 Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort, and argoile,
 Rosalgar, and other materes enbibing,
 And eke of our materes encorporing,
 And of our silver citrination,
 Our cementing and fermentation,
 Our ingottes, testes, and many thinges mo?

I wol you tell as was me taught also
 The foure spirites and the bodies sevene
 By ordre, as oft I herd my lord hem nevene:
 The firste spirit Quicksilver cleped is,
 The second Orpiment, the thridde ywis
 Sal Armoniak, and the fourth Brimston.
 The bodies sevene eke, lo hem here anon:
 Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,
 Mars iren, Mercurie quicksilver we clepe,
 Saturnus led, and Jupiter is tin,
 And Venus coper, by my fader kin.

This cursed craft who so wol exercise
 He shal no good have that him may suffice,
 For all the good he spendeth therabout
 He lesen shal, therof have I no doute.
 Who so that listeth uttren his folie
 Let him come forth and lerne multiplie;
 And every man that hath ought in his cofre,
 Let him appere and wex o philosophre,
 Ascaunce that craft is so light to lere.
 Nay, nay, God wot al be he monk or frere,
 Preeft or chanon, or any other wight,
 Though he sit at his book both day and night
 In lerning of this elvish nice lore
 All is in vain, and parde mochel more
 To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee.
 Fie! speke not therof, for it wol not be;
 And conne he letterure, or conne he non
 As in effect he shal finde it all on;
 For bothe by two my salvation
 Concluden in multiplication
 Ylike wel whan they have al ydo;
 This is to fain, they faillen bothe two.

Yet forgate I to maken reherfaile
 Of waters corosif and of limaile,
 And of bodies molification,
 And also of hir induration,
 Oiles, ablutions, metal fusible;
 To tellen all wold passen any Bible
 That o wher is; wherfore as for the best
 Of all thise names now wol I me rest;
 For as I trow I have you told ynow
 To reise a fend, al loke he never so row.

A! nay, let be; the philosophres ston,
 Elixer cleped, we seken fast eche on,
 For had we him than were we siker ynow;
 But unto God of heven I make avow,
 For all our craft, whan we han all ydo,
 And all our sleight, he wol not come us to.

He hath ymade us spenden mochel good,
 For sorwe of which almost we waxen wood,
 But that good hope crepeth in our herte,
 Supposing ever, though we fore smerte,
 To ben releved of him afterward :
 Swiche supposing and hope is sharp and hard :
 I warne you wel it is to seken ever :
 That future *temps* hath made men dissever
 In trust therof from all that ever they had,
 Yet of that art they conne not waxen sad,
 For unto hem it is a bitter swete :
 So semeth it, for ne had they but a shete
 Which that they might wrappen hem in a-night,
 And a bratt to walken in by day-light,
 They wold hem sell, and spend it on this craft :
 They conne not stinten til no thing be laft ;
 And evermore, wher ever that they gon,
 Men may hem kennen by smell of brimston :
 For all the world they stinken as a gote ;
 Hir favour is so rammish and so hote
 That though a man a mile from hem be
 The favour wol enfeet him, trusteth me.

Lo, thus by smelling and thred-bare array
 If that men list this folk they knowen may ;
 And if a man wol axe hem prively
 Why they be clothed so unthriftilly,
 They right anon wol rounen in his ere,
 And saien, if that they espied were
 Men wolde hem sle because of hir science.
 Lo, thus thise folk betraien innocence.

Passé over this ; I go my Tale unto.
 Er that the pot be on the fire ydo,
 Of metals with a certain quantitee
 My lord hem tempereth, and no man but he,
 (Now he is gon I dare say boldely)
 For as men sain he can don craftily,
 Algate I wote wel he hath swiche a name,
 And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;
 And wete ye how ? ful oft it falleth so
 The pot to-breketh, and farewel ! all is go.
 Thise metales ben of so gret violence
 Our walles may not make hem resistance,
 But if they weren wrought of lime and ston ;
 They percen so that thurgh the wall they gon,
 And som of hem sinke down into the ground,
 (Thus have we lost by times many a pound)
 And som are scatered all the flore aboute,
 Som lepen into the roof withouten doute.
 Though that they fend not in our sight him shewe
 I trow that he be with us, thilke shrewe
 In helle, wher that he is lord and fire,
 Ne is ther no more, rancour, ne ire.
 Whan that our pot is broke, as I have sayde,
 Every man chit, and holt him evil apayde :
 Som sayd it was long on the fire-making,
 Som sayd nay, it was long on the blowing ;
 (Than was I ferd, for that was min office)
 Straw ! quod the thridde, ye ben lewed and nice ;
 It was not tempred as it oughte to be ;
 Nay, quod the fourthe, stinte and herken me ;
 Because our fire was not made of beche
 That is the cause, and other non, so the iche.
 I can not tell wheron it was along,
 But wel I wot gret strif is us among.

What ? quod my lord, ther n'is no more to don ;
 Of thise perils I wol beware eftfone ;
 I am right liker that the pot was crased.
 Be as he may be ye no thing amased ;
 As usage is let swepe the flore as swithe ;
 Plucke up your hertes, and be glad and blithe.

The mullek on an hepe ysweped was,
 And on the flore ycast a canévas,
 And all this mullok in a five ythrowe,
 And sifted, and ypicked many a throwe.

Parde, quod on, somewhat of our metall
 Yet is ther here, though that we have not all ;
 And though this thing mishaped hath as now
 Another time it may be wel ynow.
 We mosten put our good in aventure ;
 A marchant parde may not ay endure,
 Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee ;
 Somtime his good is drenched in the see,
 And somtime cometh it sauf unto the lond.

Pees, quod my lord, the next time I wol fond
 To bring our craft all in another plite,
 And but I do, Sires, let me have the wite :
 Ther was defaute in somewhat wel I wote.

Another sayd the fire was over hote :
 But be it hote or cold I dare say this,
 That we concluden evermore amis ;
 We faille alway of that which we wold have,
 And in our madnesse evermore we rave,
 And whan we be together everich on
 Every man semeth a Salomon.
 But all thing which that shineth as the gold
 Ne is no gold, as I have herd it told,
 Ne every apple that is faire at eye
 Ne is not good, what so men clap or crie.
 Right so, lo, fareth it amonges us ;
 He that semeth the wisest, by Jesus
 Is most fool whan it cometh to the prese,
 And he that semeth truest is a thefe :
 That shal ye know or that I from you wende,
 By that I of my Tale have made an ende.

Ther was a chanon of religioun
 Amonges us wold enfeet all a toun,
 Though it as gret were as was Ninive,
 Rome, Alisaundre, Troie, or other three.
 His sleighes and his infinite falsenesse
 Ther coude no man writen, as I gesse,
 Though that he mighte live a thousand yere :
 In all this world of falsenesse n'is his pere,
 For in his termes he wol him so winde,
 And speke his wordes in so flie a kinde,
 Whan he comunen shal with any wight,
 That he wol make him doten anon right.
 But it a fend be, as himselven is.
 Ful many a man hath he begiled er this,
 And wol, if that he may live any while ;
 And yet men gon and riden many a mile
 Him for to seke, and have his acquaintance,
 Not knowing of his false governance ;
 And if you lust to yeve me audience
 I wol it tellen here in your presence.

But, worshipful chanons religious,
 Ne demeth not that I sclander your hous,
 Although that my Tale of a chanon be
 Of every order som shrew is parde

And God forbode that all a compaignie
 Shuld rewe a singuler mannes folie.
 To sclander you is no thing min entent,
 But to correcten that is mis I ment.
 This Tale was not only told for you
 But eke for other mo : ye wot wel how
 That among Cristes aposteles twelve
 Ther was no traitour but Judas himselve;
 Than why shuld al the remenant have blame;
 That giltles were? By you I say the same;
 Save only this, if ye wol herken me,
 If any Judas in your covent be
 Remeveth him betimes I you rede,
 If shame or los may causen any drede;
 And be no thing displefed I you pray,
 But in this cas herkeneth what I say.

In London was a preest, an annuellere *;
 That therin dwelled hadde many a yere,
 Which was so plesant and so servisable
 Unto the wif ther as he was at table,
 That she wold suffer him no thing to pay
 For borde ne clothing, went he never so gay;
 And spending silver had he right ynow :
 Therof no force; I wol proceed as now,
 And tellen forth my Tale of the chanon
 That broughte this preest to confusion.

This false chanon came upon a day
 Unto the preestes chambre ther he lay,
 Beseching him to lene him a certain
 Of gold, and he wold quite it him again.
 Lene me a marke, quod he, but dayes three;
 And at my day I wol it quiten thee;
 And if it so be that thou finde me false
 Another day hang me up by the halfe.

This preest him toke a marke, and that as swith,
 And this chanon him thanked often sith,
 And toke his leve, and wente forth his wey;
 And at the thridde day brought his money,
 And to the preest he toke his gold again,
 Wherof this preest was wonder glad and fain.

Certes, quod he, nothing anoieth me
 To lene a man a noble, or two, or three,
 Or what a thing were in my possession,
 Whan he so trewe is of condition
 That in no wise he breken wol his day;
 To swiche a man I can never say nay.

What? quod this chanon, shuld I be untrewe?
 Nay, that were thing fallen al of the newe:
 Trowth is a thing that I wol ever kepe
 Unto the day in which that I shal crepe
 Into my grave, and elles God forbode!
 Beleveth this as liker as your crede,
 God thanke I, and in good time be it sayde,
 That ther n'as never man yet evil apayde
 For gold ne silver that he to me lent,
 Ne never falskede in min herte I ment.

And, Sire, (quod he) now of my privetee,
 Sin ye so goodlich have ben unto me,
 And kithed to me so gret gentillese,
 Somwhat to quiten with your kindenesse
 I wol you shewe, and if you lust to lere
 I wol you techen plainly the manere

* They were called *annuellers*, not from their receiving a yearly stipend, as the Gloss. explains it, but from their being employed solely in singing annuals or anniversary masses for the dead, without any cure of souls.

How I can werken in philosophie :
 Taketh good heed, ye shuln wel sen at eye
 That I wol do a maistrie or I go.

Ye, quod the preest; ye, Sire, and wol ye so?
 Mary, therof I pray you hertily.

At your commandement, Sire, trewely,
 Quod the chanon, and elles God forbode.
 Lo, how this thefe coude his service bedo

Ful soth it is that swiche profered service
 Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wise,
 And that ful sone I wol it verifie

In this chanon, rote of all trecherie,
 That evermore delight hath and gladnesse
 (Swiche fendly thoughtes in his herte empreffe)

How Cristes peple he may to mescchief bring :
 God kepe us from his false dissimuling!

Nought wiste this preest with whom that he delt,
 Ne of his harme coming nothing he felt.

O sely preest! o sely innocent!
 With covetise anon thou shalt be blent;

O graceles! ful blind is thy conceite,
 For nothing art thou ware of the disceite

Which that this fox yshapen hath to thee;
 His wily wenchis thou ne mayst not flee :

Wherfore to go to the conclusion,
 That referreth to thy confusion,

Unhappy man! anon I wol me hie
 To tellen thin unwit and thy folie,

And eke the falsenesse of that other wretch,
 As ferforth as that my conning will stretch.

This chanon was my lord, ye wolden wene;
 Sire Hoste, in faith, and by the heven quene,

It was another chanon, and not he
 That can an hundred part more subtiltee :

He hath betraied folkes many a time;
 Of his falsenesse it dulleth me to rime :

Ever whan that I speke of his falskede
 For shame of him my chekes waxen rede,

Algates they begynnen for to glowe,
 For redenesse have I non, right wel I knowe,

In my visage, for fumes diverse
 Of metals which ye have herd me reherse

Consumed han and wasted my rednesse.
 Now take hede of this chanons cursednesse.

Sire, quod the chanon, let your yeman gon
 For quiksilver, that we it had anon,

And let him bringen unces two or three,
 And whan he cometh as faste shal ye see

A wonder thing, which ye saw never er this.
 Sire, quod the preest, it shal be don ywis.

He bad his servant fetchen him this thing,
 And he al redy was at his bidding,

And went him forth, and came anon again
 With this quiksilver, shortly for to fain,

And toke thise unces three to the chanoun,
 And he hem laide wel and faire adoun,

And bad the servant coles for to bring,
 That he anon might go to his working.

The coles right anon weren yfet,
 And this chanon toke out a crosselet

Of his bosome, and shewed it to the preest.
 This instrument, quod he, which that thou seest

Take in thyn hond, and put thyself therein
 Of this quiksilver an unce, and here begin

In the name of Crist to wax a philosopre :
 Ther be ful fewe which that I wold profre

To shewen hem thus muche of my science;
For here shul ye see by experience
That this quiksilver I wol mortifie
Right in your sight anon withouten lie,
And make it as good silver and as fine
As ther is any in your purse or mine
Or elles wher, and make it malliable,
And elles holdeth me false and unable
Amonges folk for ever to appere.

I have a prouder here, that cost me dere,
Shal make all good, for it is cause of all
My conning which that I you shewen shall.
Voideth your man, and let him be therout,
And shet the dore, while we ben about
Our privitee, that no man us espie
While that we werke in this philosophie.

All as he bade fulfilled was in dede:
This ilke servant anon right out yede,
And his maister shette the dore anon,
And to hir labour spedily they gon.

This preest at this cursed chanons bidding
Upon the fire anon he set this thing,
And blew the fire, and besied him ful fast;
And this chanon into the croffelet cast
A poudre, n'et I never wherof it was
Ymade, other of chalk, other of glas,
Or somewhat elles, was not worth a flie,
To blinden with this preest, and bade him hie
The coles for to couchen all above
The croffelet, for in tokening I thee love
(Quod this chanon) thine owen bondes two
Shal werken all thing which that here is do.

Grand mercy, quod the preest, and was ful glad,
And couched the coles as the chanon bad;
And while he besy was this fendly wretch,
This false chanon, (the foule fend him fetch)
Out of his bosom toke a bechen cole,
In which ful subtilly was made an hole,
And therin put was of silver limaile
An unce, and stopped was withouten faile
The hole with wax to keep the limaile in.

And understandeth that this false gin
Was not made ther, bur it was made before;
And other thinges I shall tell you more
Hereafterward which that he with him brought;
Er he came ther him to begile he thought,
And so he did or that they went atwin;
'Til he had torned him coud he not blin.
It dulleth me whan that I of him speke;
On his falskede fain wold I me awreke
If I wist how; but he is here and ther:
He is so variaunt he abit no wher.

But taketh hede, Sires, now, for Goddes love.
He toke his cole, of which I spake above,
And in his hond he bare it prively,
And whiles the preest couched befily
The coles, as I tolde you er this,
This Chanon sayde; Frend, ye don amis;
This is not couched as it ought to be,
But sone I shal amenden it, quod he.
Now let me meddle therwith but a while,
For of you have I pitee by Seint Gile.
Ye ben right hot; I see wel how ye swete;
Have here a cloth and wipe away the wete.

And whiles that the preest wiped his face
This chanon toke his cole with fory grace,

And laied it above on the midward
Of the croffelet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the coles gonnen fast to bren.

Now yeve us drinke, quod this chanon, then;
As swithe all shall be wel I undertake:
Sitte we doun, and let us mery make.
And whanne that this chanones bechen cole
Wes brent all the limaile out of the hole
Into the croffelet anon fell adoun;
And so it muste nedes by refoun,
Sin it above so even couched was,
But therof wist the preest nothing, alas!
He demed all the coles ylike good,
For of the sleight he nothing understood.

And whan this alkymistre saw his time,
Riseth up, Sire Preest, quod he, and stondeth by me.
And for I wote wel ingot have ye non,
Goth, walketh forth, and bringeth a chalk ston,
For I wol make it of the same shap
That is an ingot, if I may have hap:
Bring eke with you a bolle or elles a panne
Ful of water, and ye shul wel see thanne
How that our besinesse shal thrive and preve;
And yet, for ye shul have no misbeleve
Ne wrong conceit of me in your absence,
I ne wol not ben out of your presence,
But go with you, and come with you again.

The chambre door, shortly for to fain,
They opened and shet, and went hir wey,
And forth with hem they caried the key,
And camen again withouten any delay.
What shuld I tarien all the longe day?
He toke the chalk, and shope it in the wise
Of an ingot, as I shal you devise;
I say he toke out of his owen sleve
A teine of silver (yvel mote he cheve)
Which that ne was but a just unce of weight;
And taketh heed now of his cursed sleight;
He shop his ingot in length and in brede
Of thilke teine, withouten any drede,
So slyly that the preest it not espide,
And in his sleve again he gan it hide,
And from the fire he toke up his matere,
And in the ingot it put with mery chere,
And in the water-vessel he it cast
Whan that him list, and bad the preest as fast
Loke what ther is; put in thin hond and grope;
Thou shalt ther finden silver, as I hope.
What, divel of helle! shuld it elles be?
Shaving of silver, silver is parde.

He put his hond in and toke up a teine
Of silver fine, and glad in every veine
Was this preest whan he saw that it was so,
Goddes blessing, and his mothers also,
And alle Halwes, have ye, Sire Chanon!
Sayde this preest, and I hir malison,
But and ye vouchesauf to techen me
This noble craft and this subtilitee
I wol be your in alle that ever I may.

Quod the chanon, Yet wol I make assay
The second time, that ye mow taken hede,
And ben expert of this, and in your nede
Another day assay in min absence
This discipline and this crafty science.
Let take another unce, quod he tho,
Of quiksilver, without en wordes mo,

And do therewith as ye have don er this
With that other which that now silver is.

The preest him besieth all that ever he can
To don as this chanon, this cursed man,
Commandeth him, and faste blewe the fire
For to come to the effect of his desire;
And this chanon right in the mene while
Al redy was this preest est to begile,
And for a countenance in his hond bare
An holow stikke, (take kepe and beware)
In the ende of which an unce and no more
Of silver limaile put was, as before
Was in his cole, and stopped with wax wel
For to kepe in his limaile every del;
And while this preest was in his besinesse
This chanon with his stikke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his poudre cast in
As he did erst, (the devil out of his skin
Him torne, I pray to God, for his falskede,
For he was ever false in thought and dede)
And with his stikke above the crosselet,
That was ordained with that false get,
He stirreth the coles til relenten gan
The wax again the fire, as every man
But he a fool be wote wel it mote nede,
And all that in the stikke was out yede,
And in the crosselet hastily it fell.

Now, goode Sires, what wol ye bet than wel?
Whan that this preest was thus begiled again,
Supposing nought but trouthe, soth to fain,
He was so glad that I can not expresse
In no manere his mirth and his gladnesse,
And to the chanon he profered estsone
Body and good. Ye, quod the chanon, sone,
Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt me finde:
I warne thee wel yet is ther mor behinde.

Is ther any copre here within? sayd he?
Ye, Sire, quod the preest, I trow ther be.
Elles go beie us fom, and that as swithe.

Now, goode Sire, go forth thy way and his the.

He went his way, and with the copre he came
And this chanon it in his hondes name,
And of that copre weyed out an unce.
To simple is my tonge to pronounce,
As minister of my wit, the doublenesse
Of this chanon, rote of all cursednesse:
He semed frendly to hem that knew him nought,
But he was fendly both in werk and thought.
It werieth me to tell of his falsenesse,
And natheles yet wol I it expresse,
To that entent men may beware therby,
And for non other cause trewely.

He put this copre into the crosselet,
And on the fire as swithe he hath it set,
And cast in poudre, and made the preest to blow,
And in his werking for to stoupen low
As he did erst, and all n'as but a jape;
Right as him list the preest he made his ape;
And afterward in the ingot he it cast,
And in the panne put it at the last
Of water, and in he put his owen hond:
And in his fleve, as ye beforen hond
Herde me telle, he had a silver teine;
He silylly tokc it out, this cursed heine,

(Unweting this preest of his false craft)
And in the pannes bottom he it last,
And in the water rombleth to and fro,
And wonder prively toke up also
The copre teine, (not knowing thilke preest)
And hid it, and him hente by the brest,
And to him spake, and thus said in his game;
Stoupeth adoun; by God ye be to blame;
Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere;
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.

This preest toke up this silver teine anon;
And thanne said the chanon, Let us gon
With thise three teines which that we han wrought
To som goldsmith, and wete if they ben ought,
For by my faith I n'olde for my hood
But if they weren silver fine and good,
And that as swithe wel preved shal it be.

Unto the goldsmith with thise teines three
They went anon, and put hem in assay
To fire and hammer: might no man say nay
But that they weren as hem ought to be.

This foted preest, who was gladder than he?
Was never brid gladder agains the day,
Ne nightingale in the seson of May
Was never non that list better to sing,
Ne lady lustier in carolling,
Or for to speke of love and womanhede,
Ne knight in armes don a hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady dere,
Than hadde this preest this craft for to lere;
And to the chanon thus he spake and seid:
For the love of God that for us alle deid,
And as I may deserve it unto you,
What shal this receit cost? telleth me now.

By our Lady, quod this chanon, it is dere.
I warne you wel that save I and a frere
In Englelond ther can no man it make.

No force, quod he: now, Sire, for Goddes sake
What shall I pay? telleth me I you pray.

Ywis, quod he, it is ful dere I say.
Sire, at o word, if that you list it have
Ye shal pay forty pound, so God me save;
And n'ere the frendship that ye did er this
To me ye shulden payen more ywis.

This preest the sum of fourty pound anon
Of nobles set, and toke hem everich on
To this chanon for this ilke receit.
All his werking n'as but fraud and deceit.

Sire Preest, he said, I kepe for to have no loos
Of my craft, for I wold it were kept cloos,
And as ye love me kepeth it secree,
For if men knewen all my subtiltee,
By God they wolden have so gret envie
To me, because of my philosophie,
I shuld be ded, that were non other way.

God it forbede, quod the preest, what ye say:
Yet had I lever spenden all the good
Which that I have (and elles were I wood)
Than that ye shuld fallen in swiche mischese.

For your good will, Sire, have ye right good prese,
Quod the chanon; and farewell, *grand mercy*.
He went his way, and never the preest him sey
After that day. And whan that this preest shold
Maken assay, at swiche time as he wold,

Of this receit, farewell! it n'old not be.
Lo, thus bejaped and begiled was he;
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bringen folk to hir destruction.

Considereth, Sires, how that in eche estat
Betwixen men and gold ther is debat,
So ferforth that unnethes is ther non.
This multiplying so blint many on
That in good faith I trowe that it be
The cause gretest of swiche scarfitee.
Thise philosophres speke so mistily
In this craft that men cannot come therby
For any wit that men have now adayes:
They mow wel chateren as don thise jayes,
And in hir termes set hir lust and peine,
But to hir purpos shul they never atteine.
A man may lightly lerne, if he have ought,
To multiplie and bring his good to nought.
Lo, swiche a lucre is in this lusty game
A mannes mirth it wol turne al to grame,
And emptien also gret and hevy purses,
And maken folk for to purchasen curses
Of hem that han therto hir good ylent.
O, fy for shame! they that han be brent,
Alas! can they not flee the fires hete?
Ye that it use I rede that ye it lete,
Lest ye lese all; for bet than never is late:
Never to thriven were to long a date:
Though ye proll ay ye shul it never find;
Ye ben as bold as is Bayard the blind,
That blondereth forth, and peril casteth non;
He is as bold to renne agains a ston
As for to go besides in the way:
So faren ye that multiplien I say.
If that your eyen cannot seen aright
Loketh that youre mind lacke not his sight,
For though ye loke never so brode, and stare,
Ye shuln not win a mite on that chaffare,
But waften all that ye may rape and renne.
Withdraw the fire lest it to faste brenne;
Medleth no more with that art I mene,
For if ye don your thrift is gon ful clene:
And right as swithe I wol you tellen here
What philosophres sain in this matere.

Lo, thus faith Arnolde of the newe toun,
As his Rosarie maketh mentioun;
He faith right thus, withouten any lie,
Ther may no man Mercurie mortifie
But it be with his brothers knowleching.

Lo, how that he which firste said this thing

Of philosophres father was, Hermes;
He faith how that the dragon douteles
Ne dieth not but if that he be slain
With his brother; and this is for to sain
By the dragon Mercury and non other
He understood, and Brimstone by his brother,
That out of Sole and Luna were ydrawe.

And therfor, said he, Take heed to my sawe:
Let no man besie him this art to feche
But if that he the entention and speche
Of philosophres understonden can,
And if he do he is a lewed man;
For this science and this conning (quod he)
Is of the secree of secrees parde.

Also ther was a disciple of Plato
That on a time said his maister to,
As his book Senior wol bere witnesse,
And this was his demand in sothfastnesse,
Telle me the name of thilke privee ston.

And Plato answerd unto him anon;
Take the ston that Titanos men name.
Which is that? quod he. Magnetia is the same
Saide Plato. Ye, Sire, and is it thus?
This is *ignotum per ignotius*,
What is magnetia, good Sire, I pray?

It is a water that is made, I say,
Of the elementes foure, quod Plato.
Tell me the rote, good Sire, quod he tho,
Of that water, if that it be your will.

Nay, nay, quod Plato, certain that I n'll:
The philosophres were sworne everich on
That they ne shuld discover it unto non,
Ne in no book it write in no manere,
For unto God it is so lese and dere
That he wol not that it discovered be
But wher it liketh to his deitee
Man for to enspire, and eke for to defende
Whom that him liketh; lo, this is the ende.

Than thus conclude I; sin that God of heven
Ne wol not that the philosophres neven
How that a man shal come unto this ston,
I rede as for the best to let it gon;
For who so maketh God his adversary,
As for to werken any thing in contrary
Of his will, certes never shal he thrive,
Though that he multiply terme of his live,
And ther a point, for ended is my Tale.
God send every good man bote of his bale!

THE MANCIPLES PROLOGUE.

WETE ye not wher stondeth a litel toun
Which that ycleped is Bob-up-and-doun,
Under the Blee in Canterbury way?
Ther gan our hoste to jape and to play,
And sayde; Sires, what? Dun is in the mire;
Is ther no man for praier ne for hire
That wol awaken our felaw behind?
A thefe him might ful lightly rob and bind:
See how he nappeth, see, for cockes bones,
As he wold fallen from his hors atones.
Is that a coke of London, with meschance?
Do him come forth, he knoweth his penance,
For he shal tell a Tale by my fey,
Although it be not worth a botel hey.
Awake, thou coke, quod he; God yeve the forwe,
What aileth thee to slepen by the morwe?
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art thou dronke?
Or hast thou with som quene al night yswonke
So that thou mayst not holden up thin hed?

This coke, that was ful pale and nothing red,
Sayd to our Hoste; So God my soule bleffe,
As ther is falle on me swiche hevinesse,
N'ot I nat why, that me were lever to slepe
Than the best gallon wine that is in Chepe.

Wel, quod the Manciple, if it may don ese
To thee, Sire Coke, and to no wight displese
Which that hire rideth in this compaignie,
And that our Hoste wol of his curtesie;
I wol as now excuse thee of thy Tale,
For in good faith thy visage is ful pale:
Thin eyen dasen, sothly as me thinketh,
And wel I wot thy breth ful soure stinketh,
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed:
Of me certain thou shalt not ben yglosed.
See how he galpeth, lo, this drunken wight,
As though he wold us swalow anon right!
Hold close thy mouth, man, by thy father kin;
The devil of helle set his foot therin,
Thy cursed breth enfecten wol us alle:
Fy, stinking swine! fy, foul mote thee basalle!
A! taketh heed, Sires, of this lusty man.
Now, swete Sire! wol ye just at the fan?
Therto me thinketh ye be wel yshape:
I trow that ye have drunken win of ape,
And that is whan men playen with a straw.

And with this speche the coke waxed all wraw,
And on the Manciple he gan not fast
For lacke of speche, and down his hors him cast,

Wher as he lay til that men him up toke:
This was a faire chivachee of a coke:
Alas that he ne had hold him by his ladel!
And er that he agen were in the sadel
Ther was gret shoving bothe to and fro
To lift him up, and mochel care and wo,
So unweldy was this fely palled gost;
And to the Manciple then spake our Host.
Because that drinke hath domination
Upon this man, by my salvation
I trowe he lewedly wol tell his Tale;
For wer it win or old or moisty ale,
That he hath dronke he speketh in his nose,
And snefeth fast, and eke he hath the pose;
He also hath to don more than ynough
To keep him on his capel out of the slough
And if he felle from of his capel estfone
Than shul we alle have ynough to done
In lifting up his hevy drunken cors.
Tell on thy Tale, of him make I no force.

But yet, Manciple, in faith thou art so nice
Thus openly to repreve him of his vice;
Another day he wol paraventure
Recleimen thee, and bring thee to the lure;
I mene he speken wol of smale thinges,
As for to pinchen at thy rekeninges,
That were not honest if it came to prefe.

Quod the Manciple, That were a gret meschefe;
So might he lightly bring me in the snare;
Yet had I lever payen for the mare
Which he writ on than he shuld with me strive:
I wol not wrathen him, so mote I thrive:
That that I spake I sayd it in my bourd
And wete ye what? I have here in my gourd
A draught of win, ye of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape;
This coke shal drinke therof if that I may;
Up peine of my lif he wol not say nay.

And certainly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessell the coke dranke fast, (alas!
What nedeth it? he dranke ynough beforne)
And whan he hadde pouped in his horne
To the Manciple he toke the gourd again;
And of that drinke the coke was wonder fain,
And thonked him in swiche wise as he coude.

Than gan our Hoste to laughen wonder loude
And sayd; I see wel it is necessary
Wher that we gon good drinke with us to cary,

For that wol turnen rancour and disese
To accord and love, and many a wrong apese
O Bacchus, Bacchus! blessed be thy name,
That so canst turnen earnest into game;

Worship and thonke be to thy deitee.
Of that matere ye get no more of me.
Tale on thy Tale, Manciple, I thee pray.
Wel, Sire, quod he, now herkeneth what I say.

THE MANCIPLES TALE *.

WHAN Phebus dwelled here in erth adoun,
As olde bookes maken mentioun,
He was the moſte luſty bacheler
Of all this world, and eke the beſt archer:
He ſlew Phiton the ſerpent as he lay
Sleping againſt the ſonne upon a day,
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as men mowen rede.

Playen he coude on every minſtralcie,
And ſingen that it was a melodie
To heren of his clere vois the ſoun:
Certes the King of Thebes Amphioun,
That with his ſinging walled the citee,
Coud never ſingen half ſo wel as he.
Therto he was the ſemelieſte man
That is or was ſithen the world began.
What nedeth it his ſeture to deſcrive?
For in this world n'is non ſo faire on live;
He was therewith fulfilled of gentilleſſe,
Of honour, and of parſite worthineſſe.

This Phebus, that was floure of bachelerie,
As wel in freedom as in chivalrie,
For his diſport, in ſigne eke of victorie
Of Phiton, ſo as telleth us the ſtorie,
Was wont to beren in his hond a bowe.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe.
Which in a cage he foſtred many a day,
And taught it ſpeken, as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe, as is a ſnow-whit ſwan,
And contrefete the ſpeche of every man
He coude whan he ſhulde tell a tale:
Therewith in all this world no nightingale
Ne coude by an hundred thouſand del
Singen ſo wonder merily and wel.

Now had this Phebus in his hous a wiſe
Which that he loved more than his liſe,
And night and day did ever his diligence
Hire for to pleaſe and don hire reverence;
Save only, if that I the ſoth ſhal ſain,
Jelous he was, and world have kept hire ſain,

* Phœbus kepeth a white crow which can ſpeak as a jay. The crow accuſeth his wiſe, of whom he was too jealous, to have played falſe in his abſence; hereupon with an arrow he ſlayeth his wiſe but after repenting of his raſhneſſe he taketh revenge of the crow. Urry.

For him were loth yjaped for to be,
And ſo is every wight in ſwiche degree:
But all for nought, for it availeth nought.
A good wiſe, that is clene of werk and thought,
Shuld not be kept in non await certain;
And trewely the labour is in vain
To kepe a ſhrew, for it wol not be.
This hold I for a veray nicetee
To ſpillen labour for to kepen wives;
Thus, writen olde clerkes in hir lives.

But now to purpoſe as I firſt began.
This worthy Phebus doth all that he can
To pleaſen hire, wening thurgh ſwiche pleaſance,
And for his manhood and his governance,
That no man ſhulde put him from hire grace;
But God it wote ther may no man embrace
As to deſtreine a thing which that Nature
Hath naturally ſet in a creature.

Take any brid and put it in a cage,
And do all thin entente and thy corage
To foſter it tendrely with mete and drinke
Of alle deintees that thou canſt bethinke,
And kepe it al ſo clenely as thou may,
Although the cage of gold be never ſo gay,
Yet had this brid by twenty thouſand fold
Lever in a foreſt that is wilde and cold
Gon eten wormes and ſwiche wretchedneſſe:
For ever this brid will don his beſineſſe
To eſcape out of his cage whan that he may:
His libertee the brid deſireth ay.

Let take a cat, and foſter hire with milke
And tendre fleſh, and make hire couche of filke,
And let hire ſee a mous go by the wall,
Anon ſhe weiveth milke and fleſh and all,
And every deintee that is in that hous,
Swiche appetit hath ſhe to ete the mous.
Lo, here hath kind hire domination,
And appetit ſtemeth diſcretion.

A ſhe-wolf hath alſo a vilains kind;
The lewedeste wolf that ſhe may find,
Or leſt of reputation, wol ſhe take
In time whan hire loſt to have a make.

All thiſe enſamples ſpeke I by thiſe men
That ben untrew, and nothing by women.

For men have ever a likerous appetit
On lower thing to parforme hir delit
Than on hir wives, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
Flesh is so newefangle, with meschance,
That we ne con in nothing have plesance
That souneth unto vertue any while.

This Phebus, which that thought upon no gile,
Disceived was for all his jolitee,
For under him another hadde she,
A man of litel reputation,
Nought worth to Phebus in comparison:
The more harme is: it happeth often so,
Of which ther cometh mochel harme and wo.

And so befell whan Phebus was absent
His wif anon hath for hire lemman sent.
Hire lemman! certes that is a knavish speche;
Foryeve it me, and that I you beseche;

The wise Plato sayth, as ye now rede,
The word must nede accorden wit the dede:
If men shul tellen proprely a thing
The word must colin be to the working.

I am a boistous man, right thus say I;
Ther is no difference trewely
Betwixt a wif that is of high degree
(If of hire body dishonest she be)
And any poure wenche, other than this,
(If it so be they werken both amis)
But for the gentil is in estat above
She shal be cleped his Lady and his Love,
And for that other is a poure woman
She shal be cleped his Wenche and his Lemman;
And God it wote, mine owen dere brother!
Men lay as low that on as lith that other.

Right so betwixt a titleles tiraunt
And an outlawe, or elles a thefe erraunt,
The same I say; ther is no difference,
(To Alexander told was this sentence)
But for the tyrant is of greter might
By force of meine for to sle doun right,
And brennen hous and hom, and make all plain,
Lo, therefore is he cleped a Capitain;
And for the outlawe hath but smale meine,
And may not do so gret an harme as he,
Ne bring a contree to so gret meschiefe.
Men clepen him an Outlawe or a Thefe.

But for I am a man not textuel
I wol not tell of textes never a del;
I wol go to my Tale as I began.

Whan Phebus wif had sent for hire lemman
Anon they wroughten all hir lust volage.
This white crowe, that heng ay in the cage,
Beheld hir werke, and sayde never a word;
And whan that home was come Phebus the lord
This crowe song Cuckow, cuckow, cuckow!

What? brid, quod Phebus, what song singest thou
Ne were thou wont so merily to sing, [now?
That to my herte it was a rejoyfing
To here thy vois? Alas! what song is this!

By God, quod he, I singe not amis.
Phebus, (quod he) for all thy worthinesse,
For all thy beautee and all thy gentillesse,
For all thy song and all thy minstrelcie,
For all thy waiting, blered is thin eye

With on of litel reputation,
Not worth to thee as in comparison
The mountance of a gnat, so mote I thrive,
For on thy bedde thy wif I saw him swive.

What wol you more? the crowe anon him told,
By fad tokenes and by wordes bold,
How that his wif had don hire lecherie
Him to gret shame and to gret vilanie,
And told him oft he sawe it with his eyen.

This Phebus gan awayward for to wrien:
Him thought his woful herte braft atwo;
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo,
And in his ire he hath his wif yslain:
This is the effect, ther is no more to sain;
For sorwe of which he brake his minstrelcie;
Both harpe and lute, giterne and sautrie,
And eke he brake his arwes and his bowe,
And after that thus spake he to the crowe:

Traitour, quod he, with tonge of scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusoun:
Alas that I was wrought! why n'ere I dede!

O dere wif, o gemme of lustyhede!
That were to me so fad and eke so trewe,
Now liest thou ded, with face pale of hewe,
Ful gilteles, that durst I swere ywis.

O rakel hond! to do so foule a mis:
O troubled wit, o ire reccheles!
That unadvised smitest gliteles:
O wantrust! ful of false suspencion,
Wher was thy wit and thy discretion?

O! every man beware of rakelnesse,
Ne trowe no thing withouten strong witnesse;
Smite not to sone er that ye weten why,
And beth avised wel and likerly

Or ye do any execution
Upon your ire for suspencion.
Alas! a thousand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordon, and brought hem in the mire.
Alas! for sorwe I wol myselven fle.

And to the crowe, O false thefe! said he,
I wol thee quite anon thy false tale;
Thou song whilom like any nightingale,
Now shalt thou, false thefe, thy song forgon,
And eke thy white fethers everich on,
Ne never in all thy lif-ne shalt thou speke;
Thus shul men on a traitour ben awreke.
Thou and thin offspring ever shul be blake,
Ne never swete noise shul ye make,
But ever crie ageins tempest and rain,
In token that thurgh thee my wif is slain.

And to the crowe he stert, and that anon,
And pulled his white fethers everich on,
And made him blak, and raft him all his song
And eke his speche, and out at dore him flog
Unto the devil, which I him betake;
And for this cause ben alle crows blake.

Lordings, by this ensample I you pray
Beth ware, and taketh kepe what that ye say,
Ne telleth never man in all your lif
How that another man hath dight his wif;
He wol you haten mortally certain.
Dan Salomon, as wise clerkes sain,
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel;
But, as I sayd, I am no textuel;

But natheles thus taughte me my dame;
 My sone, thinke on the crowe a Goddes name:
 My sone, kepe wel thy tonge, and kepe thy frend;
 A wicked tonge is worse than a fend:
 My sone, from a fende men may hem blesse:
 My sone, God of his endeles goodnesse
 Walled a tonge with teeth, and lippes eke,
 For man shuld him avisen what he speke:
 My sone, ful often for to mochel speche
 Hath many a man ben spilt, as clerkes teche,
 But for a litel speche avisedly
 Is no man shent, to speken generally:
 My sone, thy tonge shuldest thou restraine
 At alle time, but whan thou dost thy peine
 To speke of God in honour and prayere:
 The firste vertue, sone, if thou wolt lere,
 Is to restraine and kepen wel thy tonge;
 Thus leren children whan that they be yonge:
 My sone, of mochel speking evil avised,
 Ther lesse speking had ynough suffised,
 Cometh mochel harme: thus was me told and
 In mochel speche sinne wanteth naught. [taught,
 Wost thou wherof a rakel tonge serveth?
 Right as a fwerd forcutteth and forkerveth

An arme atwo, my dere sone! right so
 A tonge cutteth frendship all atwo:
 A jangler is to God abhominable.
 Rede Salomon, so wise and honourable,
 Rede David in his Psalmes, rede Senek.
 My sone, speke not but with thyn hed thou beck;
 Dissimule as thou were dese if that thou here
 A janglour speke of perilous matere.
 The Fleming sayth, and lerne if that thee lest,
 That litel jangling causeth mochel rest.
 My sone, if thou no wicked word hast said
 Thee thar not dreden for to be bewraid;
 But he that hath missayd, I dare wel sain,
 He may by no way clepe his word again.
 Thing that is sayd is sayd, and forth it goth;
 Though him repent, or be him never so loth,
 He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd
 A tale of which he is now evil apaid.
 My sone, beware, and be non auctour newe
 Of tidings whether they ben false or trewe:
 Wher so thou come, amonges high or lowe,
 Kepe wel thy tonge, and thinke upon the crowe.

THE PERSONES PROLOGUE.

By that the Manciple had his tale ended
 The sonne fro the south line was descended
 So lowe, that it ne was not to my sight
 Degrees nine-and-twenty as of hight.
 Foure of the klok it was tho, as I gesse,
 For enleven foot, a litel more or lesse,
 My shadow was at thilke time as there,
 Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
 In six feet equal of proportion;
 Therwith the mones exaltation,
 I mene Libra, alway gan ascende
 As we were entring at the thorpes ende;
 For which our Hoste, as he was wont to gie
 As in this cas our jolly compaignie,
 Said in this wise; Lordings everich on,
 Now lacketh us no Tales mo than on:
 Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;
 I trowe that we han herd of eche degree:
 Almost fulfilled in myn ordinance;
 I pray to God so yeve him right good chance
 That telleth us this Tale lustily.

Sire Preeft, quod he, art thou a vicary,
 Or art thou a Person? say soth by thy fay.
 Be what thou be ne breke thou not our play,
 For every man save thou hath told his Tale.
 Unbokel and shew us what is in thy male;
 For trewely me thinketh by thy chere
 Thou shuldest knitte up wel a gret matere.
 Tell us a fable anon, for cockes bones.

This Person him answerd al at ones;
 Thou getest fable non ytold for me,
 For Poule, that writeth unto Timothe,
 Repreveth hem that weiven sothfastnesse,
 And tellen fables and swiche wretchednesse.
 Why shuld I sown draf out of my fist
 Whan I may sown whete if that me list?
 For which I say, if that you list to here
 Moralitye and vertuous matere,

And than that ye wol yeve me audience,
 I wold ful fain at Cristes reverence
 Don you plesance lesul, as I can;
 But trusteth wel I am a fotherne man;
 I cannot geste, rom, ram, ruf, by my letter,
 And, God wote, rime hold I but litel better;
 And therefore if you list, I wol not glose,
 I wol you tell a litel Tale in prose
 To knitte up all this feste and make an ende;
 And Jesu for his grace wit me sende
 To shewen you the way in this viage
 Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrimage
 That hight Jerusalem celestial:
 And if ye vouchesauf anon I shal
 Beginne upon my Tale, for which I pray
 Tell your avis: I can no better say.

But natheles this meditation,
 I put it ay under correction
 Of clerkes, for I am not textuel:
 I take but the sentence, trusteth me wel:
 Therefore I make a protestation
 That I wol standen to correction.

Upon this word we han assented sone;
 For as us semed it was for to done,
 To enden in som vertuous sentence,
 And for to yeve him space and audience,
 And bade our Hoste he shulde to him say
 That alle we to tell his Tale him pray.

Our Hoste had the wordes for us alle:
 Sire Preeft, quod he, now faire you befall;
 Say what you list, and we shul gladly here.
 And with that word he said in this manere;
 Telleth, quod he, your meditation,
 But hasteth you, the sonne wol adoun:
 Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
 And to do wel God sende you his grace.

THE PERSONES TALE*.

Our swete Lord God of heven, that no man wol perish, but wol that we comen all to the knowleching of him, and to the blisful lif that is pardurable, amonesteth us by the prophet Jeremie, that sayth in this wise, Stondeth upon the wayes, and seeth, and axeth of the olde pathes, that is to say, of olde sentences, which is the good way, and walketh in that way, and ye shul finde refreshing for your soules. Many ben the wayes spirituel that leden folk to our Lord Jesu Crist, and to the regne of glory; of which wayes ther is a ful noble way, and wel covenantable, which may not faille to man, ne to woman that thurgh sinne hath misgon fro the right way of Jerusalem celestial, and this way is cleped Penance, of which man shuld gladly herken and enqueren with all his herte, to wete what is penance, and whennes it is cleped penance, and how many maneres ben of actions or werkings of penance, and how many spices ther ben of penance, and which thinges apperteinen and behoven to penance, and which thinges distroublen penance.

Seint Ambrose sayth, that penance is the plaining of man for the gilt that he hath don, and no more to do any thing for which him ought to plaine; and som doctour sayth, Penance is the waymenting of man that forweth for his sinne, and peineth himself for he hath misdoun. Penance with certain circumstances is veray repentance of man, that holdeth himself in sorwe and other peine for his giltyes; and for he shal be veray penitent he shal first bewailen the sinnes that he hath don, and stedfastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouth, and to don satisfaction, and never to don thing for which him ought more to bewayle or complaine, and to continue in good werkes, or elles his repentance may not availe: for, as Seint Isidor sayth, He is a japer and a gabber, and not veray repentant, that eftsones doth thing for which him oweth to repent. Weping, and not for to stint to do sinne, may not availe. But natheles men shuld hope that at every time that man falleth, be it never so oft, that he may arise thurgh penance, if he have grace; but certain it is gret doute; for, as saith Seint Gregorie, Unnethes a-

riseth he out of sinne that is charged with the charge of evil usage: and therefore repentant folk, that stint for to sinne, and forlete sinne or that sinne forlete hem, holy chirche holdeth hem siker of hir salvation: and he that sinneth and veraily repenteth him in his last day, holy chirche yet hopeth his salvation, by the grete mercy of our Lord Jesu Crist, for his repentance: but take ye the siker and certain way.

And now, sith I have declared you what thing is penance; now ye shul understond that ther ben three actions of penance. The first is, that a man be baptised after that he hath sinned. Seint Augustine sayth, But he be penitent for his old sinfulif, he may not beginne the newe clene lif; for certes, if he be baptised without penitence of his old gilt, he receiveth the marke of baptisme, but not the grace, ne the remission of his sinnes, til he have very repentance. Another default is, that men don dedly sinne after that they have received baptisme. The thridde defaute is, that men fall in venial sinnes after hir baptisme fro day to day: therof sayth Seint Augustin, that penance of good and humble folk is the penance of every day.

The spices of penance ben three. That on of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde privee. Tilke penance that is solempne is in two maneres, as to be put out of holy chirche in lenton, for slaughter of children, and swiche maner thing: another is, whan a man hath sinned openly, of which sinne the fame is openly spoken in the contree, and than holy chirche by judgement distreyneth him for to do open penance: commun penance is that preestes enjoinen men in certain cas, as for to go paraventure naked on pilgrimage or bare foot: privee penance is tilke that men don all day for privee sinnes, of which we shrive us prively, and receive privee penance.

Now shalt thou understond what is behoveful and necessary to every parfit penance; and this stont on three thinges, contrition of herte, confession of mouth, and satisfaction; for which sayth Seint John Chrysostome, Penance distreineth a man to accept benignely every peine that him is enjoined with contrition of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaction, and working of all maner humilitee. And this is fruitful penance ayenst the three thinges in which we wrathen our Lord Jesu Crist; this is to say, by delit in thinking, by reche-

* Jerem. vi. ; "State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, quae sit via bona, et ambulate in ea: et invenietis refrigerium animabus vestris." Urry.

lesnesse in speking, and by wicked sinful working: and ayenst this wicked giltes is penance, that may be likened unto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contrition, that hideth him in the herte of him that is veray repentant, right as the rote of the tree hideth him in the erthe. Of this rote of contrition springeth a stalke that bereth branches and leues of confession, and fruit of satisfaction; of which Crist sayth in his Gospell, Doth ye digne fruit of penitence, for by this fruit mow men understonde and knowe this tree, and not by the rote that is hid in the herte of man, ne by the branches, ne the leues of confession: and therefore our Lord Jesu Crist saith thus, By the fruit of hem shal ye knowe hem. Of this rote also springeth a seed of grace, which seed is moder of likerhede, and this seed is eger and hote. The grace of this seed springeth of God, thurgh remembrance on the day of dome and on the peines of helle. Of this matere sayth Salomon, that in the drede of God man forletteth his sinne. The herte of this sede is the love of God, and the desiring of the joye perdurable. This herte draweth the herte of man to God, and doth him hate his sinne; for sothly ther is nothing that favoureth so sote to a child as the milke of his norice, ne nothing is to him more abhominable than that milke whan it is medled with other mete. Right so the sinful man that loveth his sinne, him semeth that it is to him most swete of any thing, but fro that time that he loveth sadly our Lord Jesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther is to him nothing more abhominable; for sothly the lawe of God is the love of God: for which David the prophet sayth, I have loved thy lawe, and hated wickednesse: he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word. This tree saw the prophet Daniel in spirit upon the vision of Nabuchodonosor, whan he conseilled him to do penance. Penance is the tree of lif to hem that it receiven; and he that holdeth him in veray penance is blisful, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penance or contrition, man shal understond foure thinges; that is to say, what is contrition, and which ben the causes that moven a man to contrition, and how he shuld be contrite, and what contrition availeth to the soule. Than is it thus, that contrition is the veray sorwe that a man receiveth in his herte for his sinnes, with sad purpos to shriven him, and to do penance, and never more to don sinne. And this sorwe shal be in this maner, as sayth Seint Bernard; it shal ben hevy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poinant in herte; first, for a man hath agilted his Lord and his creatour, and more sharpe and poinant, for he hath agilted his father celestial, and yet more sharpe and poinant, for he hath wrathed and agilted him that boughte him, that with his precious blod hath delivered us fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the crueltee of the devil, and fro the peines of helle.

The causes that ought to meve a man to contrition ben fixe. First, a man shal remembre him of his sinnes; but loke that that remembrance ne be to him no delit by no way, but grete shame and sorwe for his sinnes; for Job sayth, Sinful men

don werkes worthy of confession; and therefore sayth Ezechiel, I wol remembre me all the yeres of my lif in the bitternesse of my herte: and God sayth in the Apocalipse, Remembre you fro whens that ye ben fall, for before the time that ye sinned, ye weren children of God, and limmes of the regne of God; but for your sinne ye ben waxen thral, and foule membres of the fende, hate of angels, sclaunder of holy chirche, and sode of the false serpent, perpetuel matere of the fire of helle, and yet more foule and abhominable for ye trespassen so oft times as doth the hound that torneth again to ete his own spewing, and yet fouler for your long continuing in sinne, and your sinful usage, for which ye be roten in your sinnes as a beest in his donge. Swiche manere thoughtes make a man to have shame of his sinne and no delit, as God sayth by the prophet Ezechiel, Ye shul remembre you of your wayes, and they shul displese you. Sothly sinnes ben the waies that lede folk to hell.

The second cause that ought to make a man to have disdeigne of sinne is this, that, as saith Seint Peter, Who so doth sinne is thral to sinne, and sinne putteth a man in gret thraldom, and therefore sayth the prophet Ezechiel, I went sorweful, and had disdeigne of myself. Certes wel ought a man have disdeigne of sinne, and withdraw him fro that thraldom and vilany. And lo, what sayth Seneke in this mater? He saith thus, Though I wist that neither God ne man shuld never know it, yet wold I have disdeigne for to do sinne. And the same Seneke also sayth, I am borne to greter thinges than to be thral to my body, or for to make of my body a thral. Ne a fouler thral may no man ne woman make of his body than for to yeve his body to sinne: al were it the foulest chorle or the foulest woman that liveth, and lest of value, yet is he than more foule and more in servitude. Ever fro the higher degree that man falleth, the more is he thral, and more to God and to the world vile and abhominable. O good God! wel ought a man have disdeigne of sinne, sith that thurgh sinne ther he was free he is made bond: and therefore sayth Seint Augustine, If thou hast disdeigne of thy servant, if he offend or sinne, have thou than disdeigne that thou thy self shuldest do sinne. Take reward of their owen value that thou ne be to foule to thyself. Alas! wel oughten they than have disdeigne to be servants and thralles to sinne, and sore to be ashamed of hemself, that God of his endles goodnesse hath sette in high estat, or yeve hem witte, strength of body, hele, beautee, or prosperitee, and bought hem fro the deth with his herte blood, that they so unkindly agains his gentillesse quiten him so villainly, to slaughter of hir owen soules, O good God! ye women that ben of gret beautee, remembreth you on the proverbe of Salomon, that likeneth a faire woman that is a fool of hire body, to a ring of gold that is worne in the groine of a sowe; for right as a sowe wroteth in every ordure, so wroteth the hire beautee in stinking ordure of sinne.

The thridde cause that ought to meve a man to contrition, is drede of the day of dome, and of the

horrible peines of helle; for, as Seint Jerome sayth, At every time that me remembreth of the day of dome I quake; for whan I ete or drinke, or do what so I do, ever semeth me that the trompe fowneth in min eres, Riseth ye up that ben ded, and cometh to the jugement. O good God! moche ought a man to drede swiche a jugement, ther as we shul be alle, as Seint Poule sayth, before the streit jugement of oure Lord Jesu Crist, wheras he shal make a general congregation, wheras no man may be absent; for certes, ther ayaileth non effoine, ne non excusation; and not only that our defautes shul be juged, but eke that all our werkes shul openly be knowen. And, as sayth Seint Bernard, Ther ne shal no pleting availe, ne no sleight: we shal yeve rekening of everich idle word: ther shal we have a juge that may not be deceived, ne corrupt: and why? for certes all our thoughtes ben discovered as to him: ne for prayer, ne for mede he wil not be corrupt; and therefore faith Salomon, 'The wrath of God ne wol not spare no wight for prayer, ne for yest; and therefore at the day of dome ther is non hope to escape; wherfore, as sayth Seint Anselme, Ful gret anguish shal the sinful folk have at that time: ther shal be the sterne and wroth juge sitting above, and under him the horrible pitte of helle open, to destroye him that wolde not be knowen his sinnes, which sinnes shullen openly be shewed before God and before every creature; and on the left side mo divels than any herte may thinke for to hary and drawe the sinful soules to the pitte of helle; and within the hertes of folk shal be the biting conscience, and without forth shal be the world all brenning. Whither than shal the wretched soule flee to hide him? Certes he may not hide him, he must come forth and shewe him; for certes, as faith Seint Jerome, the erth shal cast him out of it, and the see, and also the aire; that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnings. Now sothly, who so wil remembre him of these thinges I gesse that his sinnes shal not torne him to delit, but to grete sorwe for drede of the peine of helle; and therefore faith Job to God, Suffer, Lord, that I may a while bewaile and bewepe or I go without returning to the derke lond ycovered with the derkenesse of deth to the lond of misere and of derkenesse, wheras is the shadow of deth, wheras is non ordre ne ordinance, but grisly drede, that ever shal last. Lo, here may ye see that Job prayed respite awhile to bewepe and waile his trespas, for sothely on day of respite is better than all the tresour of this world: and for as moche as a man may acquite himself before God by penitence in this world, and not by tresour, therefore shuld he pray to God to yeve him respite a while to bewepen and bewailen his trespas; for certes, all the sorwe that a man might make fro the beginning of the world, n'is but a litel thing at regard of the sorwe of helle. The cause why that Job clepeth helle the lond of derkenesse, understondeth that he clepeth it londe or erth, for it is stable and never shal faile, and derke, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light naturel; for certes the derke light that shal come out of the fire that ever

shall brenne shall torne hem all to peine that be in helle, for it sheweth hem the horrible divels that hem tormenten covered with the derkenesse of deth; that is to say, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sight of God, for certes the sight of God is the lif perdurable. The derkenesse of deth ben the sinnes that the wretched man hath don, which that distroublen him to see the face of God, right as a derke cloud betwene us and the sonne: it is londe of misere, because that ther ben three maner of defautes ayenst three thinges that folk of this world han in this present lif, that is to say, honoures, delites, and riches. Ayenst honour have they in helle shame and confusion, for wel ye wote that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man, but in helle is non honour, ne reverence, for certes no more reverence shal be don ther to a king than to a knave; for which God faith by the prophet Jeremie, The folk that me despisen shal be in despite. Honour is also cleped gret lordship: ther shal no wight serven other but of harme and turment. Honour is also cleped gret dignitee and highnesse; but in helle shal they be alle fortroden of divels: as God sayth, The horrible divels shul gon and comen upon the hedes of dampned folk; and this is, for as moche as the higher that they were in this present lif the more shul they be abated and defouled in helle. Ayenst the riches of this world shul they have misere of povertie, and this povertie shall be in foure thinges, in defaute of tresour, of which David sayth, The riche folk, that embraceden and oneden all hir herte to tresour of this world, shul slepe in the sleping of deth, and nothing ne shul they find in hir hondes of all hir tresour. And moreover, the misere of helle shall be in defaute of mete and drink; for God sayth thus by Moyse, They shul be wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devoure hem with bitter deth, and the gall of the dragon shal ben hir drinke, and the venime of the dragon hir morsels. And further over hir misere shal be in defaute of clothing, for they shul be naked in body as of clothing, save the fire in which they brenne, and other filthes; and naked shul they be in soule, of all maner vertues which that is the clothing of the soule. Wher ben than the gay robes, the soft shetes, and the fyn shertes? Lo, what sayth God of heven by the prophet Esaie? that under hem shul be strewed mothes, and hir covertures shul ben of wormes of helle. And further over, hir misere shal be in defaute of frendes, for he is not poure that hath good frendes: but ther is no frend, for neither God, ne no good creature shal be frend to hem, and everich of hem shal hate other with dedly hate. The sonnes and the daughters shal rebel ayenst father and mother, and kinred ayenst kinred, and chiden and despisen eche other both day and night, as God sayth by the prophet Micheas; and the loving children, that whilom loveden so fleshly, everich of hem wold eten other if they might: for how shuld they love togeder in the peines of helle whan they hated eche other in the prosperitee of this lif? for truste wel hir fleshly love was dedly hate; as faith

the prophet David, Who so that loveth wickednesse he hateth his owen soule, and who so hateth his own soule certes he may love non other wight in no manere; and therefore in helle is no solace, ne no frendship, but ever the more kinredes that ben in helle, the more cursing, the more chiding, and the more dedly hate, ther is among hem. And further over, ther they shul have defaute of all maner delites, for certes delites ben after the appetites of the five wittes, as sight, hering, smelling, favouring, and touching. But in helle hir sight shal be ful of derkenesse and of smoke, and hir eyen ful of teres, and hir hering ful of waimenting and grinting of teeth, as sayth Jesu Crist, Hir nose thirles shul be ful of stinking; and, as sayth Esay the prophet, Hir favouring shal be ful of bitter galle; and touching of all hir body shal be covered with fire that never shal quenche, and with wormes that never shal die, as God sayth by the mouth of Esay, And for as moche as they shul not wene that they mow dien for peine, and by deth flee fro peine, that mow they understonde in the word of Job, that sayth, Ther is the shadow of deth. Certes a shadowe hath likenesse of the thing of which it is shadowed, but shadowe is not the same thing of which it is shadowed: right so fareth the peine of helle; it is like deth for the horrible anguish: and why? for it peineth hem ever as though they shuld die anon; but certes they shul not dien; for, as sayth Seint Gregory, To wretched caitifes shal be deth withouten deth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withouten failing; for hir deth shal alway live, and hir ende shal ever more beginne, and hir defaute shal never faile: and therefore sayth Seint John the Evangelist, They shul folow deth and they shul not finde him, and they shul desire to die and deth shal flee from hem. And eke Job saith, that in helle is non ordre of rule. And al be it so that God hath create all thing in right ordre, and nothing withouten ordre, but all thinges ben ordred and nombred, yet natheles they that ben dampned ben nothing in ordre, ne hold non ordre; for the erth shal bere hem no fruite; (for, as the prophet David sayeth, God shal destroy the fruite of the erth as fro hem) ne water shal yeve hem no moisture, ne the aire no refreshing, ne the fire no light: for, as sayth Seint Basil, The brenning of the fire of this world shal God yeve in helle to hem that ben dampned, but the light and the clerenesse shal be yeve in heven to his children, right as the good man yeveth flesh to his children and bones to his houndes. And for they shul have non hope to escape, sayth Job at last, that ther shal horror and grisly drede dwellen withouten ende. Horror is alway drede of harme that is to come, and this drede shal alway dwel in the hertes of hem that ben dampned; and therefore han they lorne all hir hope for seven causes: first, for God, that is hir juge, shal be withouten mercie to hem, and they may not plesse him ne non of his halwes, ne they may yeve nothing for hir raunsom, ne they have no vois to speke to him, ne they may not flee fro peine, ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they may shew to deli-

ver hem fro peine; and therefore sayth Salomon, The wicked man dieth, and whan he is ded he shal have non hope to escape fro peine. Who so than wold wel understonde these peines, and be-thinke him wel that he hath deserved these peines for his finnes, certes he shulde have more talent to sighen and to wepe than for to singe and playe; for, as sayth Salomon, Who so that had the science to know the peines that ben establisshed and ordeined for sinne he wold forsake sinne: That science, sayth Seint Austin, maketh a man to waimenten in his herte.

The fourthe point that oughte make a man have contrition is the sorweful remembrance of the good dedes that he hath leste to don here in erthe, and also the good that he hath lorne. Sothly the good werkes that he hath leste, either they be the good werkes that he wrought er he fell into dedly sinne, or elles the good werkes that he wrought while he lay in sinne. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fell in dedly sinne ben all mortified, astoned, and dilled, by the eft sinning; the other werkes that he wrought while he lay in sinne they ben utterly ded as to the lif perdurable in heven. Than thilke good werkes that ben mortified by eft sinning, which he did while he was in charitee, moun never quicken ayen without veray penitence: and therof sayth God by the mouth of Ezechiel, If the rightful man retorne again fro his rightwisnesse and do wickednesse shal he liven? nay; for all the good werkes that he hath wrought shul never be in remembrance, for he shal die in his sinne. And upon thilke chapitre sayth Seint Gregorie thus, that we shal understonde this principally, that when we don dedly sinne it is for nought than to remembre or drawe into memorie the good werkes that we have wrought befor, for certes in the working of dedly sinne ther is no trust in no good werk that we have don befor; that is to say, as for to have therby the lif perdurable in heven. But natheles the good werkes quicken again and comen again, and helpe and availe to have the lif perdurable in heven, whan we have contrition; but sothly the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly sinne, for as moche as they were don in dedly sinne, they may never quicken; for certes thing that never had lif, may never quicken; and natheles al be it so that they availen not to have the lif perdurable, yet availen they to abreggen the peine of helle, or elles to get temporal riches, or elles that God wol the rather enlamine or light the herte of the sinful man to have repentance; and eke they availen for to usen a man to do good werkes that the fende have the lesse power of his soule. And thus the certeis Lord Jesu Crist ne woli that no good werk that men don be losse, for in somewhat it shal availe. But for as moche as the good werkes that men don while they ben in good lif ben all amortified by sinne folowing, and eke sith all the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly sinne ben utterly ded, as for to have the lif perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne deth

sing thilke newe Frenshe song, *J'ay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour*; for certes sinne bereveth a man both goodnesse of nature and eke the goodnesse of grace; for sothly the grace of the Holy Gost fareth like fire that may not ben idle, for fire faileth anon as it forletteth his working, and right so grace faileth anon as it forletteth his working. Than leseth the sinful man the goodnesse of glorie, that only is hight to good men that labouren and werken wel. Wel may he be sory than that oweth all his lif to God as long as he hath lived, and also as long as he shal live, that no goodnesse ne hath to paie with his dette to God, to whom he oweth all his lif; for trust wel he shal yeve accomptes, as sayth Seint Bernard, of all the goodes that han ben yeven him in this present lif, and how he hath hem dispended, in so moche that ther shal not perishe an here of his hed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal not perishe of his time that he ne shal yeve therof a rekening.

The fiftre thing that ought to meve a man to contrition is remembrance of the passion that our Lord Jesu Crist suffered for our sinnes; for, as sayth Seint Bernard, While that I live I shal have remembrance of the travailes that our Lord Jesu Crist suffered in preching, his werinesse in traveling, his temptations whan he fasted, his long wakinges whan he prayed, his teres whan he wept for pitee of good peple, the wo, and the shame, and the filthe, that men sayden to him, of the foule spitting that met spitten in his face, of the buffettes that men yave him, of the foule mouthes and of the foule repreves that men saiden to him, of the nayles with which he was nailed to the crosse, and of all the remenant of his passion that he suffred for mannes sinne, and nothing for his gylte. And here ye shul understand that in mannes sinne is every maner order or ordinance touned up so down; for it is soth that God and reson, and sensualitee, and the body of man, ben ordained that everich of thise foure thinges shuld have lordship over that other, as thus; God shuld have lordship over reson, and reson over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man. But sothly whan man sinneth al this ordre or ordinance is turned up so down; and therefore than, for as moche as reson of man ne wol not be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his Lord, by right therefore leseth it the lordship that it shuld have over sensualitee, and eke over the body of man: and why? for sensualitee rebelleth than ayenst reson, and by that way leseth reson the lordship over sensualitee and over the body; for right as reson is rebel to God, right so is sensualitee rebel to reson and the body also. And certes this disordenance and this rebellion our Lord Jesu Crist abought upon his precious body ful dere: and herkeneth in whiche wise; for as moche as reson is rebel to God, therefore is man worthy to have forwe, and to be ded: this suffred our Lord Jesu Crist for man after that he had be betraied of his disciple, and distreined and bounde, so that his blood braust out at every nail of his hondes, as saith Seint Augustin. And ferthermore, for as moche as re-

son of man wol not daunt sensualitee whan it may, therefore is man worthy to have shame; and this suffred our Lord Jesu Crist for man whan they spitten in his visage. And fertherover, for as moche as the caitif body of man is rebel both to reson and to sensualitee, therefore it is worthy the deth; and this suffred our Lord Jesu Crist upon the crosse, wheras ther was no part of his body free without grete peine and bitter passion; and all this suffred our Lord Jesu Crist that never forfaited: and thus sayd he; To mochel am I peined for thinges that I never deserved, and to moche defouled for shendship that man is worthy to have: and therefore may the sinful man wel say, as sayth Seint Bernard, Accursed be the bitternesse of my sinne, for whiche ther must be suffered so moche bitternesse: for certes after the divers discordance of our wickednesse was the passion of Jesu Crist ordeined in divers thinges, as thus; certes sinful mannes soule is betraied of the divel by coveitise of temporel prosperitee, and scorned by disceite whan he cheseth fleshly delites, and yet it is turmented by impatience of adversitee, and bespet by servage and subjection of sinne, and at the last it is slain finally. For this discordance of sinful man was Jesu Crist first betraied, and after that was he bounde that came for to unbinde us of sinne and of peine; than was he bescorned that only shuld have ben honoured in alle thinges and of alle thinges; than was his visage, that ought to be desired to be seen of all mankind (in which visage angels desiren to loke) villainly bespet; than was he scourged that nothing had trespassed; and, finally, than was he crucified and slain: than were accomplished the wordes of Esaie, He was wounded for our misdeds, and defouled for our felonies. Now sith that Jesu Crist toke on himself the peine of all our wickednesse, moche ought sinful man to wepe and to bewaile that for his sinnes Goddes sone of heven shuld all this peine endure.

The sixte thing that shuld move a man to contrition is the hope of three thinges; that is to say, foryevenesse of sinne, and the yest of grace for to do wel, and the glorie of heven, with whiche God shal guerdon man for his good dedes: and for as moche as Jesu Crist yeveth us thise yestes of his largenesse and of his soveraine bountee, therefore is he cleped *Jesus Nazarenus Rex. Judaeorum*. Jesus is for to say Saviour or Salvation, on whom men shul hopen to have foryevenesse of sinnes, which that is proprely salvation of sinnes; and therefore sayd the angel to Joseph, Thou shalt clepe his name Jesus that shal save his peple of hir sinnes. And hereof saith Seint Peter, Ther is non other name under heven, that is yeven to any man, by which a man may be saved but only Jesus. Nazarenus is as moche for to say as flourishing, in which a man shal hope that he that yeveth him remission of sinnes shal yeve him also grace wel for to do; for in the flour is hope of fruit in time coming, and in foryevenesse of sinnes hope of grace wel to do. I was at the dore of this herte, sayth Jesus, and clepeth for to enter; he

that openeth to me shal have foryevenesse of his finnes, and I wol enter into him by my grace, and soupe with him by the good werkes that he shal don, which werkes ben the food of God, and he shal soupe with me by the gret joye that I shal yeve him. Thus shal man hope that for his werkes of penance God shal yeve him his regne, as he be- hight him in the Gospel.

Now shal man understande in which maner shal be his contrition. I say that it shal be universal and total; this is to say, a man shal be veray repentant for all his finnes that he hath don in delite of his thought, for delite is perilous: for ther ben two maner of consentinges; that on of hem is cleped Consenting of Affection, whan a man is moved to do sinne, and than deliteth him longe for to thinke on that sinne, and his reson apper- ceiveth it wel that it is sinne ayenst the lawe of God, and yet his reson refraineth not his soule delite or talent though he see wel apertly that it is ayenst the reverence of God; although his reson consent not to do that sinne indede, yet sayn som doctours that swiche delite that dwelleth longe is ful perilous, al be it never so lite: and also a man shuld sorrow, namely for all that ever he hath de- sired ayenst the lawe of God, with parfite con- senting of his reson, for therof is no doute that it is dedly sinne in consenting; for certes ther is no dedly sinne but that it is first in mannes thought, and after that in his delite, and so forth into con- senting and into dede; wherfore I say that many men ne repent hem never of swiche thoughtes and delites, ne never shriven hem of it, but only of the dede of gret finnes outward; wherfore I say that swiche wicked delites ben subtil begilers of hem that shul be dampned. Moreover, man ought to sorwen for his wicked wordes as wel as for his wicked dedes, for certes repentance of a singuler sinne, and not repentant of all his other finnes, or elles repenting him of all his other finnes and not of a singuler sinne, may not availe; for certes God Almighty is all good, and therefore either he foryeveth all, or elles right nought; and therefore sayth Seint Augustin, I wote certainly that God is enemy to every sinner: and how than? he that observeth on sinne shal he have foryeve- nesse of the remenant of his other finnes? nay. And furthermore, contrition shuld be wonder forweful and anguishous, and therefore yeveth him God plainly his mercie: and therefore whan my soule was anguishous, and forweful within me, than had I remembrance of God that my praier might come to him. Furthermore, contri- tion muste be continuel, and that man have sted- fast purpose to shrive him and to amend him of his lif; for sothly while contrition lasteth man may ever hope to have foryevenesse: and of this com- eth hate of sinne, that destroyeth sinne bothe in himself and eke in other folk at his power; for which sayth David, They that love God hate wickednesse; for to love God is for to love that he loveth, and hate that he hateth.

The last thing that men shull understand in contrition is this, wherof availeth contrition. I

say that contrition somtime delivereth man fro sinne; of which David saith, I say, (quod David) I purposed fermely to shrive me, and thou Lord reledest my sinne. And right so as contrition availeth not without sad purpos of shrift and sa- tisfaction, right so litel worth is shrift or satisfac- tion withouten contrition. And moreover, con- trition destroyeth the prison of helle, and maketh weke and feble all the strengthes of the devils, and restoreth the yestes of the Holy Gost and of all good vertues, and it clenseth the soule of sinne, and delivereth it fro the peine of helle, and fro the compaignie of the devil, and fro the servage of sinne, and restoreth it to all goodes spirituel, and to the compaignie and communion of holy chirche. And furthermore, it maketh him that whilom was sone of ire to be the sone of grace: and all these thinges ben preved by holy writ; and therefore he that wold set his entent to thise thinges he were ful wise; for sothly he ne shuld have than in all his lif corage to sinne, but yeve his herte and body to the service of Jesu Crist, and therof do him homage; for certes our Lord Jesu Crist hath spared us so benignely in our fo- lies, that if he had ne pitce on mannes soule a sory song might we alle singe.

Explicit prima pars penitentiae, et incipit pars secunda.

The second part of penitence is confession, and that is signe of contrition. Now shul ye under- stonde what is confession, and whether it ought nedes to be don or non, and which thinges ben convenable to veray confession.

First shalt thou understande that confession is veray shewing of finnes to the preest; this is to saie veray, for he must confesse him of all the conditions that belongen to his sinne as ferforth as he can: all must be sayd, and nothing excused, ne hid, ne forwrapped, and not avaunt him of his good werkes: also it is necessarie to understande whennes that finnes springen, and how they en- cressen, and which they ben.

Of springing of finnes saith Seint Poule in this wise; that right as by on man sinne entred first into this world, and thurgh sinne deth, right so deth entreth into alle men that sinnen: and this man was Adam, by whom sinne entred into this world whan he brake the commandement of God: and therefore he that first was so mighty that he ne shuld have died, became swiche on that he must nedes die whether he wold or no; and all his pro- genie in this that in thilke maner sinnen dien. Loke that in the estate of innocence, whan Adam and Eve weren naked in Paradise, and no thing ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was most wily of all other bestes that God had made, sayd to the woman, Why com- manded God you that ye shuld not ete of every tree in Paradise? The woman answered, Of the fruit, sayd she, of the trees of Paradise we feden us, but of the fruit of the tree that is in the mid- del of Paradise, God forbode us for to eten, ne to touche it, lest we shuld die. The serpent sayd to the woman, Nay, nay, ye shul not dien of deth.

for soth God wote that what day that ye ete ther-
of your eyen shul open, and ye shul be as goddes,
knowing good and harme. The woman saw that
the tree was good to feding, and faire to the eyen,
and delectable to the sight; she toke of the fruit of
the tree and did ete, and yave to hire husbond, and
he ete; and anon the eyen of hem both opened;
and whan they knewe that they were naked, they
sowed of a fig-tree leves in maner of breches to
hiden hir members. Here mow ye seen that
dedly sinne hath first suggestion of the sende, as
sheweth here by the adder, and afterward the de-
lit of the flesh, as sheweth here by Eve, and after
that the consenting of reson, as sheweth by Adam:
for trust wel though so it were that the sende
tempted Eve, that is to say, the flesh, and the flesh
had delit in the beautee of the fruit defended, yet
certes til that reson, that is to say Adam, consented
to the eting of the fruit, yet stode he in the state of
innocence. Of thilke Adam toke we thilke sinne
original; from him fleshly descended be we all,
and engendred of vile and corrupt mater; and
whan the soule is put in our bodies, right anon is
contract original sinne, and that that was erst but
only peine of concupiscence is afterward both
peine and sinne; and therefore we ben all yborne
sones of wrath and of dampnation perdurable, if ne
were baptisme that we receive, which benimeth
us the culpe: but forsoth the peine dwelleth with
us as to temptation, which peine hight concupis-
cence. This concupiscence, whan it is wrongfully
disposed or ordeined in man, it maketh him co-
veit, by coveitise of flesh, fleshly sinne by sight of
his eyen, as to erthly thinges, and also coveitise of
highnesse by pride of herte.

Now, as to speke of the first coveitise, that is,
concupiscence, after the lawe of our membres that
were lawfully ymaked, and by rightful judgement
of God, I say, for as moche as a man is not obei-
sant to God that is his Lord, therefore is his herte
to him disobeisant thurgh concupiscence, which is
called nourishing of sinne, and occasion of sinne;
therefore all the while that a man hath within him
the peine of concupiscence it is impossible but he
be tempted somtime, and moved in his flesh to
sinne. And this thing may not faile as long as he
liveth; it may wel waxe feble by vertue of bap-
tisme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence,
but fully ne shal it never quenche, that he ne shal
somtime be moved in himselfe but if he were re-
freined by sikenesse, or malefice of forcerie, or cold
drinkes. For lo, what sayth Seint Poule? The
flesh coveiteth ayenst the spirit, and the spirit
ayenst the flesh; they ben so contrarie and so stri-
ven that a man may not alway do as he wold.
The same Seint Poule, after his gret penance in
water and in lond; in water by night and by day
in gret peril and in gret peine, in lond in grete
famine and thrust, cold and clothles, and ones
stoned almost to deth, yet sayd he, Alas! I caitif
man, who shal deliver me fro the prison of my cai-
tif body? And Seint Jerom, whan he long time
had dwelled in desert, wheras he had no compag-
nie but of wilde bestes, wheras he had no mete

but herbes, and water to his drinke, ne no bed but
the naked erth, wherfore his flesh was black as an
Ethiopian for hete, and nie destroyed for cold, yet
sayd he that the brenning of lecherie boiled in all
his body: wherfore I wot wel likerly that they
be deceived that say they be not tempted in hir
bodies; witnesse Seint James, that said that every
wight is tempted in his owen conscience; that is
to say, that eche of us hath mater and occasion to
be tempted of the nourishing of sinne that is in
his body; and therefore sayth Seint John the Evan-
gelist, If we say that we ben without sinne we de-
ceive ourself, and truth is not in us.

Now shul ye understonde in what maner sinne
wexeth and encrefeth in man. The first thing is
that nourishing of sinne of which I spake before,
that is, concupiscence; and after that cometh sug-
gestion of the devil, this is to say, the divels be-
lous, with which he bloweth in man the fire of
concupiscence; and after that a man bethinketh
him whether he wol do or no that thing to which
he is tempted; and than if a man withstond and
weive the first entising of his flesh and of the fend
than it is no sinne; and if so be he do not, than
feleth he anon a flame of delit, and than it is good
to beware and kepe him wel, or elles he wol fall
anon to consenting of sinne, and than wol he do
it if he may have time and place. And of this
mater sayth Moyse by the devil in this maner;
The fend sayth, I wol chace and pursue man by
wicked suggestion, and I wol hent him by meving
and stirring of sinne, and I wol depart my pris or
my prey by deliberation, and my lust shal be ac-
complished in delit; I wol draw my swerd in con-
senting; (for certes right as a swerd departeth a
thing in two peces, right so consenting departeth
God fro man) and than wol I fle him with my
hond in dede of sinne. Thus sayth the fend, for
certes than is a man al ded in soule; and thus is
sinne accomplished by temptation, by delit, and by
consenting, and than is the sinne actual.

Forsoth sinne is in two maners; either it is ve-
nial or dedly sinne. Sothly whan a man loveth
any creature more than Jesu Crist our creatour,
than it is dedly sinne; and venial sinne it is if a
man love Jesu Crist lesse than him ought. For-
soth the dede of this venial sinne is ful perilous,
for it amenuseth the love that man shuld have to
God more and more; and therefore if a man charge
himself with many swiche venial sinnes, certes but
if so be that he somtime discharge him of hem by
shrift, they may wel lightly amenuse in him all the
love that he hath to Jesu Crist. And in this wise
skippeth venial sinne into dedly sinne; for certes
the more that a man chargeth his soule with ve-
nial sinnes, the more he is enclined to fall into ded-
ly sinne; and therefore let us not be negligent to
discharge us of venial sinnes; for the proverbe
sayth that many smal maken a gret. And herken
this ensample: a gret wawe of the see cometh
somtime with so gret a violence that it drencheth
the ship; and the same harme do somtime the
smal dropes of water that enteren thurgh a litel
crevis in the thurrok, and in the bottom of the

ship, if men ben so negligent that they discharge hem not by time; and therefore although ther be difference betwix thise two causes of drenching algates, the ship is dreint. Right so fareth it sometime of dedly sinne and of anoious venial sinnes, whan they multiplie in man so gretly that thilke worldly thinges that he loveth, thurgh which he sinneth venially, is as gret in his herte as the love of God, or more; and therefore the love of every thing that is not beset in God, ne don principally for Goddes sake, although that a man love it lesse than God, yet it is venial sinne; and dedly sinne is whan the love of any thing weigheth in the herte of man as moche as the love of God, or more. Dedly sinne, as sayth Seint Augustine, is whan a man tourneth his herte fro God, whiche that is veray soveraine bountee, that may not chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thing that may chaunge and flitte; and certes that is every thing fave God of heven: for soth is that if a man yeve his love, which that he oweth to God with all his herte, unto a creature, certes as moche of his love as he yeveth to the same creature, so moche he bereveth fro God, and therefore doth he sinne; for he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth not to God all his dette, that is to sayn, all the love of his herte.

Now sith man understondeth generally which is venial sinne, than is it convenable to tell specially of sinnes whiche that many a man peraventure demeth hem no sinnes, and shriveth him not of the same, and yet natheles they be sinnes sothly, as thise clerkes writen; this is to say, at every tyme that man eteth and drinketh more than sufficeth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he doth sinne; eke whan he speketh more than it nedeth, he doth sinne; eke whan he herkeneth not benignely the complaint of the poure; eke whan he is in hele of body, and wol not fast whan other folk fast, without cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth more than nedeth, or whan he cometh by that encheson to late to chirche, or to other werkes of charitee; eke whan he useth his wif withouten soveraine desire of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yeld his wif his dette of his body; eke whan he wol not visite the sike or the prisoner if he may; eke if he love wif or child, or other worldly thing, more than reson requireth; eke if he flater or blandise more than him oughte for any necessitee; eke if he amuse or withdrawe the almesse of the poure; eke if he appaile his mete more deliciously than nede is, or ete it to hastily by likerousnesse; eke if he talke vanitees in the chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a taler of idle wordes of folie or villanie, for he shal yeld accomptes of it at the day of dome; eke whan he behighteth or assureth to don thinges that he may not perfourme; eke whan that he by lightnesse of folly missayeth or scorneth his neighbour; eke whan he hath any wicked suspencion of thing ther he ne wote of it no sothfastnesse. Thise thinges, and mo withouten nombre, be sinnes, as sayth Seint Augustine. Now shal ye understonde that al be it so that non erthly

man may eschewe al venial sinnes, yet may he refreine him by the brenning love that he hath to our Lord Jesu Crist, and by prayer and confession, and other good werkes, so that it shal but litel grieve: for, as sayth Seint Augustine, If a man love God in swiche maner that all that ever he doth is in the love of God, or for the love of God veraily, for he brenneth in the love of God, loke how moche that o drope of water which falleth into a fourneis ful of fire anoieth or greveth the brenning of the fire, in like maner anoieth or greveth a venial sinne unto that man whiche is stedfast and parfite in the love of our Saviour Jesu Crist. Furthermore, men may also refreine and put away venial sinne by receiving worthily the precious body of Jesu Crist, by receiving eke of holy water, by almes dede, by general confession of *confiteor* at masse, and at prime, and at complin, and by blessing of bishoppes and preestes, and by other good werkes.

De Septem Peccatis Mortalibus.

Now it is behovely to tellen whiche ben dedly sinnes, that is to say, chiefetaines of sinnes, for as moche as all they ren in o lees, but in divers maners. Now ben they cleped chiefetaines for as moche as they be chiefe, and of hem springen all other sinnes. The rote of thise sinnes than is pride, the general rote of all harmes, for of this rote springen certain braunches, as ire, envie, accide or slouthe, avarise or soveitise, (to common understonding) glotonie, and lecherie; and eche of thise chief sinnes hath his braunches and his twigges, as shal be declared in hir chapitres following.

De Superbia.

And though so be that no man knoweth utterly the nombre of the twigges and of the harmes that comen of pride, yet wol I shew a partie of hem as ye shul understand. Ther is inobedience, avaunting, ipocrisie, despit, arrogance, impudence, swelling of herte, insolence, elation, impatience, strif, contumacie, presumption, irreverence, pertinacie, vaine glorie, and many other twigges that I cannot declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the commandements of God, and to his soveraines, and to his gostly fader; avauntour is he that boasteth of the harme or of the bountee that he hath don; ipocrite is he that hideth to shew him swiche as he is, and sheweth him to seme swiche as he is not; despitous is he that hath disdain of his neighebour, that is to sayn, of his even Cristen, or hath despit to do that him ought to do; arrogant is he that thinketh that he hath those bountees in him that he hath not, or weneth that he shulde have hem by his deserving, or elles that demeth that he be that he is not; impudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of his sinnes; swelling of herte is whan man rejoyceth him of harme that he hath don; insolent is he that despiseth in his judgement all other folk as in regarde of his value, of his conning, of his speking, and of

his bering; elation is whan he ne may neither suffer to have maistre ne felawe; impatient is he that wol not be taught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werrieth truth wetingly, and defendeth his foly; *contumax* is he that thurgh his indignation is ayenst every auctoritee or power of hem that ben his soveraines; presumption is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that him ought not to do, or elles that he may not do, and this is called surquidrie; irreverence is whan man doth not honour ther as him ought to do, and waiteth to be revered; pertinacie is whan man defendeth his foly, and trusteth to moche in his owen wit; vaine-glorie is for to have pompe and delit in his temporal highnesse, and glorye him in his worldly estate; jangling is whan man speketh to moche before folk, and clappeth as a mille, and taketh no kepe what he sayth.

And yet ther is a privee spice of pride that waiteth first to be salewed or he wol salew, all be he lesse worthy than that other is; and eke he waiteth to sit or to go aboye him in the way, or kisse the pax, or ben encensed or gon to offering before his neighbour, and swiche semblable thinges, ayenst his deutee peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swiche a proude desire to be magnified and honoured beforn the peple.

Now ben ther two maner of prides; that on of hem is within the herte of a man, and that other is without; of whiche sothly thise foresayd thinges, and mo than I have sayd, apperteinen to pride that is within the herte of man; and ther be other, spices of pride that ben withouten; but natheless that on of thise spices of pride is signe of that other, right as they gay Levesell at the taverne is signe of the win that is in the celler. And this is in many thinges, as in speche and contenance, and outrageous array of clothing; for certes if there had ben no sinne in clothing Crist wold not so sone have noted and spoken of the clothing of thilke rich man in the Gospel; and, as Seint Gregory sayth, that precious clothing is culpable for the derth of it, and for his softnesse, and for his strangenesse and disguising, and for the superfluitee or for the inordinate scantnesse of it. Alas! may not a man see as in our daies the sinneful costlewe array of clothing, and namely in to moche superfluitee, or elles in to disordinate scantnesse.

As to the first sinne, in superfluitee, of clothing, whiche that maketh it so dere, to the harm of the peple, not only the coste of the enbrouding, the disguising, endenting or barring, ounding, paling, winding, or bending, and semblable wast of cloth in vanitee but ther is also the costlewe furring in hir gounes, so muche pounsoning of chesel to maken holes, so moche dagging of sheres, with the superfluitee in length of the foresaide gounes, trailing in the dong and in the myre, on hors and eke on foot, as wel of man as of woman, that all thilke trailing is veraily (as in effect) wasted, consumed, thredbare, and rotten with dong, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to get damage of the foresayd poure folk, and that in sondry wise, this is to sayn, the more that cloth is wasted the more

must it cost the pour peple for the scarcenesse; and furthermore, if so be that they wolden yewe swiche pounsoned and dagged clothing to the poure peple it is not convenient to were for hir estate, ne suffisant to bote hir necessitee, to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament. Upon that other side, to speke of the horrible disordinate scantnesse of clothing, as ben thise cutted sloppes or hanselines, that thurgh hir shortnesse cover not the shameful members of man to wicked entente: alas! som of hem shewen the bosse and the shape of the horrible swollen members, that semen like to the maladie of Hernia, in the wrapping of hir hosen, and eke the buttokkes of hem behinde, that faren as it were the hinder part of a she ape in the ful of the mone. And moreover, the wretched swollen members that they shew thurgh disguising, in departing of hir hosen in white and rede, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres were flaine: and if so be that they departe hir hosen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blake, or blake and rede, and so forth, than semeth it, as by variance of colour, that the half part of hir privee members ben corrupt by the fire of Seint Antonie, or by cancre, or other swiche mischance. Of the hinder part of hir buttokkes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes in that partie of hir body, ther as they purgen hir stinking ordure, that soule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in dispite of honestee, whiche honestee that Jesu Crist and his frendes observed to shewe in hir lif. Now as to the outrageous array of women, God wote that though the visages of some of hem semen ful chaste and debonaire, yet notisien they in hir array of attire likerousnesse and pride. I say not that honestee in clothing of man or woman is uncomvenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinate scarcitee of clothing is reprevable. Also the sinne of ornament or of appaile is in thinges that apperteine to riding, as in to many delicat hors that ben holden for delit, that ben so faire, fatte, and costlewe; and also in many a vicious knave that is sustained because of hem; in curious herneis, as in saddles, coppers, peitrels, and bridles, covered with precious cloth and rich, barred and plated of gold and silver, for which God sayth by Zacharie the prophet, I wol confounde the riders of swiche hors. These folke taken litel regard to the riding of Goddes sone of heven, and of his harneis, whan he rode upon the asse, and had none other harneis but the poure clothes of his disciples, ne we rede not that ever he rode on any other beste. I speke this for the sinne of superfluitee, and not for honestee, whan reason it requireth. And moreover, certes pride is gretly notified in holding of gret meinie, whan they ben of litel profite or of right no profite, and namely whan that meinie is felonous and damageous to the peple by hardinesse of high lordeship, or by way of office; for certes swiche lordes sell than hir lordeship to the devil of helle whan they susteine the wickednesse of hir meinie; or eke whan thise folk of low degree, as they that holden hostelryes, sustainen theste of hir

hostellers, and that is in many maner of deceites; thiike maner of folk ben the flies that folowen the hony, or elles the houndes that folowen the caraine: swiche foresayde folk stranglen spiritually hir lordeshipes; for which thus saith David the prophet, Wicked deth mot come unto thilke lordshipes, and God yeve that they mot descend into helle all doun, for in hir houses is iniquitee and shrewednesse, and not God of heven: and certes but if they don amendement, right as God yave his benison to Laban by the service of Jacob, and to Pharaon by the service of Joseph, right so God wol yeve his malison to swiche lordshipes as susteine the wickednesse of hir servants, but they come to amendement. Pride of the table appereth eke ful oft, for certes riche men be clefted to festes, and poure folk he put away and rebuked; and also in excesse of divers metes and drinkes, and namely swiche maner bake metes and dishe metes brenning of wilde fire, and peinted and castelled with paper, and semblable wast, so that it is abusyon to thinke; and eke in to gret preciousnesse or vessell, and curiositee of minstrelcie by which a man is stirred more to the delites of luxurie, if so be that he sette his herte the lesse upon oure Lord Jesu Crist, it is a sinne; and certainly the delites might ben so gret in this cas that a man might lightly fall by hem into dedly sinne. The spices that sourden of pride, sothly whan they sourden of malice imagined, avised, and forecaste, or elles of usage, ben dedly sinnes it is no doute; and whan they sourden by freeltee unavised sodenly, and sodenly withdrawn again, al be they grevous sinnes I gesse that they be not dedly. Now might men aske wherof that pride sourdeth and springeth? I say that somtime it springeth of the goodes of nature, somtime of the goodes of fortune, and somtime of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stonden only in the goodes of the body or of the soule; certes the goodes of the body ben hele of body, strength, delivernesse, beautee, gentrie, franchise; the goodes of nature of the soule ben good wit, sharpe understanding, subtil engine, vertue naturel, good memorie: goodes of fortune ben riches, high degree of lordshipes, and preisinges of the peple; goodes of grace ben science, power to suffre spiritueltravaile, benignitee, vertuous contemplation, withstanding of temptation, and semblable thinges; of which foresaid goodes certes it is a gret folie a man to priden him in ony of hemall. Now as for to speke of goodes of nature, God wot that somtime we have hem in nature as moche to our damage as to our profite. As for to speke of hele of body, trewely it passeth ful lightly, and also it is ful ofte encheson of siknesse of the soule, for God wote the flesh is a gret enemy to the soule, and therefore the more that the body is hole the more be we in peril to falle; eke for to priden him in his strength of body it is a grete folie, for certes the flesh coveiteth ayenst the spirite, and ever the more strong that the flesh is the sorier may the soule be; and, over all, this strength of body and worldly hardinesse causeth ful of to many man peril and

mischance; also to have pride of gentrie is right gret folie, for oft time the gentrie of the body benimeth the gentrie of the soule: and also we ben all of o fader and of o moder, and all we ben of o nature; rotten and corrupt, bothe riche and poure. Forsotho maner gentrie is for to preise, that appareilleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees, and maketh him Cristes child, for trusteth wel that over what man that sinne hath maistrie he is a veray cherl to sinne.

Now ben ther general signes of gentilnesse, as eschewing of vice and ribaudrie, and servage of sinne in word, and in werk and contenance, and using vertue, as courtesie and clenenesse, and to be liberal, that is to say, large by measure, for thilke that passeth mesure is folie and sinne; another is to remember him of bountee that he of other folk hath received; another is to be benigne to his subgettes; wherfor saith Seneke, Ther is nothing more covenable to a man of high estate than dobonairtee and pitee; and therefore thise flies that men clepen Bees, whan they make hir king they chesen on that hath no pricke wherwith he may sting. Another is, man to have a noble herte and a diligent, to atteine to high vertuous thinges: now, certes a man to priden him in the goodes of grace is eke an outrageous folie, for thilke yestes of grace that shuld have tourned him to goodnesse and to medicine tourneth him to venime and confusyon, as sayth Seint Gregorie. Certes also, who so prideth him in the goodnesse of Fortune he is a gret fool, for somtime is a man a gret lord by the morwe that is a caitife and a wretch or it be night: and somtime the richnesse of a man is cause of his deth: and somtime the delites of a man ben cause of grevous maladie thurgh which he dieth. Certes the commendation of the peple is ful false and brotel for to trust; this day they preise, to-morwe they blame. God wote desire to have commendation of the peple hath caused deth to many a besy man.

Remedium Superbie.

Now sith that so it is that ye have understond what is pride, and which be the spices of it, and how mennes pride sourdeth and springeth, now ye shul understond which is the remedie ayenst it. Humilitee or mekenesse is the remedie ayenst pride; that is a vertue thurgh which a man hath veray knowledge of himself, and holdeth of himself no deintee ne no pris, as in regard of his desertes, considering ever his freeltee. Now ben ther three maner of humilitees, as humilitee in herte, and another in the mouth, and the thridde in werkes. The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres; that on is whan a man holdeth himself as nought worth before God of heven; the second is whan he despiseth non other man; the thridde is whan he ne recketh nat though men holde him nought worth; and the fourth is whan he is not sory of his humilitation. Also the humilitee of mouth is in four thinges; in attemperate speche; in humilitee of speche, and whan he confesseth

with his owen mouth, that he is swiche as he thinketh that he is in herte; another is whan he preifeth the bountee of another man, and nothing therof amenufeth. Humilitee eke in werkes is in foure maners: the first is whan he putteth other men before him; the second is to chese the lowest place of all; the thridde is gladly to assent to good conseil; the fourth is to stond gladly to the award of his fovereigne, or of hem that is higher in degree; certain this is a gret werk of humilitee.

De Invidia.

After pride wol I speke of the foule sinne of envie, which that is, after the word of the philosopher, sorwe of other mennes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustine it is sorwe of other mennes wele, and joy of other mennes harme. This foule sinne is platly ayenst the Holy Gost: al be it so that every sinne is ayenst the Holy Gost, yet natheles for as moche as bountee apperteineth properly to the Holy Gost, and envie cometh properly of malice, therefore it is properly ayenst the bountee of the Holy Gost. Now hath malice two spices, that is to say, hardnesse of herte in wickednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blind that he considereth not that he is in sinne, or recketh not that he is in sinne, which is the hardnesse of the divel. That other spice of envie is whan that a man werrieth trouth whan he wot that it is trouth, and also whan he werrieth the grace of God that God hath yeve to his neighbour; and all this is by envie; certes than is envie the werst sinne that is, for sothly all other sinnes be sometime only ayenst on special vertue, but certes envie is ayenst al maner vertues and alle goodnesse, for it is sory of all bountee of his neighbour: and in this maner it is divers from all other sinnes, for wel unnethe is ther any sinne that it ne hath som delit in himself save only envie that ever hath in himself anguish and sorwe. The spices of envie ben these: ther is first sorwe of other mennes goodnesse and of hir prosperitee, and prosperitee ought to be kindly mater of joye; than is envie a sinne ayenst kinde. The seconde spice of envie is joye of other mennes harme, and that is properly like to the divel, that ever rejoyfeth him of mannes harme. Of this two species, cometh backbiting; and this sinne of backbiting or detracting hath certain spices, as thus; som man preifeth his neighbour by a wicked entente, for he maketh alway a wicked knotte at the laste ende; alway he maketh a *but* at the last ende, that is digne of more blame than is worth all the preifing: the second spice is, that if a man be good, or doth or sayth a thing good entente, the backbiter wol turne all that goodeffe up so down to his shrewde entente: the thridde is to amenufe the bountee of his neighbour: the fourthe spice of backbiting is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man than wol the backbiter say, Parfay swiche a man is yet better than he, in dispreifing of him that men preise:

the fifth spice is this, for to consent gladly to herken the harme that men speke of other folk: this sinne is ful gret, and ay encreseth after the wicked entent of the backbiter: after backbiting cometh grutching or murmurance, and sometime it springeth of impatience ayenst God, and sometime ayenst man: ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst the peine of helle, or ayenst poverté, or losse of catel, or ayenst rain or tempest, or elles grutcheth that shrewes have prosperitee, or elles that good men have adversitee: and all thise thinges shuld men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful jugement and ordinance of God. Somtime cometh grutching of avarice, as Judas gruched ayenst the Magdeleine whan she anointed the hed of our Lord Jesu Crist with hire precious oynement: this maner murmuring is swiche as whan man grutcheth of goodnesse that himself doth or that other folk don of hir owen catel. Somtime cometh murmur of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee gruched ayenst the Magdeleine whan she approached to Jesu Crist and wept at his feet for hire sinnes: and sometime it foudeth of envie, whan men discover a mannes harme that was privee, or bereth him on hond thing that is false. Murmur also is oft among servants, that grutchen whan hir foveraines bidden hem do lesful thinges: and for as moche as they dare not openly withsay the commaundement of hir foveraines, yet wol they say harme and grutche and murmure prively for veray despit, which wordes they call the divels *Pater noster*, though so be that the devil had never *Pater noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swiche a name. Somtime it cometh of ire or privee hate, that norissheth rancour in the herte, as afterward I shal declare. Than cometh eke bitternesse of herte, thurgh which bitternesse very good dede of his neighbour semeth to him bitter and unfavory. Than cometh discord, that unbindeth all maner of frendship: than cometh scorning of his neighbour, al do he never so wel: than cometh accusing, as whan a man seketh occasion to annoyen his neighbour, which is like the craft of the divel, that waiteth both day and night to accusen us all: than cometh malignitee, thurgh which a man annoieth his neighbour prively if he may, and if he may not algate his wicked will shal not let as for to brenne his hous prively, or enpoisen him, or fle his bestes, and semblable thinges.

Remedium Invidie.

Now wol I speke of the remedie ayenst this foule sinne of envie. Firste is the love of God principally, and loving of his neighbour as himself, for sothly that on ne may not be without that other; and trust wel that in the name of thy neighbour thou shalt understande the name of thy brother, for certes all we have on fader fleshy and on moder, that is to say, Adam and Eve, and also on fader spirituel, that is to say, God of heven. Thy neighbour art thou bounde for to

love, and will him all goodnesse, and therefore sayth God, Love thy neighbour as thyself, that is to say, to salvation both of lif and soule; and moreover, thou shalt love him in word, and in benigne amonesting and chastising, and comfort him in his anoyes, and praye for him with all thy herte; and in dede thou shalt love him in swiche wise that thou shalt do to him in charitee as thou woldest that it were don to thin owen person, and therefore thou ne shalt do him no damage in wicked word, ne harme in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule, by entising of wicked ensample: thou shalt not desire his wif, ne non of his thinges. Understonde eke that in the name of Neighbour is comprehended his enemy; certes man shal love his enemy for the commandement of God, and sothly thy frend thou shalt love in God: I say thin enemy shalt thou love for Goddes sake by his commandement, for if it were reson that man shoulde hate his enemy forsoth God n'olde not receive us to his love that ben his enemies. Ayenst three maner of wronges that his enemy doth to him he shal do three thinges, as thus; ayenst hate and rancour of herte he shal love him in herte; ayenst chiding and wicked wordes he shal pray for his enemy; ayenst the wicked dede of his enemy he shal do him bountee; for Crist sayth, Love your enemies, and prayeth for hem that speke you harme, and for hem that chafen and pursuen you, and do bountee to hem that haten you. Lo, thus commandeth us our Lord Jesu Crist to do to our enemies. Forsoth nature driveth us to love our frendes, and parsay our enemies have more nede of love than our frendes, and they that more nede have certes to hem shal men do goodnesse; and certes in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jesu Crist that died for his enemies; and in as moche as thilke love is more grevous to performe, so moche is more gret the merite, and therefore the loving of our enemy hath confounded the venime of the divel; for right as the divel is confounded by humilitee, right so is he wounded to the deth by love of our enemy: certes than is love the medicine that casteth out the venime of envie fro mannes herte.

De Ira.

After envy wol I declare of the sinne of ire, for sothly who so hath envy upon his neighbour anon communly wol finde him mater of wrath in word or in dede ayenst him to whom he hath envie. And as wel cometh ire of pride as of envie, for sothly he that is proude or envious is lightly wroth.

This sinne of ire, after the discribing of Seint Augustin, is wicked will to be avenged by word or by dede; ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blode of man yquickened in his herte, thurgh which he wold harme to him that he hateth; for certes the herte of man by enchaufing and meving of his blood waxeth so troubled that it is out of all maner judgement of reson. But ye shul understonde that ire is in two maners, that on of

hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh the which man is wroth with wickednesse, and again wickednesse, and therefore saith the wise man that ire is better than play. This ire is with debonairete, and it is wrothe without bitternesse; not wrothe ayenst the man, but wrothe with the misdede of the man; as saith the prophet David, *Irascimini, et nolite peccare*. Now understonde that wicked ire is in two maners, that is to say, soden ire or hasty ire, without avisement and consenting of reson; the meaning and the sence of this is, that the reson of a manne consenteth not to that soden ire, and than it is venial. Another ire is that is ful wicked, that cometh of felonie of herte, avised and cast before, with wicked will to do vengeance, and therto his reson consenteth; and sothly this is dedly sinne. This ire is so displefant to God that it troubleth his hous, and chafeth the Holy Gost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the likenesse of God, that is to say, the vertue that is in mannes soule, and putteth in him the likenesse of the devil, and benimeth the man fro God that is his rightful Lord. This ire is a ful gret plesance to the devil, for it is the devils forneis that he enchaufeth with the fire of helle; for certes right so as fire is more mighty to destroye erthly thinges than any other element, right so ire is mighty to destroye all spirituel thinges. Loke how that fire of smal gledes, that ben almost ded under ashen, wol quicken ayen whan they ben touched with brimstone; right so ire wol evermore quicken ayen whan it is touched with pride that is covered in mannes herte; for certes fire ne may not come out of nothing, but if it were first in the same thing naturelly, as fire is drawn out of flintes with stele; and right so as pride is many times mater of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as sayth Seint Isidore, that whan men make a fire of the faide tree, and cover the coles of it with ashen, sothly the fire therof wol last all a yere or more: and right so fareth it of rancour whan it is ones conceived in the herte of som men; certes it wol lasten peraventure from on Easterne day until another Easterne day, or more; but certes the same man is ful fer from the mercie of God all thilke while.

In this foresaid devils forneis ther forgen three shrewes, Pride, that ay bloweth and encrefeth the fire by chiding and wicked wordes; than stondeth Envie, and holdeth the hot yren upon the herte of man with a pair of longe tonges of longer rancour; and than stondeth the sinne of contumelie, or strif and cheste, and battereth and forgeth by vilains reprevings. Certes this cursed sinne annoyeth both to the man himself and eke his neighbour, for sothly almost all the harme or damage that ony man doth to his neighbour cometh of wrath, for certes outrageous wrathe doth all that ever the soule fende willeth or commandeth him; for he ne spareth neyther for our Lord Jesu Crist ne his swete moder; and in his outrageous anger and ire, alas! alas! ful many on at that

time feleth in his herte ful wickedly both of Crist and also of all his halwes. Is not this a cursed vice? yes, certes. Alas! it benimmeth fro man his witte and his reson, and all his debonaire lif spirituel, that shuld kepe his soule: certes it benimmeth also Goddes due lordship (and that is mannes soule) and the love of his neighbours; it striveth also all day ayenst trowth; it reveth him the quiet of his herte, and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stinking engendrures; first hate, that is olde wrath; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde frend that he hath loved ful long; and than cometh werre, and every manner of wrong that a man doth to his neighbour in body or in catel. Of this cursed sinne of ire cometh eke manslaughter. And understondeth wel that homicide (that is manslaughter) is in divers wise. Som maner of homicide is spirituel, and som is bodily. Spirituel manslaughter is in six thinges. First, by hate, as sayth Seint John, He that hateth his brother is an homicide. Homicide is also by backbiting, of which backbitours sayth Salomon, that they have two fwerdes with which they slay hir neighbours; for sothly as wicked it is to benime of him his good name as his lif. Homicide is also in yeving of wicked conseil by fraude, as for to yeve conseil to areise wrongful customes and talages, of which sayth Salomon, A lion roring, and a bare hungrie, ben like to cruel lordes in withholding or a bregging of the hire or of the wages of servantes, or elles in usurie, or in withdrawing of the almesse of poure folk; for which the wise man sayth, Fedeth him that almost dieth for hunger, for sothly but if thou fede him thou sleest him: and all thise ben dedly sinnes. Bodily manslaughter is whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in other maner, as whan thou commandest to sle a man, or elles yevest conseil to sle a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners. That on is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth him that is culpable to the deth; but let the justice beware that he do it rightfully, and that he do it not for delit to spill blood, but for keping of rightwisenesse. Another homicide is don for necessitee, as whan a man sleeth another in his defence, and that he ne may non other wise escapen fro his owen deth; but certain and he may escape withouten slaughter of his adversarie he doth sinne, and he shal bere penance as for dedly sinne. Also if a man by cas or aventure shete an arowe or cast a stone with which he sleeth a man, he is an homicide. And if a woman by negligence overlyeth hire child in hire slepe, it is homicide and dedly sinne. Also whan a man disturbleth conception of a childe, and maketh a woman barein by drinckes of venomous herbes thurgh which she may not conceive, or sleeth hire child by drinckes, or elles putteth certain material thing in hire secret place to flee hire child, or elles doth unkinde sinne, by which man or woman shedeth his nature in place ther as a childe may not be conceived; or elles if a woman hath conceived and hurteth hireself,

and by that mishappe the childe is flaine, yet is it homicide. What say we eke of women that murderen hir children for drede of worldly shame? certes it is an horrible homicide. Eke if a man approche to a woman by desir of lecherie thurgh which the childe is perished, or elles smitten a woman wetingly, thurgh which she leseth hire child, all thise ben homicides, and horrible dedly sinnes. Yet comen ther ire many mo sinnes, as wel in worde as in thought and in dede; as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is himself gilty, or despiseth God and all his halwes, as don thise cursed hasardours in divers contrees. This cursed sinne don they whan they felen in hir herte ful wickedly of God and of his halwes: also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter, thilke sinne is so gret that unneth it may be relefed, but that the mercy of God passeth all his werkes, it is so gret, and he so benigne. Than cometh also of ire attray anger, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrift to leve his sinne; than wol he be angry, and answere hokerly and angerly, to defend or excusen his sinne by unstedfastnesse of his flesh; or elles he did it for to hold compaignie with his felawes; or elles he sayeth the fend enticed him; or elles he did it for his youthe; or elles his complexion is so corageous that he may not forbere; or elles it is his destinee, he sayth, unto a certain age; or elles he sayth it cometh him of gentilnesse of his auncestres, and semblable thinges. All thise maner of folke so wrappen hem in hir sinnes that they ne wol not deliver hemself, for sothly no wight that excuseth himself wilfully of his sinne may not be delivered of his sinne til that he mekely beknoweth his sinne. After this than cometh swering, that is expresse ayenst the commandement of God; and that befalleth often of anger and of ire: God sayth, Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in idel: also our Lord Jesu Crist sayth by the word of Seint Mathew, Ne shal ye not swere in all manere, neyther by heven, for it is Goddes trone, ne by erthe, for it is the benche of his feet, ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a gret king, ne by thin hed, for thou ne mayst not make an here white ne black; but he sayth, Be your word ye, ye, nay, nay; and what that is more it is of evil. Thus sayth Crist, for Cristes sake swere not so sinnefully, in dismembriug of Crist, by soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes it semeth that ye thinken that the cursed Jewes dismembred him not ynough, but ye disembre him more. And if so be that the lawe compell you to swere, than reuleth you after the lawe of God in your swering, as sayth Jeremie, Thou shalt kepe three conditions; thou shalt swere in trowth, in dome, and in rightwisenesse; this is to say, thou shalt swere soth, for every lesing is ayenst Crist, for Crist is veray trowth: and thinke wel this, that every gret swerer, not compelled lawfully to swere, the plague shal not depart fro his hous while he useth unlesful swering. Thou shalt swere also in dome, whan thou art constreined by the domesman to

witnesse a trouth. Also thou shalt not swere for envie, neyther for favour ne for mede, but only for rightwisenesse, and for declaring of trouthe to the honour and worship of God, and to the aiding and helping of thin even Cristen: and therefore every man that taketh Goddes name in idel, or falsely swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on him the name of Crist, to be called a Cristen man, and liveth agenst Cristes living and his teching, all they take Goddes name in idel. Loke also what sayth Seint Peter, *Actuum iv. Non est aliud nomen sub celo, &c.*; Ther is non other name (sayth Seint Peter) under heaven yeven to men in which they may be saved, that is to say, but the name of Jesu Crist. Take kepe eke how precious is the name of Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Poule *ad Philipenses ii. In nomine Jesu, &c.*; that in the name of Jesu every knee of heavenly creature, or erthly, or of helle, shuld bowen; for it is so high and worshipful that the cursed fend in helle shuld tremble for to here it named. Than semeth it that men that swere so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise it more boldely than did the cursed Jewes, or elles the divel, that trembleth whan he hereth his name.

Now certes sith that swering (but if it be lawfully don) is so highly defended, moche worse is for to swere falsely and eke nedeles.

What say we eke of hem that deliten hem in swering, and hold it a genterie or manly dede to swere gret othes? and what of hem that of veray usage ne cese not to swere gret othes, al be the cause not worth a strawe? certes this is horrible sinne: swering sodenly without avisement is also a gret sinne. But let us go now to that horrible swering of adjuration and conjuration, as don thise false enchantours and nigromancers in basins ful of water, or in a bright swerde, in a cercle, or in a fire, or in a sholder bone of a shepe: I cannot sayn but that they do cursedly and damnablely ayenst Crist, and all the faith of holy chirche.

What say we of hem that beleven on divinales, as by flight or by noise of briddes or of bestes, or by sorte of geomancie, by dremes, by chirking of dores, or cracking of houses, by gnawing of rattes, and swiche maner wretchednesse? Certes all thise thinges ben defended by God and holy chirche, for which they ben accursed, till they come to amendement, that on swiche filth set hir beleve. Charmes for woundes, or for maladies of men or of bestes, if they take any effect it may be peraventure that God suffreth it for folk shuld yeve the more feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I speke of lesinges, which generally is false signifiante of word, in entent to deceive his even Cristen. Some lesing is of which ther cometh non avantage to no wight; and som lesing turneth to the profite and ese of a man, and to the dammage of another man; another lesing is for to save his lif or his catel; another lesing cometh of delit for to lie, in which delit they wol forge a long tale, and peint it with all circumstances, wher all the ground of the tale is false; some

lesing cometh for he wol sustein his word; and som lesing cometh of recchelesnesse withouten avisement, and semblable thinges.

Let us now touche the vice of flaterie, which ne cometh not gladly, but for drede or for covetise. Flaterie is generally wrongful preising: flaterers ben the devils nourices, that nourish his children with milke of losengerie. Forsoth Salomon sayth that flaterie is worse than detraction, for somtime detraction maketh an hautein man be the more humble, for he dredeth detraction, but certes flaterie maketh a man to enhaunce his herte and his contenance. Flaterers ben the devils enchauntours, for they maken a man to wenen himself be like that he is not like: they be like to Judas that betrayed God; and thise flaterers betrayen man to selle him to his enemy, that is the devil. Flaterers ben the devils chappeleines, that ever singen *Placebo*. I reken flaterie in the vices of ire, for oft time if a man be wroth with another, than wol he flater som wight to susteine him in his quarrel.

Speke we now of swiche cursing as cometh of irous herte. Malison generally may be said every maner power of harme: swiche cursing bereveth man the regne of God, as sayth Seint Poule; and oft time swiche cursing wrongfully retorneth again to him that curseth, as a bird retorneth again to his owen nest: and over all thing men ought eschew to curse hir children, and to yeve to the devil hir engendrure, as fer forth as in hem is; certes it is a grete peril and a grete sinne.

Let us than speke of chiding and repreving, which ben ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsow the seames of frendship in mannes herte; for certes unneth may a man be plainly accorded with him that he hath openly reviled, reprevd, and disclaundred; this is a full grisly sinne, as Crist sayth in the gospel. And take ye kepe now that he that repreveth his neighbour either he repreveth him by som harme of peine that he hath upon his bodie, as mesel, croked harlot, or by som sinne that he doth: now if he reprev him by harme of peine, than turneth the reprev to Jesu Crist; for peine is sent by the rightwise sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or maimie, or maladie; and if he reprev him uncharitably of sinne, as thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so forth, than apperteineth that to the rejoicing of the devil, which ever hath joye that men don sinne. And certes chiding may not come but out of a vilains herte, for after the haboundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful oft. And ye shul understond that loke by any way whan ony man chastiseth another that he beware fro chiding or repreving, for trewely but he beware he may ful lightly quicken the fire of anger and of wrath, which he shuld quench, and peraventure sleth him that he might chastise with benignitee; for, as sayth Salomon, The amiable tonge is the tree of lif, that is to say, of lif spirituel; and sothly a dissolute tonge sleth the spirit of him that repreveth, and also of him which is reprevd. Lo, what sayth Seint Augustine; Ther

is nothing so like the devils child as he which oft chideth; a servant of God behoveth not to chide; and though that chiding be a vilains thing betwix all maner folk, yet it is certes most uncovenable betwene a man and his wif, for ther is never rest; and therefore sayth Salomon, An hous that is uncovered in rayn and dropping and a chiding wif ben like; a man which is in a dropping hous in many places though he eschew the dropping in o place, it droppeth on him in another place; so fareth it by a chiding wif, if she chide him not in o place she wol chide him in another; and therefore better is a morsel of bred with joye than an hous filled ful of delices with chiding, sayth Salomon: and Seint Poule sayth, O ye women! beth ye subgettes to your hufbonds as you behoveth in God; and ye men loveth your wives.

Afterward speke we of scorning, which is a wicked sinne, and namely whan he scorneth a man for his good werkes, for certes swiche scorners faren like the foule tode, that may not endure to smell the swete favour of the vine whan it flourisheth: thise scorners ben parting felaws with the devil, for they have joye whan the devil winneth, and sorwe if he leseth; they ben adversaries to Jesu Crist, for they hate that he loveth, that is to say, salvation of foule.

Speke we now of wicked conseil, for he that wicked conseil yeveth is a traitour, for he deceiveth him that trusteth in him; but natheles yet is wicked conseil first ayenst himself; for, as sayth the wise man, Every false living hath this propertee in himself, that he that wol annoy another man, he annoyeth first himself. And men shul understand that man shal not take his conseil of false folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially hir owen profit, ne of to moche worldly folk, namely in conseil of mannes foule.

Now cometh the sinne of hem that maken discord among folk, which is a sinne that Crist hateth utterly; and no wonder is, for he died for to make concord; and more shame don they to Crist than did they that him crucified; for God loveth better that friendship be amonges folk than he did his owen body, which that he yave for unitee; therefore ben they likened to the devil, that ever is about to make discord.

Now cometh the sinne of double tonge, swiche as speke faire before folk and wickedly behind, or elles they make semblaunt as though they spake of good entention, or elles in game and play, and yet they speken of wicked entente.

Now cometh bewreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed: certes unneth may he restore the damage: now cometh manace, that is an open folie, for he that oft manaceth he threteth more than he may performe ful oft time: now comen idel wordes that be without profite of him that speketh the wordes, and eke of him that herkeneth the wordes, or elles idel wordes ben tho that ben nedeles, or withouten entente of naturel profit; and al be it that idel wordes be somtime venial sinne, yet shuld men doute hem, for we shul yeve

rekening of hem before God. Now cometh jangling, that may not come withouten sinne; and, as sayth Salomon, It is a signe of apert folie; and therefore a philosophre sayd, whan a man axed him how that he shuld plesse the peple, he answered, Do many good werkes, and speke few jangelinges. After this cometh the sinne of japeres, that ben the devils apes, for they make folk to laugh at hir japerie, as folk don at the gaudes of an ape; swiche japes defendeth Seint Poule. Loke how that vertuous wordes and holy comforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so comforten the vilains words and the knakkes of japeres hem that travaillen in the service of the devil. Thise ben the finnes of the tonge, that comen of ire, and other finnes many mo.

Remedium Iræ.

The remedie ayenst ire is a vertue that cleped is Manfuetude, that is debonairtee, and eke another vertue that men clepen Patience or Sufferaunce.

Debonairtee withdraweth and refreineth the stirrings and mevings of mannes corage in his herte in swich maner that they ne skip not out by anger ne ire; sufferance suffereth swetely all the annoyance and the wrong that is don to man outward. Seint Jerome sayth this of debonairtee, that it doth no harme to no wight ne sayth, ne for no harme that men do ne say he ne chafeth not ayenst reson. This vertue somtime cometh of nature; for, as sayth the philosophre, A man is a quick thing, by nature debonaire, and trefable to goodnesse; but whan debonairtee is enformed of grace, than it is the more worth.

Patience is another remedy ayenst ire, and is a vertue that suffereth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is not wroth for non harme that is don to him. The philosophre sayth that patience is the vertue that suffreth debonairely al the outrage of adversitee and every wicked word. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owen childe, as sayth Crist: this vertue discomfiteth thin enemies; and therefore sayth the wise man, If thou wolt vanquish thin enemy see thou be patient. And thou shalt understand that a man suffereth foure maner of grevances in outward thinges, ayenst the which foure he must have foure maner of patiences.

The first grevance is of wicked wordes; thilke grevance suffred Jesu Crist, without grutching, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised him and repreved him ful oft: suffer thou therefore patiently, for the wise man saith, If thou strive with a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though he laugh, algate thou shalt have no reste. That other grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel; therayenst suffred Crist ful patiently whan he was despoiled of al that he had in this lif, and that n'as but his clothes. The thridde grevance is a man to have harme in his body; that suffred Crist ful patiently in all his passion. The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes; wher-

fore I say that folk that make hir servants to tra-
vaile to greuously, or out of time, as in holy dayes,
sothly they do gret sinne: hereayenst suffered
Crist ful patiently, and taught us patience, whan
he bare upon his blessed sholders the crosse upon
which he shuld suffer despitous deth. Here may
men lerne to be patient; for certes not only Cristen
men be patient for love of Jesu Crist, and for
guerdon of the blisful lif that is perdurable, but
certes the old Payenes, that never were chris-
tened, commended and useden the vertue of
patience.

A philosophre upon a time that wold have be-
ten his disciple for his gret trespas, for which he
was gretly meved, and brought a yerde to bete the
childe, and whan this child sawe the yerde he sayd
to his maister, What thinke ye to do? I wol bete
thee, sayd the maister, for thy correction. For-
soth, sayd the childe, ye ought first correct your-
self, that have lost all your patience for the offence
of a child. Forsooth, sayd the maister, all weping,
thou sayest soth; have thou the yerde, my dere
sone! and correct me for min impatienc. Of
patience cometh obedience, thurgh which a man
is obedient to Crist, and to all hem to which he
ought to be obedient in Crist. And understand
wel that obedience is parfite whan that a man doth
gladly and hastily, with good herte entirely, all
that he shuld do. Obedience generally, is to per-
forme hastily the doctrine of God and of his sove-
raines, to which him ought to be obeisant in all
rightwisenesse.

De Accidia.

After the sinne of wrath now wol I speke of the
sinne of accidie or slouth; for envie blindeth the
herte of a man, and ire troubleth a man, and ac-
cidie maketh him hevy, thoughtful, and wrawe.
Envie and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which
bitternesse is mother of accidie, and benimeth him
the love of alle goodnesse; than is accidie the an-
guish of a trouble herte: and Seint Augustine
sayth, It is annoye of goodnesse and annoye of
harne. Certes this is a damnable sinne, for it
doth wrong to Jesu Crist, in as moche as it beni-
meth the service that men shulde do to Crist with
alle diligence, as sayth Salomon; but accidie doth
non swiche diligence: he doth all thing with an-
noye, and with wrawnesse, slacknesse, and excusa-
tion, with idelnesse and unlust; for which the
book sayth, Accursed be he that doth the service
of God negligently. Than is accidie enemy to
every estate of man; for certes the estate of man
is in three maners: either it is the estate of inno-
cence, as was the estate of Adam before that he fell
into sinne, in which estate he was holden to werk,
as in heryng and adoring of God. Another estate
is the estate of sinful men, in which estate men
ben holden to labour in praying to God for
amendement of hir sinnes, and that he wold
graunt hem to rise out of hir sinnes. Another estate
is the estate of grace, in which estate he is holden
to werkes of penitence; and certes to all thise

thinges is accidie enemy and contrary, for he
loveth no besinesse at all. Now certes this foule
sinne of accidie is eke a ful gret enemy to the live-
lude of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce
ayenst temporel necessitee, for it forsleutheth, for-
sluggeth, and destroieth all goodes temporel by
recchelesnesse.

The fourth thing is that accidie is like hem that
ben in the peine of helle because of hir slouth and
of hir hevinesse; for they that be damned ben so
bound that they may neyther do wel ne think
wel. Of accidie cometh first that a man is annoi-
ed and accombred to do any goodnesse, and that
maketh that God hath abhominacion of swiche ac-
cidie, as sayth Seint John.

Now cometh slouth, that wol not suffre no
hardnesse ne no penance; for sothly slouth is so
tendre and so delicat, as sayth Salomon, that he
wol suffre non hardnesse ne penance, and therefore
he shendeth all that he doth. Ayenst this roten
sinne of accidie and slouth shuld men exercise
hemself, and use hemself to do good werkes, and
manly and vertuously cachen corage wel to do,
thinking that our Lord Jesu Crist quiteth every
good deed, be it never so lite. Usage of labour is
a gret thing, for it maketh, as sayth Seint Ber-
nard, the labourer to have strong armes and hard
sinewes, and slouth maketh hem feble and tendre.
Than cometh drede for to beginne to werke any
good werkes; for certes he that enclineth to sinne,
him thinketh it is to gret an emprise for to under-
take the werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his
herte that the circumstances of goodnesse ben so
grevous and so chargeant for to suffre that he dare
not undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as sayth
Seint Gregorie.

Now cometh wanhope, that is despeir of the
mercy of God, that cometh somtime of to moche
outrageous sorwe, and somtime of to moche
drede, imagining that he hath do so moche sinne
that it wolde not availe him though he wolde re-
pent him and forsake sinne, thurgh which despeire
or drede he abandoneth all his herte to every ma-
ner sinne, as sayth Seint Augustine; which damp-
nable sinne, if it continue unto his end, it is cleped
the sinne of the Holy Gost. This horrible sinne is
so perilous that he that is despeired ther n'is no
felonie, ne no sinne that he douteth for to do, as
shewed wel by Judas. Certes aboven all sinnes
than is this sinne most displefant and most ad-
versarie to Crist. Sothly he that despeireth him
is like to the coward champion recreant that
flieth withouten nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is
he recreant and nedeles despeired. Certes the
mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent per-
son, and is above all his werkes. Alas! can-
not a man bethinke him on the Gospel of Seint
Luke, chap. xv.; wheras Crist sayth, that as wel
shal ther be joye in heven, upon a sinful man that
doth penitence, as upon ninety-and-nine rightful
men that neden no penitence? Loke further in
the same gospel the joye and the feste of the good
man that had lost his sone, whan his sone was re-
toured with repentance to his fader. Can they

not remembre hem also (as sayth Seint Luke, ch. xxiii.) how that the thefe that was honged beside Jesu Crist sayd, Lord, remembre on me whan thou comest in thy regne? Forsoth, said Crist, I say to thee to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradis. Certes ther is non so horrible sinne of man that ne may in his lif be destroyed by penitence thurgh vertue of the passion and of the deth of Crist. Alas! what nedeth man than to be despeired, fith that his mercy is so redy and large? Axe and have. Than cometh sompnolence, that is, sluggy slumbring, which maketh a man hevy and dull in body and in soule, and this sinne cometh of slouth; and certes the time that by way of reson man shuld not slepe is by the morwe, but if ther were cause resonable; for sothly in the morwe tide is most covenable to a man to say his prayers, and for to think on God, and to honour God, and to yeve almesse to the poure that comen first in the name of Jesu Crist. Lo, what sayth Salomon? Who so wol by the morwe awake to seke me he shal find me. Than cometh negligence or recchelesnesse, that recketh of nothing; and though that ignorance be mother of all harmes certes negligence is the norice: negligence ne doth no force whan he shal do a thing whether he do it wel or badly.

The remedie of thise two finnes is, as sayth the wise man, that he that dredeth God spareth not to do that him ought to do; and he that loveth God he wol do diligence to plesse God by his werkes, and abandon himself with all his might wel for to do. Than cometh idelnesse, that is the yate of all harmes. An idel man is like to a place that hath no walles, theras deviles may enter on every side, or shoot at him at discoverte by temptation on every side: this idelnesse is the thurrok of all wicked and vilains thoughtes, and of all jangleles, trifles, and all ordure: certes heven is yeven to hem that will labour, and not to idel folk: also David sayth, They ne be not in the labour of men, ne they shul not ben whipped with men, that is to say, in Purgatorie: certes than semeth it they shul ben tormented with the devil in helle but if they do penance.

Than cometh the sinne that men clepen *Tarditas*, as whan a man is latered or taryed or he wol tourne to God; and certes that is a gret folie: he is like him that falleth in the dicke and wol not arise. And this vice cometh of false hope, that thinketh that he shal live long; but that hope failleth ful oft.

Than cometh Lacheffe, that is he that whan he beginneth any good werk, anon he wol forlete it and stint, as don they that have any wight to governe, and ne take of him no more kepe, anon as they find any contrary or any annoy. Thise ben the newe shepherdes that let hir shepe wetingly go renne to the wolf that is in the breres, and do no force of hir owen governance. Of this cometh poverté and destruction both of spirituel and temporel thinges: than cometh a maner coldnesse that frefeth all the herte of man; than cometh undevo-tion, thurgh which a man is so blont, as sayth

Seint Bernard, and hath swliche langour in his soule, that he may neyther rede ne sing in holy chirche, ne here ne thinke of no devotion, ne travail: with his hondes in no good werk, that it n'is to him unsavory and all appalled: than wexeth he sluggish and slombry, and sone wol he be wroth, and sone is he inclined to hate and to envie: than cometh the sinne of worldly sorwe, swiche as is cleped *Tristitia*, that seth a man as sayth Seint Poule; for certes swiche sorwe werketh to the deth of the soule and body also, for therof cometh that a man is annoied of his owen lif, wherfore swiche sorwe shorteth the lif of many a man, or that his time is come by way of kinde.

Remedium Accidie

Ayent this horrible sinne of accidie, and the braunches of he same, ther is a vertue that is called *Fortitudo* or Strength, that is, an affection thurgh which a man despiseth noyous thinges. This vertue is so mighty and so vigorous, that it dare withstand mightily, and wraastle ayent the affautes of the devil, and wisely kepe himself fro periles that ben wicked, for it enhaunfeth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth and maketh it feble; for this *fortitudo* may endure with long sufferance the travailles that ben covenable.

This vertue hath many spices: the first is cleped Magnanimitee, that is to say, gret corage; for certes ther behoveth gret corage ayent accidie, lest that it swalowe the soule by the sinne of sorwe, or destroy it with wanhope. Certes this vertue maketh folk to undertake hard and grevous thinges by hir owen will wisely and resonably. And for as moche as the devil fighteth ayent man more by queintesse and sleight than by strength, therefore shal a man withstand him by wit, by reson, and by discretion. Than ben ther the vertues of feith, and hope in God and in his seintes, to acheven and accomplice the good werkes, in the which he purposeth fermely to continue. Than cometh seuretee or sikernes, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaile in time coming of the good werkes that he hath begonne: than cometh magnificence, that is to say, whan a man doth and performeth gret werkes of goodnesse that he hath begonne, and that is the end why that men shuld do good werkes, for in the accomplishing of good werkes lieth the gret guerdon: than is ther constance, that is stablenesse of corage, and this shuld be in herte by stedfast feith, and in mouth, and in bering, in chere and in dede. Eke ther ben mo special remedies ayent accidie, in divers werkes, and in consideration of the peines of helle, and of the joyes of heven, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Gost, that will yeve him might to performe his good entent.

De Avaritia.

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of covetise; of which sinne Seint Poule sayth, The rote

of all harmes is coveitise; for sothly whan the herte of man is confounded in itself and troubledd, and that the soule hath lost the comfort of God, than seketh he an idel solas of worldly thinges.

Avarice, after the description of Seint Augustine, is a likerousnesse in herte to have erthly thinges. Som other folk sayn that avarice is for to purchase many erthly thinges, and nothing to yeve to hem that har nede. And understond wel that avarice standeth not only in land ne catel, but som time in science and in glorie, and in every maner outrageous thing, is avarice: and the difference betwene avarice and coveteise is this; coveteise is for to coveit swiche thinges as thou hast not, and avarice is to withholde and kepe swiche thinges as thou hast without rightful nede. Sothly this avarice is a sinne that is ful dampnable; for all holy writ curseth it, and speket ayenst it, for it doth wrong to Jesu Crist, for it bereveth him the love that men to him owen, and tourneth it backward ayenst all reson, and maketh that the avaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in Jesu Crist, and doth more observance in keping of his tresour than he doth in the service of Jesu Crist; and therefore sayth Seint Poule, that an avaricious man is the thraldome of idolatrie.

What difference is ther betwix an idolastre and an avaricious man, but that an idolastre peraventure ne hath not but o maumet or two, and the avaricious man hath many? for certes every florein in his coffre is his maumet: and certes the sinne of maumetrie is the first that God defended in the ten commandments, as bereth witnesse, *Exod. ch. xx.*: Thou shalt have no false goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to thee no graven thing. Thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresour before God an idolastre. And thurgh this cursed sinne of avarice and coveitise cometh thise hard lordships thurgh which men ben distreined by tallages, customes, and cariages, more than hir dutee or reson is; and eke take they of hir bondmen amercementes, which might more resonably be called extortions than amercementes; of which amercementes, or ransoming of bondmen, som lordes stewardes say that it is rightful; for as moche as a cherl hath no temporel thing that it ne is his lordes as they say. But certes thise lordshippes don wrong, that bereven hir bondmen thinges that they never yave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei, libro ix.* Soth is that the condition of thraldom, and the first cause of thraldom was for sinne. *Genesis v.*

Thus may ye see that the gilt deserved thraldom, but not nature; wherfore thise lordes ne shuld not to moche glorifie hem in hir lordshippes, sith that they by naturel condition ben not lordes of hir thralles, but that thraldom came first by the deserte of sinne. And furthermore, ther as the lawe sayth that temporel goodes of bondfolk ben the goodes of hir lord, ye, that is for to understond, the goodes of the emperour, to defend hem in hir right, but not to robbe hem ne to reve hem; therefore sayth Seneca, The prudent shuld live benignely with the thral, tho that thou clepest thy thralles ben Goddes peple; for humble folk ben

Cristes frendes; they ben contubernial with the Lord thy king.

Thinke also that of swiche seed as cherles springen, of swiche seed springen lordes: as wel may the cherl be saved as the lord. The same deth that taketh the cherl swiche deth taketh the lord; wherfore I rede do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy lord did with thee if thou were in his plight. Every sinful man is a cherl to sinne. I rede thee, thou lord, that thou reule thee in swiche wise that thy cherles rather love thee than drede thee. I wote wel that ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skill is, that men do hir devoir ther as it is due; but certes extortion and despit of your underlinges is dampnable.

And furthermore, understond wel that thise conquerours or tyrantes maken ful oft thralles of hem that ben borne of as royal blood as ben they that hem conqueren. This name of Thraldom was never erst couthe til that Noe sayd that his sone Cham shuld be thrall to his brethren for his sinne. What say we than of hem that pille and don extortions to holy chirche? Certes the swerd that men yeven first to a knight whan he is newe dubbed signifieth that he shuld defend holy chirche, and not robbe it ne pille it; and who so doth is traitour to Crist: as faith Seint Augustine, Tho ben the devils wolves that strangelen the shepe of Jesu Crist, and don worse than wolves; for sothly whan the wolf hath full his wombe he stinteth to strangle shepe, but sothly the pillours and destroyers of holy churches goodes ne do not so, for they ne stint never to pille. Now, as I have sayd, sith so is that sinne was first cause of thraldom, than is it thus, that at the time that all this world was in sinne, than was all this world in thraldom and in subjection: but certes sith the time of grace came, God ordeined that som folk shuld be more high in estate and in degree, and som folk more lowe, and that everich shuld be served in his estate and his degree: and therefore in som contrees ther as they ben thralles whan they have tourned hem to the feith they make hir thralles free out of thraldom; and therefore certes the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to the lord. The Pope clepeth himself Servant of the servants of God; but for as moche as the estate of holy chirche ne might not have ben, ne the commun profite might not have be kept, ne pees ne rest in erthe, but if God had ordeined that som men have higher degree and som men lower, therefore was soveraintee ordeined to kepe and mainteine, and defend, hire underlinges or hire subjectes in reson, as ferforth as it lieth in hire power, and not to destroy hem ne confound; wherfore I say that thilke lordes that ben like wolves, that devoure the possessions or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receive by the same mesure that they have measured to poure folk the mercy of Jesu Crist, but they it amende. Now cometh deceit betwixt marchant and marchant. And thou shalt understond that marchandise is in two maners, that on is bodily, and that other is gostly; that on is honest and leful, and that other is dishonest and

unlesful. The bodily marchandise, that is lesful and honest, is this, that ther as God hath ordeined that a regne or a contree is suffisant to himself, than it is honest and lesful that of the haboundance of this contree men helpe another contree that is neddy; and therefore ther must be marchants to bring fro on contree to another hir marchandise. That other marchandise that men haunten with fraude, and trecherie, and deceit, with lesinges and false othes, is right cursed and dampnable. Spirituel marchandise is proprely simonie, that is, ententif desire to buy thing spirituel, that is, thing which apperteineth to the seintuarie of God, and to the cure of the soule. This desire, if so be that a man do his diligence to performe it, al be it that his desire ne take non effect, yet it is to him a dedly sinne, and if he be ordered he is irregular. Certes simonie is cleped of Simon Magus, that wold have bought for temporel catel the yeste that God had yeven by the Holy Gost to Seint Peter and to the apostles; and therefore understond ye, that both he that selleth and he that byeth thinges spirituel ben called Simoniackes, be it by catel, be it by procuring, or by fleshly praier of his frendes, fleshly frendes or spirituel frendes, fleshly in two maners, as by kinrede or other frendes; sothly if they pray for him that is not worthy and able it is simonie, if he take the benefice, and if he be worthy and able ther is non. That other maner is whan man or woman prayeth for folk to advancen hem only for wicked fleshly affection, which they have unto the persons, and that is foule simone; but certes in service, for which men yeven thinges spirituel unto hir servants, it must be understonde that the service must be honest or elles not, and also that it be without bargaining, and that the person be able; for (as sayth Seint Damascen) All the finnes of the world, at regard of this sinne, ben as thing of nought, for it is the grettest sinne that may be after the sinne of Lucifer and of Anticrist; for by this sinne God forleseth the chirche and the soule, which he bought with his precious blood, by hem that yeven chiches to hem that ben not digne, for they put in theves, that stelen the soules of Jesu Crist, and destroyen his patrimonie. By swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men lesse reverence of the sacraments of holy chirche; and swiche yevers of chiches put the children of Crist out, and put into chiches the divels owen sones; they sellen the foules that lambes shuld kepe to the wolf, which strangeth hem, and therefore shall they never have part of the pasture of lambes, that is, in the blisse of heven. Now cometh hasardrie, with his apertenautes, as tables and raffles, of which cometh deceit, false othes, chidings, and all raving, blaspheming, and reneying of God, hate of his neyghbours, wast of goodes, mispending of time, and somtime manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mow not be without gret sinne. Of avarice comen eke lesinges, theft, false witnesse, and false othes; and ye shul understonde that these be gret finnes, and expresse ayenst the commandments of God, as I have sayd. False witnesse is eke

in word and in dede; in word, as for to bereve thy neyghbours good name by thy false witnesse, or bereve him his catel or his heritage by thy false witnesssing, whan thou for ire, or for mede, or for envie, bereft false witnesse, or accusest him, or excusest thyself falsely. Ware, ye questmongers and notaries! certes for false witnesssing was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and peine, and many another mo. The sinne of theft is also expresse ayenst Goddes heft, and that in two maners, temporel and spirituel. The temporel theft is as for to take thy neyghbours catel ayenst his will, be it by force or by sleight, be it in meting or mesure, by steling, by false enditements upon him, and in borrowing of thy neyghbours catel in entent never to pay it ayen, and semblable thinges. Spirituel theft is sacrilege, that is to say, hurting of holy thinges, or of thinges sacred to Crist, in two maners; by reson of the holy place, as chiches or chiches hawes; (for every vilains sinne that men don in swiche places may be called sacrilege, or every violence in semblable places) also they that withdrawe falsely the rentes and rightes that longen to holy chirche; and plainly and generally, sacrilege is to reve holy thing fro holy place, or unholy thing out of holy place, or holy thing out of unholy place.

Remedium Avaritie.

Now shul ye understond that releving of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men might axe why that misericorde and pitee are releving of avarice? Certes the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man, for he deliteth him in the keping of his tresour, and not in the rescouing ne releving of his even Cristen: and therefore speke I first of misericorde. Than is misericorde (as sayth the philosophre) a vertue by which the corage of man is stirred by the misese of him that is misefed; upon which misericorde foloweth pitee, in performing and fulfilling of charitable werkes of mercie, helping and comforting him that is misefed. And certes this meveth a man to misericorde of Jesu Crist, that he yave himself for our offence, and suffred deth for misericorde, and foryaf us our original finnes, and therby relefed us fro the peine of hell, and amenufed the peines of Purgatory by penitence, and yeveth us grace wel to do, and at the last the blisse of heven. The spices of misericorde ben for to lene, and eke for to yeve, and for to foryeve and relese, and for to have pitee in herte, and compassion of the mischese of his even Cristen, and also to chastise ther as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst avarice is resonable largesse; but sothly here behoveth the consideration of the grace of Jesu Crist, and of the temporel goodes, and also of the goodes perdurable that Jesu Crist yave to us, and to have remembrance of the deth which he shal receive, he wot not whan; and eke that he shal forgon all that he hath, save only that which he hath dispended in good werkes.

But for as moche as som folk ben unmesurable, men oughten for to avoid and eschue fool-largeffe, the whiche men clepen Waste. Certes he that is fool-large he yeveth not his catel, but he leseth his his catel: sothly what thing that he yeveth for vaine glorie, as to minstrels, and to folk that bere his re- nome in the world, he hath do sinne therof, and non almesse: certes he leseth foule his good that he seketh with the yeste of hir good nothing but sinne: he is like to an hors that seketh rather to drink drovy or troubled water than for to drink water of the clere well: and for as moche as they yeven ther as they shuld nat yeven, to hem appertaineth thilke malison that Crist shal yeve at the day of dome to hem that shul be dampned.

De Gulā.

After avarice cometh glotonie, which is expresse ayenst the commandement of God. Glotonie is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drinke, or elles to do in ought to the unmesurable appetite and disordeined coveitise to ete or drinke. This sinne corrupted all this world, as is wel shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eve. Loke also what sayth Seint Poule of glotonie: Many (sayth he) gon; of which I have ofte said to you, and now I say it weping, that they ben the enemies of the crosse of Crist, of which the end is deth, and of which hir wombe is hir God and hir glorie, in confusion of hem that so serven erthly thinges. He that that is usant to this sinne of glotonie, he ne may no sinne withstond, he must be in servage of all vices, for it is the devils horde ther he hideth him and resteth. This sinne hath many spices: the first is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes reson, and therefore whan a man is dronke he hath lost his reson; and this is dedly sinne; but sothly whan that a man is not wont to strong drinkes, and peraventure ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke, or hath feble- nesse in his hed, or hath travailled, thurgh which he drinketh the more, al be he sodenly caught with drinke, it is no dedely sinne but venial. The second spice of glotonie is, that the spirit of a man wexeth all trouble for dronkenesse, and bereveth a man the discretion of his wit. The thridde spice of glotonie is whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath not rightful maner of eting. The fourthe is, whan thurgh the gret abundance of his mete the humours in his body ben distempered. The fifthe is foryetful- nesse by to mochedrinking, for which sometime a man forgeteth by the morwe what he did over eve.

In other maner ben distinct the spices of glotonie, after Seint Gregorie. The first is for to ete before time; the second is whan a man geteth him to delicate mete or drinke; the thridde is whan men taken to moche over mesure; the fourth is curiositee, with gret entent to maken and appareille his mete; the fifth is for to ete gredily. Thise ben the five fingers of the devils hond, by which he draweth folk to the sinne.

Remidium Gulae.

Ayenst glotonie the remedie is abstinence, as sayth Galien; but that I holde not meritorie, if he do it only for the hele of his body. Seint Augustine wol that abstinence be don for vertue, and with patience. Abstinence (sayth he) is litel worth but if a man have good will therto, and but it be enforced by patience and charitee, and that men don it for Goddes sake, and in hope to have the blisse in heven.

The felawes of abstinence ben attemperance, that holdeth the mene in alle thinges; also shame, that escheweth all dishonestee; suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drinkes; ne doth no force of non outrageous appareilling of mete; mesure also, that restraineth by reason the unmesurable appetit of eting; sobernesse also, that restraineth the outrage of drinke; sparing also, that restraineth the delicat ese to sit long at mete, wherfore som folk standen of hir owen will whan they ete, because they wol ete at lesse leiser.

De Luxuriā.

After glotonie cometh lecherie, for thise two finnes ben so nigh cosins that oft time they wol not depart. God wote this sinne is ful displefant to God, for he said himself, Do no lecherie; and therefore he putteth gret peine ayenst this sinne: for in the old lawe if a woman thrall were taken in this sinne, she shuld be beten with staves to the deth, and if she were a gentilwoman she shuld be slain with stones, and if she were a bishoppes doughter she shuld be brent by Goddes commandement. Moreover, for the sinne of lecherie God dreint all the world, and after that he brent five cities with thonder and lightning, and sanke hem down into hell.

Now let us speke than of the said stinking sinne of lecherie, that men clepen Avoutrie, that is of wedded folk; that is to say, if that on of hem be wedded or elles both. Seint John sayth, that avouterers shul ben in helle in a stacke brenning of fire and of brimstone; in fire for her lecherie, in brimstone for the stenche of hir ordure. Certes the breking of this sacrament is an horrible thing; it was made of God himself in Paradis, and confirmed by Jesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the Gospel; A man shal let fader and moder, and take him to his wif, and they shal be two in on flesh. This sacrament betokeneth the knitting together of Crist and holy chirche. And not only that God forbade avoutrie in dede, but also he commanded that thou shuldest not coveit thy neighbours wif. In this haste (sayth Seint Augustine) is forbidden all maner coveitise to do lecherie. Lo, what sayth Seint Mathew in the Gospel; that who so seeth a woman to coveitise of his lust, he hath don lecherie with hire in his herte. Here may ye see that not only the dede of this sinne is forbidden, but eke the desire to don that sinne. This cursed sinne annoyeth grevously

hem that it haunt : and first to the soule, for he obligeth it to sinne and to peine of deth, which is perdurable ; and to the body annoyeth it greuously also, for it drieth him and wasteth and shent him, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the fend of helle : it wasteth eke his catel and his substance ; and certes if it be a foule thing a man to waste his catel on women, yet is it a fouler thing whan that for swiche ordure women dispenden upon men hir catel and hir substance. This sinne, as sayth the prophet, bereveth man and woman hir good fame and all hir honour ; and it is ful plesant to the devil, for therby winneth he the moste partie of this wretched world : and right as a marchant deliteth him most in that chaffare which he hath most advantage and profite of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that other hond of the devil, with five fingers, to cacche the peple to his vilanie. The first fingre is the foole-losing of the foole woman and of the foole man, that sleth right as the basilicok sleth folk by venime of his sight, for the coveitise of the eyen foloweth the coveitise of the herte. The second fingre is the vilains touching in wicked maner ; and therefore sayth Salomon, that who so toucheth and handleth a woman he fareth as the man that handleth the scorpion, which stingeth and sodenly sleth thurgh his enveniming, or as who so that toucheth warme pitch it shendeth his fingers. The thridde is foule wordes, whiche fareth like fire, which right anon brenneth the herte. The fourth finger is kissing, and trewely he were a gret foole that wold kisse the mouthe of a brenning oven or of a fourneis ; and more fooles ben they that kissen in vilainie, for that mouth is the mouth of helle ; and namely thise olde dotardes holoures, which wol kisse and flicker, and besie hemself though they may nought do : certes they ben like to houndes, for an hound whan he cometh by the roser or by other bushes, though so be that he may not pisse, yet wol he heve up his leg and make a contenance to pisse. And for that many men weneth that he may not sinne for no likerousnesse that he doth with his wif, trewely that opion is false ; God wot a man may slee himself with his own knif and make himself dronken of his owen tonne. Certes be it wif, be it childe, or any worldly thing, that he loveth before God, it is his maumet, and he is an idolastre. A man shuld love his wif by discretion, patiently and attemprely and than is she as though it were his suster. The fiftth fingre of the divels hond is the stinking dede of lecherie. Trewely the five fingers of glotonie the fend putteth in the wombe of a man, and with his five fingers of lecherie he gripeth him by the reins for to throwe him into the fourneis of helle, ther as they shul have the fire and the wormes that ever shul lasten, and weping and wayling, and sharpe hunger and thirst, and grislinesse of divels whiche shul all to-trede hem withouten respite and withouten ende. Of lecherie, as I sayd, souden and springen divers spices ; as fornication that is betwene man and woman which

ben not married, and is dedly sinne, and ayenst nature. All that is enemy and destruction to nature is ayenst nature. Parfay the reason of a man eke telleth him wel that it is dedly sinne, for as moche as God forbad lecherie ; and Seint Poule yeveth hem the regne that n'is dewe to no wight but to hem that don dedely sinne. Another sinne of lecherie is, to bereven a maid of hire maidenhed, for he that so doth, certes he casteth a mayden out of the highest degree that is in this present lif, and bereveth hire thilke precious fruit that the booke clepeth the Hundreth Fruit ; I ne can say it non otherwise in English, but in Latine it hight *Centesimus fructus*. Certes he that so doth is the cause of many damages and vilanies mo than any man can reken : right as he sometime is cause of all damages that bestes do in the feld that breketh the hedge of the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may not be restored ; for certes no more may maidenhed be restored than an arme that is smitten fro the body may returne ayen and wexe : she may have mercy, this wot I wel, if that she have will to do penitence, but never shal it be but that she is corrupte. And all be it so that I have spoke somewhat of avoutrie, it is good to shewe the periles that longen to avoutrie, for to eschewe that foule sinne. Avoutre, in Latine, is for to saye, approching of another mannes bedde, thurgh whiche tho that sometime were on fleshe abandone hir bodies to other persons. Of this sinne, as sayth the wise man, folow many harmes : firste breking of feith : and certes feith is the key of Cristendom, and whan that key is broken and lorne sothly Cristendom is lorne, and stont vaine and without fruit. This sinne also is theft, for theft generally is to reve a wight his thinges ayenst his will. Certes this is the foulest theft that may be whan that a woman steleth hire body from her husbond, and yeveth it to hire holour to defoule it, and steleth hire soule fro Crist and yeveth it to the devil : this is a fouler thefte than for to breke a chirche and stele away the chalice ; for thise avouterers breken the temple of God spirituelly, and stelen the vessell of grace, that is, the body and the soule, for whiche Criste shal destroy hem, as sayth Seint Poule. Sothly of this theft douted gretly Joseph, whan that his lordes wif prayed him of vilainie, whan he sayde, Lo, my Lady, how my Lord hath take to me under my warde all that he hath in this world, ne nothing is out of my power but only ye, that ben his wif : and how shuld I then do this wickednesse, and sinne so horribly ayenst God and ayenst my Lord ? God it forbede ! Alas ! all to litel is swichetrouth now yfounde ! The thridde harme is the filth thurgh which they breke the commandment of God and defoule the auter of matrimonies, that is Crist ; for certes in so moche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so moche is it the greter sinne for to breke it, for God made mariage in Paradis, in the estate of innocencie, to multiplie mankinde to the service of God, and therefore is the breking therof the more grevous, of which breking come false heires oft time, that wrongfully occupien folkes heritages, and therfor wol Crist put hem

out of the regne of heven, that is heritage to good folk. Of this breking cometh eke oft time that folk unware wedde or sinne with hir owen kindrede; and namely thise harlottesthat haunten bordelles of thise foul women that may helikened to a commune gong wheras men purge hir ordure. What say we also of putours, that live by the horrible sinne of puterie, and constrein women to yelde hem a certain rent of her bodily putrie, ye, somtime his owen wif or his childe, as don thise baudes? Certes thise ben cursed sinnes. Understonde also that avourie is set in the ten commandements betwene theft and manslaughter, for it is the grettest theft that may be, for it is theft of body and of soule: and it is like to homicide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were made on flesh; and therefore by the old lawe of God they shuld be slaine, but nathelesse by the lawe of Jesu Crist, that is the lawe of pitee, whan he sayd to the woman that was found in avourie, and shuld have be slain with stones, after the will of the Jewes, as was hir lawe, Go, said Jesu Crist, and have no more will to do sinne. Sothly the vengeance of avourie is awarded to the peine of helle, but if so be that it be discombered by penitence. Yet ben ther mo spices of this cursed sinne, as whan that on of hem is religious, or elles both; or of folk that ben entered into ordere, as sub-deken, deken, or preest, or hospitalers; and ever the higher that he is in ordere the greter is the sinne. The thinges that gretely agrege hir sinne is the breking of hir avow of chastitee whan they received the ordere. And moreover, soth is that holy ordere is chiefe of all the tresorie of God, and is a special signe and marke of chastitee, to shew that they ben joined to chastitee, which is the moste precious lif that is. And thise ordered folk ben specially titled to God, and of the special meinie of God, for which whan they don dedly sinne they ben the special traitours of God and of his peple, for they live by the peple to praye for the peple, and whiles they ben swiche traitours hir prayeres availe not to the peple. Preestes ben as angels as by the mysterie of hir dignitee; but forsoth Seint Poule saith that Sathanas transfourmeth him in an angel of light. Sothly the preest that haunteth dedly sinne he may be likened to an angel of derknesse transfourmed into an angel of light; he semeth an angel of light, but for soth he is an angel of derknesse. Swiche preestes be the sones of Hely, as is shewed in the Book of Kinges that they were the sonnes of Belial, that is the divel. Belial is to say withouten juge, and so faren they; hem thinketh that they be free, and have no juge, no more than hath a free boll, that taketh which cow that him liketh in the toun. So faren they by women, for right as on free boll is ynough for all a toun, right so is a wicked preest corruption ynough for all a parish or for all a countree. Thise preestes, as sayth the book, ne cannot minister the mysterie of preesthood to the peple, ne they knowe not God, ne they hold hem not apaied, as saith the book, of sodden flesh that was to hem offred, but they take by force the flesh that is raw. Certes

right so thise shrewes ne hold hem not apaied of roasted flesh and sodden with which the peple feden hem in gret reverence, but they wol have raw flesh, as folkes wives and hir daughters. And certes thise women that consenten to hir harlotrie don gret wrong to Crist and to holy chirche, and to all halowes and to all soules, for they bereven all thise hem that shuld worship Crist and holy chirche, and pray for Cristen soules; and therefore han swiche preestes, and hir lemmans also that consenten to hir lecherie, the malison of the court Cristen til they come to amendement. The thridde spice of avourie is somtime betwixt a man and his wif, and that is whan they take no regard in hir assembling but only to hir fleshly delit, as saith Seint Jerome, and ne reckon of nothing but that they ben assembled because they ben married: all is good ynough, as thinketh to hem. But in swiche folk hath the divel power, as said the angel Raphael to Tobie, for in hir assembling they putten Jesu Crist out of hir herte, and yeven themself to all ordure. The fourth spice is of hem that assemble with hir kindrede, or with hem that ben of an affinitee, or elles with hem with which hir fathers or hir kinred have deled in the sinne of lecherie: this sinne maketh hem like to houndes, that taken no kepe of kindrede. And certes parentele is in two maners, cyther gostly or fleshly; gostly is for to delen with hir godfribbes; for right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly father, right so is his godfather his father spirituel, for which a woman may in no lesse sinne assemble with hire godfrib than with hire owen fleshly broder. The fiftie spice is that abhominable sinne of which abhominable sinne no man unneth ought to speke ne write, natheles it is openly reherfed in holy writ. This cursednesse don men and women in diverse entent and diverse maner: but though that holy writ speke of horrible sinne, certes holy writ may not be defouled, no more than the sonne that shineth on the myxene. Another sinne apperteineth to lecherie that cometh in sleping, and this sinne cometh often to hem that ben maidens, and eke to hem that ben corrupt and this sinne men call Pollution, that cometh of four maners: somtime it cometh of languishing of the body, for the humours ben to ranke and haboundant in the body of man; somtime of infirmitie, for feblenesse of the virtue retentif, as phisike maketh mention; somtime of surfet of met and drinke; and somtime of vilains thoughtes that ben enclosed in mannes minde whan he goth to slepe, which may not be withouten sinne, for whiche men must kepe hem wisely, or elles may they sinne ful grevously.

Remedium Luxurie.

Now cometh the remedy ayenst lecherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence; that restraineth all disordinate mevings that comen of fleshly talents, and ever the greter merite shal he have that most restraineth the wicked enchaufing

or ardure of this sinne; and this is in two maners, that is to say, chastitee in mariage and chastitee in widowhood. Now shalt thou understonde that matrimony is lesful assembling of man and woman that receiven by vertue of this sacrement the bonde thurgh whiche they may not be departed in all hir lif, that is to say, while that they live bothe. This, as saith the book, is a ful gret sacrement; God made it (as I have said) in Paradis, and wold himself be borne in mariage; and for to halowe mariage he was at a wedding whereas he touned water into wine, whiche was the first miracle that he wrought in the erthe before his disciples. The trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornication, and replenisheth holy chirche of good lignage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth dedly sinne into venial sinne betwene hem that ben wedded, and maketh the hertes all on of hem that ben ywedded as wel as the bodies. This is veray mariage that was established by God er that sinne began, whan naturel lawe was in his right point in Paradis; and it was ordeined that o man shuld have but o woman, and o woman but o man, as sayth Seint Augustine, by many retons.

First, for mariage is figured betwix Crist and holy chirche; and another is, for a man is hed of the woman, (algate by ordinance it shuld be so) for if a woman had mo men than on than shuld she have mo hedes than on, and that were an horrible thing before God; and also a woman mighte not plesse many folk at ones; and also ther shuld never be pees ne rest among hem, for everich of hem wold axe his owen right. And furthermore, no man shulde knowe his owen engendrure, ne who shuld have his heritage, and the woman shuld be the lesse beloved for the time that she were conjunct to many men.

Now cometh how that a man shuld bere him with his wif, and namely in two thinges, that is to say, in suffrance and in reverence, and this shewed Crist whan he first made woman; for he ne made hire of the hed of Adam, for she shuld not claime to gret lordshippe, for ther as the woman hath the maistrie she maketh to moche disarray; ther nede non ensamples of this, the experience that we have day by day ought ynough suffice: also certes God ne made not woman of the foot of Adam, for she shuld not be holden to lowe, for she cannot patiently suffer; but God made woman of the rib of Adam, for woman shuld be felaw unto man. Man shuld bere him to his wif in feith, in trouth, and in love, as sayth Seint Poule, that a man shuld love his wif as Crist loved holy chirche, that loved it so wel that he died for it: so shuld a man for his wif, if it were nede.

Now how that a woman shuld be subget to hire husbond that telleth Seint Peter: first in obedience; and eke, as sayth the decree, A woman that is a wif, as long as she is a wif, she hath non auctoritee to swere ne bere witnesse without leve of hire husbonde, that is hire lord, algate he shuld be so by reton: she shulde also serve him in all

honestee, and ben attempre of hire array. I wete wel that they shuld set hir entent to plesse hir husbonds, but not by queintise of hir array. Seint Jerom sayth, Wives that ben appareilled in filke and precious purple ne mow not cloth hem in Jesu Crist: Seint Gregorie sayth also, that no wight seketh precious array but only for vain glorie, to be honoured the more of the peple. It is a gret folie a woman to have a faire array outward and hireself to be soule inward. A wif shuld also be mesurable in loking, in bering, and in laughing, and discrete in all hire wordes and hire dedes, and above all worldly thinges she shulde love hire husbonde with all hire herte, and to him be trewe of hire body; so shuld every husbond eke be trewe to his wif; for sith that all the body is the husbondes so shuld hire herte be also, or elles ther is betwix hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage. Than shul men understond that for three thinges a man and his wif fleshly may assemble. The first is for the entent of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimonie: another cause is to yelde eche of hem to other the dettes of hir bodies, for neyther of hem hath power of hir owen bodie: the thridde is for to eschew lecherie and vilanie: the fourth is for soth dedly sinne. As to the first, it is meritorie; the second also, for, as sayth the decree, She hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire husbond the dette of hire body, ye, though it be ayenst hire liking and the lust of hire herte. The thridde maner is venial sinne. Trewely scarcely may any of thise be without venial sinne for the corruption and for the delit therof. The fourth maner is for to understond, if the assemble only for amorous love and for non of the foresaid causes, but for to accomplish hir brenning delit, they recke not how oft, sothly it is dedly sinne; and yet with sorwe som folk wol peine hem more to do than to hir appetit sufficeth.

The second maner of chastitee is for to be a clene widow, and eschue the embracing of a man, and desire the embracing of Jesu Crist. Thise ben tho that have ben wives, and have forgon hir husbonds, and eke women that have don lecherie, and ben releved by penance: and certes if that a wif coud kepe hire all chast, by licence of hire husbond, so that she yeve no cause ne non occasion that he agilted, it were to hire a grete merite. This maner of women, that observen chastitee, must be clene in herte as wel as in body, and in thought, and mesurable in clothing and in contenance, abstinent in eting and drinking, in speking, and in dede, and than is she the vessel or the boiste of the blessed Magdeleine, that fulfilleth holy chirche of good odour. The thridde maner of chastitee is virginitee; and it behoveth that she be holy in herte and clene of body; than is she the spouse of Jesu Crist, and she is the lif of angels; she is the preising of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee; she hath in hire that tongue may not telle, ne herte thinke. Virginitee bare our Lord Jesu Crist, and virgin was himself.

Another remedie against lecherie is specially to withdrawe swiche thinges as yeven occasion to that vilanie, as ese, eting, and drinking; for certes whan the pot boileth strongly the best remedie is to withdrawe the fire. Sleping long in gret quiet is also a gret nourice to lecherie.

Another remedie ayenst lecherie is, that a man or a woman eschewe the compaignie of hem by which he douteth to be tempted; for all be it so that the dede be withstonden, yet is ther gret temptation. Sothly a white wall, although it ne brenne not fully with sticking of a candle, yet is the wall black of the leyte. Ful oft time I rede that no man trust in his owen perfection but he be stronger than Sampson, or holier than David, or wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared you as I can of the Seven Dedly Sinnes, and som of hir braunches, and the remedies, sothly if I coude I wold tell you the ten commandements; but so high doctrine I lete to divines: natheles I hope to God they ben touched in this tretise everich of hem alle.

Now for as moche as the second part of penitence stont in confession of mouth, as I began in the first chapitre, I say Seint Augustine saith, Sinne is every word and every dede, and all that men covetein, ayenst the law of Jesu Crist; and this is for to sinne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by the five wittes, which ben sight, hering, smelling, tasting or savouring, and feling. Now is it good to understond the circumstances that agregeen moche every sinne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that dost the sinne, whether thou be male or female, yonge or olde, gentil or thrall, free or servant, hole or sike, wedded or single, ordered or unordered, wise or foole, clerk or seculer, if she be of thy kinred bodily or gostly or non, if any of thy kinred have sinned with hire or no, and many mo thinges.

Another circumstance is this, whether it be don in fornication or in advoutrie or no, in maner of homicide or non, a horrible gret sinne or final, and how long thou hast continued in sinne. The thridde circumstance is the place ther thou hast don sinne, whether in other mennes houses or in thin owen, in feld, in chirche, or in chirch-hawe, in chirche dedicate or non; for if the chirche be halowed, and man or woman spille his kinde within that place, by way of sinne or by wicked temptation, the chirche were enterdited til it were reconciled by the bishop; and if it were a preeft that did swiche vilanie, the terme of all his lif he shuld no more sing masse; and if he did he shuld do dedly sinne at every time that he so song masse. The fourthe circumstance is by whiche mediatours, as by messagers, or for enticement, or for consentment, to bere compaignie with felawship, for many a wretche for to bere felawship wol go to the divel of helle; wherfore they that eggen or consenten to the sinne ben partners of the sinne, and of the dampnation of the sinner. The fift circumstance is, how many times that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how oft he hath fallen; for he that oft falleth

in sinne he despiseth the mercy of God, and encrefeth his sinne, and is unkind to Crist, and he waxeth the more feble to withstand sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, and the later ariseth, and is more slow to shrive him, and namely to him that hath ben his confessour; for which that folk, whan they fall ayen to hir old folies, either they forleten hir old confessour al utterly, or elles they departen hir shrift in divers places: but sothly swiche departed shrift deserveth no mercie of God for hir sinnes. The sixte circumstance is, why that a man sinneth, as by what temptation, and if himself procure thilke temptation, or by exciting of other folk, or if he sinne with a woman by force or by hire owen assent, or if the woman maugre hire hed have ben enforced or non; this shal she tell, and wheder it were for coveitise or povertie, and if it were by hire procuring or non, and swiche other thinges. The seventh circumstance is, in what maner he hath don his sinne, or how that she hath suffered that folk have don to hire: and the same shal the man tell plainly, with all the circumstances, and wheder he hath sinned with commun bordel women or non, or don his sinne in holy times or non, in fasting times or non, or before his shrift, or after his later shrift, and hath peraventure broken therby his penance enjoined, by whos helpe or whos conseil, by forcerie or crafte; all must be told. All thise thinges, after that they ben gret or smale, engreggen the conscience of man or woman. And eke the preeft that is thy juge may the better be avised of his jugement in yeving of penance, and that shal be after thy contrition: for understond wel that after the time that a man hath defouled his baptism by sinne, if he wol come to salvation, ther is non other way but by penance, and shrifte, and satisfaction; and namely by tho two, if ther be a confessour to whom he may shrive him, and that he first be veray contrite and repentant, and the thridde if he have lif to performe it.

Than shal a man loke and consider that if he wol make a trewe and a profitable confession ther must be foure conditions. First, it must be in sorowful bitternesse of herte, as sayth the King Ezechiel to God, I wol remember all the yeres of my lif in the bitternesse of my herte. This condition of bitternesse hath five signes; the first is that confession must be shamefast, not for to covern ne hide his sinne, but for he hath agilted his God and defouled his soule: and hereof sayth Seint Augustin, The herte travaileth for shame of his sinne, and for he hath gret shamefastnesse he is digne to have gret mercie of God. Swiche was the confessioun of the Publican that wold not heve up his eyen to heaven, for he had offended God of heaven, for which shamefastnesse he had anon the mercy of God; and therefore saith Seint Augustine, that swiche shamefast folk ben next foryevnesse and mercy. Another signe is humilitee in confession, of whiche sayth Seint Peter, Humbleth you under the might of God; the hond of God is mighty in confession, for therby God foryeveth thee thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power. And

this humilitee shal be in herte and in signe outward; for right as he hath humilitee to God in his herte, right so shuld he humble his body outward to the preest that sitteth in Goddes place; for which in no maner, sith that Crist is soveraine, and the preest mene and mediatour betwixt Crist and the sinner, and the sinner is last by way of reson, than shuld not the sinner sitte as high as his confessor, but knele before him or at his feet, but if maladie distrouble it; for he shal not take kepe who sitteth ther, but in whos place he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a lord, and cometh for to axe mercie and maken his accorde, and setteth him down anon by the lord, men wolde holde him outrageous, and not worthy so sone for to have remission ne mercy. The thridde signe is, that the shrift shuld be ful of teres, if men mowen wepe, and if they mowe not wepe with hir bodily eyen, than let hem wepe in hir herte: swiche was the confession of Seint Peter, for after that he had forsake Jesu Crist he went out and wept ful bitterly. The fourth signe is that he ne lete not for shame to shrive him and shewe his confession; swiche was the confession of Magdeleine, that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren at the feste to go to our Lord Jesu Crist, and beknewe to him hire sinnes. The fiftie signe is, that a man or a woman be obeisant to receive the penance that hem is enjoined, for certes Jesu Crist for the gilt of man was obedient to the deth.

The second condition of veray confession is, that it be hastily don; for certes if a man hadde a dedly wound, ever the lenger that he taried to warishe himself the more wold it corrupt and haste him to his deth, and also the wound wol be the werse for to hele. And right so fareth sinne that long time is in a man unshewed: certes a man ought hastily to shewe his sinnes for many causes; as for drede of deth, that cometh oft sodenly, and is in no certain what time it shal be, ne in what place; and eke the drenching of o sinne draweth in another; and also the lenger that he tarieth, the ferther is he fro Crist; and if he abide to his last day scarcely may he shrive him, or remembre him of his sinnes, or repent him for the grevous maladie of his deth. And for as moch as he ne hath in his lif herkened Jesu Crist whan he hath spoken unto him, he shal crie unto our Lord at his last day, and scarcely wol he herken him. And understonde that this condition muste have foure thinges; first that the shrift be purveyed afore, and avised, for wicked hast doth not profite; and that a man con shrive him of his sinnes, be it of pride, or envie, and so forth, with the spices and circumstances, and that he have comprehended in his minde the nombre and the gretnesse of his sinnes, and how longe he hath lien in sinne, and eke that he be contrite for his sinnes, and be in stedfast purpose (by the grace of God) never este to fall into sinne; and also that he drede and countrewaite himself that he flee the occasions of sinne to which he is inclined: also thou shalt shrive thee of all thy sinnes to o man, and not parcelmele to o man and parcelmele to another; that is to

understonde, in entent to depart thy confession for shame or drede, for it is but strangling of thy soule; for certes Jesu Crist is entierly all good, in him is non imperfection, and therefore either he foryeveth all parfitly or elles never a dele. I say not that if thou be assigned to thy penitencer for certain sinne that thou art bounde to shewe him all the remenant of thy sinnes of whiche thou hast ben shriven of thy curat but if it like thee of thyn humilitee; this is no departing of shrift: ne I say not, ther as I speke of division of confession, that if thou have licence to shrive thee to a discrete and an honest preest, and wher thee liketh, and by the licence of thy curat, that thou ne mayest wel shrive thee to him of all thy sinnes; but lete no blot be behind; let no sinne be untolde as fer as thou hast remembrance. And whan thou shalt be shriven of thy curat tell him eke all the sinnes that thou hast don sith thou were laste shriven: this is no wicked entente of division of shrift.

Also the veray shrift axeth certain conditions. First, that thou shrive thee by thy free will, not constreined, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, or swiche other thinges, for it is reson that he that trespasseth by his free will, that by his free will he confesse his trespas, and that non other man telle his sinne but himself; ne he shal not nay ne deny his sinne, ne wrath him ayenst the preest for amonesting him to lete his sinne. The second condition is, that thy shrift be lawful, that is to say, that thou that shrivest thee, and eke the preest that hereth thy confession, be veraily in the feith of holy chirche, and that a man ne be not dispeired of the mercie of Jesu Crist, as Cain and Judas were. And eke a man muste accuse himself of his owen trespas, and not another; but he shal blame and wite himselfe of his owen malice and of his sinne, and non other: but natheles if that another man be encheson or enticer of his sinne, or the estate of the person be swiche by which his sinne is aggregated, or elles that he may not plainly shrive him but he tell the person with whiche he hath sinned, than may he tell, so that his entent ne be not to backbite the person, but only to declare his confession.

Thou ne shalt not also make no lesinges in thy confession for humilitee, peraventure to say that thou hast committed and don swiche sinnes of which that thou ne were never guilty; for Seint Augustine sayth, If that thou, because of thin humilitee, makest a lesing on thyself, though thou were not in sinne before yet arte thou than in sinne thurgh thy lesing. Thou must also shew thy sinne by thy propre mouth, but thou be dombe, and not by no letter; for thou that hast don the sinne thou shalt have the shame of the confession. Thou shalt not eke peint thy confession with faire and subtil wordes, to cover the more thy sinne, for than begilest thou thyself and not the preest; thou must telle it plainly, be it never so foule ne so horrible. Thou shalt eke shrive thee to a preest that is discrete to conseille thee; and eke thou shalt not shrive thee for vaine glorie, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but only for the doute of Jesu Crist and

the hele of thy soule. Thou shalt not eke renne to the preest al sodenly to tell him lightly thy sinne, as who telleth a jape or a tale, but avisedly and with good devotion; and generally shrive thee ofte: if thou ofte fall, ofte arise by confession. And though thou shrive thee after than ones of sinne which thou hast be shriven of it is more merite; and, as sayth Seint Augustine, Thou shalt have the more lightly relese and grace of God both of sinne and of peine. And certes ones a yere at the lest way it is lawful to be houseled, for sothely ones a yere all things in the erthe renovelen.

Explicit secunda pars penitentie, et sequitur tertia pars.

Now have I told you of veray confession, that is the seconde part of penitence; the thridde part is satisfaction, and that stont most generally in almesse dede and in bodily peine. Now ben ther three maner of almesse; contrition of herte, wher a man offreth himself to God; another is to have pitee of the defaute of his neighbour; and the thridde is in yeving of good conseil gostly and bodily wher as men have nede, and namely in sustentance of mannes food. And take kepe that a man hath nede of thise thinges generally; he hath nede of food, of clothing, and of herberow, he hath nede of charitable conseilling and visiting in prison and in maladie, and sepulture of his ded body. And if thou maiest not visite the nedeful in prison in thy person, visite hem with thy message and thy yestes: thise ben generally the almesses and werkes of charitee of hem that have temporel richesses or discretion in conseilling. Of thise werkes shalt thou heren at the day of dome.

This almesse shuldest thou do of thy propre thinges, and hastily and prively, if thou mayest; but natheles if thou mayest not do it prively thou shalt not forbere to do almesse though men see it, so that it be not don for thanke of the world, but only to have thanke of Jesu Crist; for, as witnesfeth Seint Mathewe, *chap. v.* A citee may not be hid that is sette on a mountaine, ne men light not a lanterne to put it under a bushell, but setten it upon a candlesticke, to lighten the men in the hous: right so shal your light lighten before men, that they mowe see your good werkes, and glorifie your fader that is in heaven.

Now as for to speke of bodily peine, it stont in praiers, in waking, in fasting, and in vertuous teching. Of orisons ye shul understond, that orisons or prayers is to say a pitous will of herte, that setteth it in God, and expresseth it by word outward to remeve harmes, and to have thinges spirituel and perdurable, and somtime temporel thinges; of which orisons certes in the orison of the *Pater noster* hath Jesu Crist enclosed most thinges: certes it is privileged of three thinges in his dignitee, for whiche it is more digne than any other prayer, for that Jesu Crist himself made it; and it is short, for it shuld be coude the more lightly, and to hold it the more esie in herte, and helpe himself the after with this orison, and for a man shuld be the lesse wery to say it, and for a man may not excuse

him to lerne it, it is so shorte and so esie, and for it comprehendeth in himself all good prayrs. The exposition of this holy prayer, that is so excellent and so digne, I betake to the maisters of theologie; save thus moche wol I say, that whan thou prayest that God shuld foryeve thee thy giltyes as thou foryevest hem that have agiltyed thee, be wel ware that thou be not out of charitee. This holy orison amenufeth eke venial sinne, and therefore it apperteineth specially to penitence.

This prayer must be trewely sayd, and in perfect feith, and that men prayen to God ordinately, discretely, and devoutly: and alway a man shal put his will to be subgette to the will of God. This orison must eke be sayd with gret humbleesse, and ful pure and honestly, and not to the annoyance of any man or woman: it must eke be continued with werkes of charitee: it availeth eke ayenst the vices of the soule; for, as sayth Seint Jerome, By fasting ben saved the vices of the flesh, and by prayer the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalt understonde that bodily peine stont in waking; for Jesu Crist sayth, Wake ye and pray ye that ye ne enter into wicked temptation. Ye shul understond also that fasting stont in three thinges, in forbering of bodily mete and drinke, in forbering of worldly jolitee, and in forbering of dedly sinne; this is to say, that a man shal kepe him fro dedly sinne with all his might.

And thou shalt understond also that God ordained fasting, and to fasting appertaineth foure thinges; largenesse to poure folk, gladnesse of herte spirituel, not to be angry ne annoied, ne grutch for he fasteth, and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is to say, a man shal not ete in untime, ne sit the longer at the table for he fasteth.

Than shalt thou understonde that bodily peine stont in discipline, or teching by word or by writing, or by ensample, also in wering of here or of stamin, or of habergeons, on hir naked flesh for Cristes sake. But ware thee wel that swiche maner penances ne make not thin herte bitter or angry, ne annoied of thyself, for better is to cast away thin here, than to cast away the swetnesse of our Lord Jesu Crist; and therefore sayth Seint Poule, Clothe you as they that ben chosen of God in herte, of misericorde, debonairtee, suffrance, and swiche maner of clothing, of which Jesu Crist is more plesed than with the heres or habergeons.

Than is discipline eke in knocking of thy brest, in scourging with yerdes, in kneeling, in tribulation, in suffring patiently wronges that ben don to thee, and eke in patient suffring of maladies, or lesing of worldly cattle, or wif, or child, or other friendes.

Than shalt thou understond which thinges distourben penance, and this is in foure maners, that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperation. And for to speke first of drede; for which he weneth that he may suffer no penance, ther ayenst is remedie for to thinke that bodily penance is but short, and litel at regard of

the peine of helle, that is so cruel and so long, that it lasteth withouten ende.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shrive him, and namely thise ipocrites, that wold be holden so parfit that they have no nede to shrive hem, ayenst that shame shuld a man thinke, that by way of reson he that hath not ben ashamed to do foule thinges, certes him ought not be ashamed to do faire thinges, and that is confessions. A man shuld also think that God seeth and knoweth al his thoughtes, and al his werkes, and to him may nothing be hid ne covered. Men shuld eke remembre hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome to hem that ben not penitent in this present lif; for all the creatures in heven and in erthe, and in helle, shul see apertly all that they hidden in this world.

Now for to speke of the hope of hem that ben so negligent and slowe to shrive hem, that stondeth in two maners; that on is that he hopeth for to live long, and for to purchase moche riches for hir delit, and than he wol shrive him, and, as he sayth, he may, as him semeth, than timely ynough come to shrift; another is the surquedrie that he hath in Cristes mercie. Ayenst the first vice he shal thinke that our lif is in no sikernesse, and eke that all the riches in this world ben in aventure, and passen as a shadowe on a wall; and as sayth Seint Gregorie, that it appertaineth to the gret rightwisnesse of God that never shal the peine stinte of hem that never wold withdrawe hem from sinne, hir thanks, but ever continue in sinne. For thilke perpetual will to don sinne shall they have perpetual peine.

Wanhope is in two maners; the first wanhope is in the mercie of God; that other is that they think that they ne might not long persevere in goodnesse. The first wanhope cometh of that, he demeth that he hath sinned so gretly and so oft, and so long lyn in sinne, that he shal not be saved. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhope shulde he thinke that the passion of Jesu Crist is more stronge for to unbinde than sinne is strong for to binde. Ayenst the second wanhope he shal thinke that as often as he falleth he may arisen again by penitence; and though he never so longe hath lyen in sinne, the mercie of Crist is alway redy to receive him to mercie. Ayenst that wanhope that he demeth he shuld not long persevere in goodnesse he shal think, that the febleness of the devil may nothing do but if men wol suffre him; and eke he shal have strength of the helpe of Jesu Crist, and of all his chirche, and of the protection of angels, if him list.

Than shal men understonde what is the fruit of penance; and after the wordes of Jesu Crist it is an endeles blisse of heven, ther joye hath no con-

trariositee of wo ne grevance; ther all harmes ben passed of this present lif: ther as is sikernesse from the peines of helle; ther as is the blisful compaignie that rejoycen hem ever mo everich of others joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foule and derke, is more clere than the sonne; ther as the body that whilom was sike and freele, feble and mortal, is immortal, and so strong and so hole, that ther ne may nothing appeire it; ther as is neither hunger, ne thurst, ne colde, but every foule replenished with the sight of the parfit knowing of God. This blisful regne mowe men purchase by povertie spirituel, and the glory by lowlinesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaile, and the lif by deth and mortification of sinne: to which life he us bring that bought us with his precious blood! Amen.

Now preye I to hem alle that herken this litel tretise or reden it, that if ther be any thing in it that liketh hem that therof they thanken our Lord Jesu Crist, of whom procedeth alle witte and all godenesse; and if ther be any thing that displeth hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonning, and not to my wille, that wold fayn have seyde better if I hadde had koning; for oure boke seyth, All that is written is written for oure doctrine, and that is myn entente; wherfore I beseeke you mekely, for the mercie of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercie of me and foryeve me my giltes, [and namely of myn Translations and enditinges of worldly vanitees, the which I revoke in my retractions; as The Boke of Troilus, The Boke also of Fame, The Boke of The Five-and-twenty Ladies, The Boke of The Duchesse, The Boke of Seint Valentines Day of the Parlement of Briddes, The Tales of Canterbury, thilke that sounen unto sinne, The Boke of the Leon, and many an other Bokes; if they were in my remembraunce, and many a Song, and many a lecherous Lay, Crist of his grete mercie foryeve me the sinne! but of The translation of Boes of Consolation, and other Bokes of Legendes of Saints, and of Omelies, and Moralite, and Devotion, that thanke I oure Lord Jesu Crist and his blisful mother, and alle the seintes in heven, beseking hem that they fro hensforth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to bewaile my giltes, and to stodien to the savation of my soule,] and graunte me grace, of veray penance, confession and satisfaction to don in this present lif, thorgh the benigne grace of him that is King of kinges and Preste of alle prestes, that bought us with the precious blode of his herte, so that I mote ben on of hem atte the laste day of dome that shullen be saved; *Qui cum Deo patre et Spiritu sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

THE COKE'S TALE OF GAMELYN.

Now lithin and listinith, and
Herkinith you aright,
And ye shullin here me tell
You of a doughti knight.

Sir Johan of Boundis clepid was
This ilke knight's name;
Wele coudin he of noriture,
And eke of mochil game.

Thre sonnis this knight had, and with
His bodi he them wan;
The eldest was a moche shrew,
And sonè he began.

His brotherin lov'd thir fadir,
And of him were agast;
Th' eldist deserv'd his fadir's curse,
And had it at the last.

The godè knight his fadir did
Live so long and yore,
That Deth was comen him unto,
And handlid him full fore.

The godè knight ycarid moch,
Sore like ther as he lay,
How that his childerin shuldè
Lyvin after his day.

He haddè ben widè where, but;
Noon husbondèe he was;
Allè the londè which that he had
It was veray purchas;

And fayn he woldè that it were
Dressid among them all,
That everich of them had his part
As it mightè befall.

Tho sent he into the contrè
Aftir wifè knightis,
To helpen dele his londis, and
Dressin them to rightis.

He sent them word by letteris
That they shulde hyè blyve
If that they wol speken with him
While that he was on live.

Sone as those knightis herden how
Thus sekè that he lay,
Tho haddè they no mannir rest
Nothir by night nor day

Tyll that they comin unto him,
Ther as he layd him still,
Upon his deth's bedde for to
Abidin Godd's wil.

Thus then saidin the godè knight,
Sek ther as he lay,
Lordis, I warnè you forsothe,
Withoutin any nay,

I may not lengir liven herè
In this sorrowful stound,
For thorough Godd's will supreme
Dethe drawith me to ground.

Ther ne was no one of them alle,
That herdin him aright,
That thei ne haddè mochil routh
Upon that ilke knight;

And seidè, Sir, for Godd's love
Ne dismayen you nought,
God may don botè of balè
Which that is now ywrought.

Then answerid them the gode knight,
Sike there as he lay,
Botè of balè God may send,
I wote it is no nay.

But I besekè you knightis,
Al for the love of me,
Goith and dressith my londis
Among my sonis thre.

And, frendis, for the love of God
Delith them nat amys,
And forgettith not Gamelyn,
My yongè son that is.

Takith hedè unto that one
As wel as to that other;
Seldome ye seine any heir
That helpè woll his brother.

Tho lettin they the knighte liggia
Which that was not in hele,
And in thei wentin to counsaile
His londis for to dele;

For to delin them al too on
That was ther only thought,
And for that Gamelyn yongist was
He shuldè havin nought.

Al the londè which that ther was
They delten it in two,
And lete Gamelyn the yonge
Withouten londè go.

And everich of them seiden
Til othir fullè loude,
His bretherin mowe give him londè
Whan that he godis koude.

Whan they had delid the londis
After their owne will,
Tho camin they unto the knight
Ther as he lay full still,

And toldin unto him anon
How that they hadd ywrought,
And the knight there as he seke lay
Ylikid it right nought.

Then seide the knight angrily,
I fware by Seint Martyn
For all that which ye have ydone
Yet is the londè myn.

For Godd'is love, my neighbouris,
Standeith ye allè still,
And I woll delin my londe
After myn owne will.

Johan myn eldist sone shall
Yhave plowis five,
That was my fadir's heritage
While that he was on live;

And middillist sone shall
Five plowis have of lond
That I holpe for to gettin
With myn own rightè hond;

And all myn othir purchas
Of landis and of ledes,
That I bequethè Gamelyn,
And alle my gode stedès.

And I beseke you, gode men,
That lawis con of lond,
For Gamelyn's love that
Thus my bequest may stond.

Thus delid hath the gode knightè
His londè be his dai,
Right upon his deth's beddè,
Sore like ther as he lay:

And sone aftirwerdis he
Lay as a stone still,
And dyid whan the tymè came,
As it was Crist's will.

Anon aftir that he was dede,
And undir grafs ygrave,
Tho sone the eldir brothir
Begylid the yongè knave.

He tokin into his hondis
His londis and his lede,
And also Gamelyn himself
To clothin and to fede.

He clothid him and feddè him
Evil and ekè wroth,
And letin his londis for fare,
And als his housis both;

His parkis eke, and his wodis,
And diddè nothyng wel,
And sithin he it abouttè
On his own feire fell.

So longè tyme was Gamelyn
In his brother's Hall,
For the strengift of godè will
They doutidin him all.

There ne was none wight in that place,
Nothir yongè ne olde,
That woldè wrathin Gamelyn
Were he nevir so bold.

Gamelyn stode upon a day
In his brother's yerde,
And he began with his hondè
To handilin his berde.

He thoughtin upon his londis,
That layin longe unfawe,
And also of his feire okis,
That dounè were ydrawe.

His parkis werin al brokin,
And al his deir reved;
Of allè his gode stedis noon
Was there with him beleved;

His housis weren unhelid
And full evilly dight;
Tho thought this yongè Gamelyn
It wentè not aright.

After camè his brothir in
Ywalkyng statelich thare,
And seide unto Gamelyn,
What? is our metè yare?

Tho Gamelyn ywrothid hym,
And fware by Godd'is boke,
Thou shalt y go bake, luke, thy self;
I wol not be thy coke.

How, brothir Gamelyn, quod he,
Thus answerist me thou?
Thou spakist nevir soche a word
Yet as thou doist now.

By my faith, seide Gamelyn,
Now me it thinkith nede;
Of all the harmis that I have.
I nevir yit toke hede.

My parkis ben y brokin, and
My deir ben yreved;
Of myn harnis and my stedis
Noght is there me beleved.

Al that my fadir me bequethe
Al goith now to shame,
And therefore have thou Godd'is curse,
Brothir John by thy name.

Than thus bespakin his brothir,
That rapè was of vees,
Stondith stille, thou gadiling,
And holdith right thy pees:

Thou shaltè ben ful faign to have
Thy metè and thy wede.
What spekest thou, thou gadiling,
Of lond othir of lede?

Then seide to him Gamelyn,
The childè that was yinge,
Christ's cursè mote he havin
That clepith me Gadlyng.

I am no wors gadlying than the,
Parde ne no wors wight,
But born I was of a lady,
And gottin of a knyght.

Ne durst he not to Gamelyn
Not oo fote ferthir go,
But clepid to him his meinè,
And seide to them tho;

Goith and betith wele this boy,
And ravith him his wit,
And let him lere another time
To answering me bett.

Then seid the chyld, yong Gamelyn;

Christ'is curse mote thou havin
What? brother art thou myn.

And if that I shal algatis
Y betin be anon,
Crist'is curse mote thou havin
But that thou be that one.

And right anon his brothir did,
In that his gret hete,
Makin his meine fett stavis,
This Gamelyn to bete.

Whan everich of them had a staff
Into his hond nomin;
Gamelyn was aware tho,
He forsaugh them comin.

Tho Gamelyn saugh them comin
He lokid ovir all,
And was ware of a pestil
Stodè undir the wall.

And Gamelyn was fully light,
And thidir gan he lepe,
And droffe all his brother's men
Right sone on an hepe.

He lokid like a wild lion,
And laidin on gode wone;
Tho whan his brothir seye that
He beganne to gonne.

He fleigh up untill a loftè,
And shet the dorè fast:
Thus Gamelyn with his pestil
Made them all agast.

Some for Gamelyn's love,
And some for his envie,
Allè withdrawen them to halves
Tho he began to pleie:

What now? seide Gamelyn; brothir,
Evil motè ye the;
Wollè ye beginnin contek
And than so sone fle?

Gamelyn fought his brothir tho
Whithir he was yflowe,
And saugh where that he lokid out
At a solere windowe.

Brothir, tho seide Gamelyn,
Comith a litil nere,
And I wol techin the a plaie
Attè the bokillere.

His brothir to hym answerid,
And swore by Seint Richere,
While the pestil is in thyn honde
I woll comin no nere.

Brothir, I woll makin the pece,
I swere by Crist's ore;
Castith away the pestil tho,
And wrathè the na more.

I mot nedis, seide Gamelyn,
Wrathè me at onys,
For that thou woldist make thy men
To breikin my bonis.

Ne had I haddin meyn and might,
In myn ownè twey armes,
To have y pushin them fro me
They would have done me harmes.

To Gamelyn tho seidin his
Brothir; Be thou not wrothe,
For to sein the havin harme
Me werin rightè lothe.

I ne did it not, my brothir,
But right for a fonding,
For to lokin if thou were strong,
And art so very ying.

Come adoun then to me, quod he,
And grauntè me my bone,
Of oo thing I wol askin the,
And we shul saughtè sone.

Adoun then camin his brothir,
That fkill was and fell,
And was swithè right sore aghast
Of that ilkè pestil.

He seide, Brothir Gamelyn;
Askè me now thy bone,
And loke that you me blamè, but
I grauntè it full sone.

Tho seiden yongè Gamelyn;
Brothir mynè, I wiss
And if we shullè ben at one
Thou must me grauntè this:

Al that my fadir me bequethe,
While that he was on live,
Thou mustè do me it to have,
If that we shul not strive.

That thou shalt havè, Gamelyn,
I swere by Crist's ore,
Al that thy fadir the bequethe,
Though thou woldist have more.

Thy londè, that now lyith lie,
Full well it shall be sowe,
And thyne housis yraifid up
That now ben layd full lowe.

Thus seide the knight to Gamelyn,
But only with his mouth,
And thoughtè but of falseness,
As he right welè couth.

The knightè thoughtin on traifon,
But Gamelyn on noon,
And went and kissid his brothir,
And then they were at oon.

Alas for yongè Gamelyn!
Nothing at all he wist
With swichè false traifon
His brothir hath him kist.

Lithinith and lestipith, and
Holdith you stille your tonge,
And ye shull herin straunge talking
Of Gamelyn the yonge.

There happid to be there beside
Tryid a wraffiling,
And therefore there was yfettin
A ram and als a ring.

And Gamelyn was in a will
To wendè thereunto,
For to previn his mighte, and se
What that he couthè do.

Now brothir myne, quod Gamelyn,
By holie Seint Richere
Thou mustè nedis lene to night
Me a litil coursere,

That is freshe to the sporis,
Upon him for to ride;
I mustin on an errand go
A litil here beside.

Be God, seide his brothir tho,
Of stedis in my stall
Goith and chosith the the best,
And sparith none of alle,
Of stedis or of courseris,
That stondith 'hem beside,
And tellith me, my godè brothir,
Whithur thou wiltè ride.

Herè besidis, brothir, is
Y cryid a wrastring,
And therefore shallè ben y sett
A ram and als a ring.

Mochè worship it were sothly,
Brothir, unto us all
Might I the ram and als the ring
Bringin home to the Hall.

A stedè there was fadilid,
Smarth was it and eke flete;
Gamèlyn diddin a peire of
Sporis fast on his fete.

He sat his fote in the stirrop,
The stedè he bestrode,
And towardis the wrastring
The yongè childè rode.

Tho Gamèlyn the yongè was
Riddin out at the gate,
The falsè knight his own brothir
Lokkid it astir thate.

And he besoughtin Jesu Crist,
That is of hevin king,
That he mightè brekin his nek
In that ilk wrastring.

Assone as Gamèlyn cam there
The wrastring placè was
He lightid down of the stedè
And stodin on the gras.

And ther he herd a frankelyn
Weloway for to sing,
And beganin all bittirly
His handis for to wring.

Godè man, seide Gamèlyn,
Why makist thou this fare?
Is ther no man that may you help
Out of this nicè care?

Alas! seide this frankelyn,
That evir I was bore!
For tweiè stalworthè sonis
I wene I have forlore.

A champion is in the place
That has wroughtin me sorow,
For he hath slayn my too sonis
But if that God them borrow.

I woldè givin ten poundis,
Be Jesu Crist, and more,
With the nonis I fond a man
To handilin him fore.

Godè man, seide Gamèlyn,
Wilt thou this welè done?
Holdè my hors while that my man
Ydrawith of my shone.

And helpe my man also to kepe
My clothis and my stede,
And I woll into the place gon
And loke how I may spede.

By God, seide the frankelyn,
It shall right so be don,
I woll my filfin be thy man
To drawin of thy shone.

And wendè you into the place,
Swete Jesu Crist the spede,
And dredè not of thy clothis
Nor of thy godè stede.

Barefote and ungert Gamèlyn
Into the ringe came,
Allè that werin in the place
Hedin of him the name,

How he durstin aventure him
On him to don his might
That was so doughti a champion
In wrastring and in fight.

Upstertè tho the champion
Ful rapely right anon,
Towardis yongè Gamèlyn
He tho began to gon,

And seide, Who is thy fadir,
And who is eke thy sire?
Forsothè thou art a gret sole
For that thou camist hire.

Anon Gamèlyn answerid
The stout champion tho,
Thou knewist full wele my fadir
While that he couthè go:

Whilis that he was on live,
I swere by Seint Martyn,
Sir John of Boundis was his name,
And I am Gamèlyn.

Felawe, seide the champion,
So evir mote I thrive,
I knew right welè thy fadir
While that he was on live;

And thy felfin, yongè Gamèlyn,
I will that thou it here,
Whiles thou wert a yongè boy
A mochè shrew thou were.

Then seide yongè Gamèlyn,
And swore bi Crist's ore,
Now am I oldir wox thou shalt
Y findin me a more.

Be God, seide the champion,
Welcome mote thou be;
Come thou onys in my honde
Shaltin thou nevir the.

It was welè within the night,
And bright the mone shone,
Whan Gamèlyn and the champion
Togidir gan to gon.

The champion castè tornis
To Gamèlyn that was prest,
And Gamèlyn stodin stillè,
And bad him don his best.

Then seiden yongè Gamèlyn
Unto the champion,
Now that I have fully provid
Many tornis of thine,

Thou mostin, seidè Gamelyn,
Prove oon or two of myn.

Gamelyn to the champion
Yede smartily anon,
Of al the tornis that he coude
He shewid him but one;
And kest him on the listè side
That thre ribbis to brak,
And thereunto his left armè,
That gaf a grettè crak.

Than seidè yongè Gamelyn
Smertly to him anon,
Shall it be holdin for a cast,
Or ellis go for none?

Bi God, seidè the champion,
Whedir so that it be,
He that ones comith in thyn hand
Shallin he nevir the.

Than seidè the frankelyn, that
Thre sonis there had lore,
Blessid be thou, yongè Gamelyn,
That ever thou were bore!

For now unto the champion
This have I for to seie,
This is the yongè Gamelyn
That taughtè the to pleie.

Ayen answerde the champion,
That likid nothyng well,
He is allè their maistir, and
His pleiè is right fell.

Sithin that I wristilid first
It is agon full yore,
But I was nevir in my life
Handilid so before.

Yongè Gamelyn stode in the place
Allone withouten ferk,
And seide, If there be any mo
Let them comè to werk.

The champion which that painid
Him to workin so fore,
It semith by his countinaunce
That he willè no more.

Gamelyn in the placè stode
Stillè as any stone.
For to abidin wraustiling,
But there ycomith none.

There ne was none with Gamelyn
That woldè wrestle more,
For he handilid the champion
So wonderously fore.

Two gentilmeinè that owned the place
Come to Gamelyn, God geve them grace!
And seidè to him, Have done on
Thy hosin and thy shone;
Forsothè at this timè all
This faire it is ydone.

Tho seidè to them Gamelyn,
So mote I well yfare,
I havè not yet halvindele
Yfoldè all my ware.

Than seide the champion so broke,
I may it welè fwere
He is a sole that therof bieth,
Thou sellest it so dere.

Tho seide to him the frankelyn,
That was in mochill care,
Fellow, he saide, whi lakkist
Thou so moche of his ware?

Be Seint Jame, that in Galis is,
That many man has fought,
Yet it is moche too godè chepe
That thou hasten ybought.

Tho that the wardinis werin
Of that ilk wraustiling
Comin forth, and brought Gamelyn
The ram and als the ring.

And thus wann yongè Gamelyn
The ram and eke the ring,
And wentè forth with mochil joy
Homeward in the morning.

His brothir se where that he come
With all the grettè rout,
And bad the porter shute the gate,
And holdin him without.

The porter of his lord's word
Was so right fore agast,
And stert anon unto the gate
And lokkid it full fast.

Now lithinith and lestinith
Bothè yongè and old,
And ye shullin herè gamin
Of Gamelyn the bold.

Gamelyn cometh therunto
For to have comen in;
But all in vaine; the dore then was
Y shitt fast with a pyn.

Than seidè yongè Gamelyn,
Porter, undo the yate,
For many a godè mann's
Sonnè stondith thereat.

Then answerid him the porter,
And swore by Godd's berde,
Thou ne shalt, frènde Gamelyn,
Comin into this yerde.

Thou lyist, seidè Gamelyn,
So broukin I my chynne:
He smote the wikit with his fote,
And brak away the pyn.

The porter streightwey saughè tho
It might no bettir be,
He sette fote on erthè, and
Fast he began to fle.

Bi my faith, seidè Gamelyn,
That travaile is ylore,
For I am on fote as light as
Thow, though thou had yswore,

Gamelyn ovirtoke the porter,
And his teenè ywrak,
And gert him fall upon the nek,
That he the bon to brak;

And toke him by that oon armè,
And threw him in a well;
Seven hundrid fadoma it was depe,
As I have herdè telle.

Whan Gamelyn the yongè thus
Had yplaid his play,
Alle that in the yerdè were
Withdrewin them away,

That dredin him full forè for
The wreke that he wrought,
And for the fayir cumpany
That he had thither brought.

Yong Gamelyn yede to the gate
And letè it up wide,
He letin in allè the rout
That gon woldin or ride;

And feidè, Ye ben ywelcome
Withouten any greve,
For we wol ben maisteris here,
And askè no man leve.

It n'as but yesterdai I last,
Saide yongè Gamelyn,
In my brother's feleris
Five toun of right gode wyne.

I willè not this cumpany
Partyn with me on twyn,
And if ye will don aftir me,
Whil any sope is inn:

And if my brothir grutchith us,
Or makith it foulè chere,
Othir for spence of mete and drink
That we shull spendin here,

I am the ovircaterir,
And bere our althir purse,
He shallè have for his grutching
Sancta Maria's curse.

My brothir is but a nigon,
I swere by Crist's ore,
And we woll spendè largely
That he hath sparid yore.

And whofo that makith grutching
That we do here ydwell,
He shall go unto the porter
Into the drawè well.

Sevin dayis and sevin nightes
Gamelyn held his fest,
With mochè solace that there was,
And eke no mannir heste.

All in a litil torrit his
Brothir laydè ysteke,
And saugh him wastin his godis,
But durstè not to speke.

Right erli in a morrowning,
Upon the eightè day,
The gestis come to Gamelyn,
And woldè gon thir way.

Lordis, tho feidè Gamelyn,
And wollin ye so hie?
Allè the wyn is not yet dronk,
So broukin I mine eye.

Yongè Gamelyn in his hertè
Was sorowfull and wo
Whan that his gestis toke their leve
And fro him woldè go.

He woldè that they had dwellid
Lengir, and they seide Nay,
But bitaught Gamelyn to God,
And bad him have gode dai.

Thus madè Gamelyn his feste,
And brought it well to end,
And aftirward his gestis toke
Levè their way to wend,

Now lithinith and listinith
And holdith you your tonge,
And ye shullin herè gamin
Of Gamelyn the yonge.

Herkinith, Lordilingis, and
Listinith you aright,
Whan all the gestis weren gon
How Gamelyn was dight.

Allè the while that Gamelyn
Had hold his mangerie
His brothir thought on him bewreke
With his false trecherie;

Tho whan that Gamelyn's gestes
Y ridin were and gon
Gamelyn stode anon alone,
Frendè tho had he none.

Tho aftir this full sone it fell,
Within a littil stound,
That Gamelyn was takin, and
Full hardly was he bound.

Than forth comith the false knight
Out of the solerè,
And to Gamelyn his brothir
He goith fullè nere,

And seiden unto Gamelyn,
Who mede the so bold
For to destroyin and waste
The store of my household?

Brothir, answered Gamelyn,
Now wrathè the right noght,
For it is many day agon
Sithins it was ybought:

For, brothir, thou hastin haddè,
I swere by Seint Richere,
Of fiftene plowis of londè
This full sixtenè yere;

And of allè the bestis which
Thou hastè forth ybredd,
That my fadir to me bequethe
Upon his deth's bedd:

Of allè this full sixtene yere
I gevè the the prow,
For the metè and the drinkè
That we have spendid now.

Than thus seidè the false knight,
(Full evil mote he the)
Herkinith, brothir Gamelyn,
What I woll gevin the;

For of my body, brothir, heir
Y gettin have I none;
I wollè makin the my heir,
I swerè by Seint John.

Par mafay, seidè Gamelyn,
And if that it so be,
And thou thinkest as thou seyist,
May God yeldin it the!

Nothing wistè yongè Gamelyn
Of his brother's gile,
And therefore he him begilid
In verry littil while.

Gamelyn, seiden he, o thing
I nedis must the tell,
Tho whan thou threwe my porter
Into the drawè well,

I sworè in that wrathè, and
In that my gretè mote,
That thou shuldift ybondè be
Both hondè and eke fote :

And therefore I besechè the,
My brother Gamelyn,
Letith thou noght me be forsworn,
As brothir art thou mine ;

But letith me ybindin the
Both hondè and eke fote,
For me to holdin myne avough,
Right as I the behote.

Brothir, tho seide Gamelyn,
As so I motin the,
Thou shaltè not bèn forsworin
For the love of me.

Tho madin thei this Gamelyn
To fitte, might he not stand,
Tyll that he him ybondin had
Both fote and also hand.

The falsè knight his brothir of
Gamelyn was agast,
And sentè aftir fetteris
To fetterin him fast.

His brothir madè lesingis
On him ther as he stode,
And toldè them that comin in
That Gamelyn was wode.

Gamelyn stode to a post
Y bondin in the Hall,
And tho that ther ycomin in
Lokid upon him all.

Evir stode yong Gamelyn
Evin bolte upright,
But mete nor drink ne had he none
Nowthir by day ne night.

Tho seide yongè Gamelyn,
Brothir myn, by my hals
Now I have wele espyid that
Thou art a parti fals.

Had I but wistè that trefon
That thou haddist yfond
I woldin have gevin strokis
Or I had ben ybound.

Gamelyn stode thus bondin
As still as any stone
For too dayis and too nightis,
And metè had he none.

Then seide at last this Gamelyn,
That stode boundin strong,
Adam Spencer, methinkith that
I fastè al to long ;

Therefore, Adam le Dispencer,
Now I beseche the
For the mochè lovè with which
My fadir lovid the,

If thou may comin to the kaies,
Lefith me out of bond,
And for thi I woll departin
With the of my fre lond.

Than him answerid this Adam,
Which that was the Spencer,
I have yservid thy brothir
This full sixtenè yere,

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And if I shuldè letin you
To gon out of his boure
He woldin aftirwardis feye
That I were a traytour.

Adam, answeyrd Gamelyn,
So broukin I myn hals,
Thou shaltè findin my brothir
At the last rightè fals ;

And therefore, brothir Adam, me
Lofè out of my bonds,
And I wollè departin with
The of myn own fre londs.

Upon so gode a forewardè
Saidin Adam, I wis
I wollè doin thereunto
Allè that in me is.

Adam, tho seide Gamelyn,
As so mowin I the,
I woll holdè the covènaunt,
An thou too wollè me.

Anon as Adam his lordè
To beddè was ygone,
Adam tokè the kaies, and lat
Gamelyn out anon.

He unlokid yongè Gamelyn
Both hondis and eke fete,
On hope of the avauncement
Which that he him bēhete.

Then seide yongè Gamelyn,
Thankid be Godd'is sonde,
For now that I am ylofid
Both fote and also hond !

Had I but etin a litil,
And thereto dronk aright,
There is non in this housè that
Shuld bindè me this night.

Tho Adam tokè Gamelyn,
As still as any stone,
And haddin him into the spence
Right rapily anon ;

And settin him to his soupere
Right in a privie stede,
And badin hym do gladly,
And Gamelyn so dede.

Anon affone as Gamelyn
Had etin wel and fine,
And thereunto had ydrankin
Well of the redè wyne,

Adam, seide yongè Gamelyn,
Tell what is now thy rede ;
For me to go to my brothir,
And gerdin of his kede ?

No, Gamelyn, seidin Adam,
It shallè not be so,
But I can tellè the a rede
That is yworth the too.

I wote wele forsothè that
(And this it is no nay)
We shullin have a mangerie
Rightè upon Sunday ;

Of abbotis and priouris
Full many here shal be,
And othir men of holie cherch,
As I can tellè the ;

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Thou shalt stand up by the post,
As thou were hondè fast,
And I shall them leve unlok, that
Away thou may them cast:

And whan that they have y etin,
And washin have their hondes,
Tho thou shalt bespekin them all
To bring the out of bondes:

And if that they will borrow the
That werin a gode game,
Than werin thou out of prison
And I als out of blame;

But if that evèrich of them
Sayè unto us Nay,
I shullè don anothir thing,
I swerè by this day.

Thou shullè have a godè staffe,
And I woll have another,
And Crist'is curse have that oon
That failè shall that othir.

Ye, for God, seidè Gamelyn,
I say it right for me
If that I failin on my side
Than evil mote I the.

If that we shullin algatis
Asoile them of thire synne;
Warnith me, my brothir Adam,
Whan that we shall begynn.

Now Gamelyn, seiden Adam,
Ey Seintè Charitè
I wollè warnè the befor
Whan that the time shall be.

Whan that I twinkin upon the
Lokè for to be gon,
And cast away the fetteris,
And come to me anon.

Adam, seidè yong Gamelyn,
Y blissid be thy bones!
That is a rightè gode counsaile
Y gevin for the nones.

If that they shullin wernè me
To bring the out of bendes
I wollè settin gode strokis
Full right upon their lendes.

Tho the Soudy was ycomin,
And these folk to the feste;
Faire they werein ywelcomid
Bothè the leste and meste.

And evir as they at the Hall
Dorè were comin in
They evèrich castin an eie
On yongè Gamelyn.

The falsè knight his own brothir,
So full of trecherie,
Allè the gestes that there were
At that ilk mangerie

Of Gamelyn his own brothir
He toldin them with mouth
Allè the harmis and the shame
That e're he tellè couth.

Tho they werein yservid streit
Of messis too or thre;
Than seidè yongè Gamelyn,
How do ye servè me?

It ne is not wele yservid,
Be God that allè made,
That I shold sittin here fasting
And othir men make glade.

The falsè knightè his brothir,
Thereas that he ystode,
Toldin to allè his gestis
That Gamelyn was wode.

And Gamelyn there stodè still,
And answerid right noght,
But of Adam'is wordis he
Heldè still in his thought.

Tho Gamelyn began to speke,
Right doulefully withall,
Unto the grettè lordis that
Y satyn in the Hall:

My Lordings, tho seiden he,
For Crist'is passion
Helpin to bringè Gamelyn
Out of thilkè prison.

Than seidè to him an abbot,
(Sorow upon his cheke!)
He shallin have Crist'is curse
And Seintè Maries eke,

That shall the out of this prison
Beggin owthir borow,
But evir worthè hym full wele
That doth the mykil sorow.

And anon astir that abbot
Than spakin anothir,
I woldè that thyn hede were of
Though thou were my brothir.

Allè that the shall borrowin
Motè them foulè fall;
And thus yseiden allè they
That werin in the Hall.

Than seidè to him a priour,
Evil mowin he thrive!
It is grettè forow and care,
Boy, that thou art on live.

On, on, seidè yongè Gamelyn,
So broukin I my bone,
Now that I havin espyid
That frendis have I none.

A cursid mot he worthè be,
Bothè fleshe and blode,
That evir doth to priouris
Or abbotes any gode.

Anon Adam the Dispencer
Takin up hath the cloth,
And lokid unto Gamelyn,
And saugh that he was wroth.

Adam of the pantrie at thilk
Time litil he thought.
And too godè stavis unto
The Hallè dore he brought.

Adam lokid on Gamelyn
And he was war anon,
And cast awaie the fetteris,
And began for to gon.

Tho he camin unto Adam,
He toke to the one staff,
And beginning to werkè wele,
And gode strokis he gaff.

THE COKE'S TALE OF GAMELYN,

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Gamelyn came into the Hall,
And Adam Spencer both,
And lokid them all aboutin
As they haddè ben wroth.

Gamelyn sprenith holi watir
All with an okin spire;
That some of them that stode upright
Fillin into the fire.

There was no mannir lewde man
That in the Hallè stode
That woldè doin Gamelyn
Any thingè but gode,

But thei stode besidin, and
Letè them bothè werch,
For thei ne haddè no routhè
Of men of holi cherk.

Of abbot or of prior, or
Of monk or of canon,
That Gamelyn hath overtoke,
Anon they yedin doun.

There ne was none of them allè
That with his stuff ymette
That he made them overthrowe,
And quyttè them his dette.

Tho Gamelyn, seide Adam,
For Seintè Charite
Payith, I pray, gode liveray,
And for the love of me;

And I wollè kepin the dore;
So evir here I masse
Er that they ben affoilyd
Ther shallè noon ypassè.

Doutè the noght, seide Gamelyn,
While that we ben in fere;
But kepè thou welè the dore
And I woll werkin here;

Besturrithe, gode Adam, and
Ne lettith none ylle,
And we shall tellè largily
How many here there be.

To Gamelyn seiden Adam,
Doith them all but gode,
For thei ben men of holi cherk;
Drawith of them nò blode;

Savith right wele the coroune,
And doith them no harmes,
But brekith bothè their leggis,
And sithin here thir armes.

Thus Gamelyn and Adam hath
Y wroughtin rightè fast,
And pleidin with the monkie tho,
And madè them agast.

Forth hidir they comè riding
Full jolily with swaines,
But home agen they werin ledde
In cartis and in waines.

Tho as they haddin all ydone
Than seidin a gray frere,
Alas! alas! my Lord Abbot,
What diddè we now here?

Tho that we hither did ycome
It was a coldè rede;
Us had far better ben at home
With watir and with brede,

While Gamelyn made orderis
Of monkis and of frere
Evir stodè his brothir stille,
And madè foulè chere.

Tho Gamelyn up with his staff,
That he ful welè knew,
And grettin him upon the nek,
That he him overthrowe,

A litil above the girdil
The riggin bone to braft,
And sett him in the fetteris
There as he fatten arft.

Sittith thou there, my brothir John,
Tho seide Gamelyn,
For to colin thy hotte bodie,
As I did colè myn.

And swithe as they yhaddè wele
Wroken them on their sone,
They askid for the watir, and
They wishin them anon.

What some of them for their love,
And somè for their awe,
Allè the servauntis servid
Them of the bestè law.

The shereff was thennis away
But about a five myle,
And all was toldin unto him
Within a litte whyle,

How Gamelyn and Adam had
Ydon a sorry res,
Boundin and woundin many men
Agen the king's pece.

Eftsonis tho begannin sone
Striffe for to awake,
And the shiregereve about did
Cast Gamelyn to take.

Now lithinith and lestinith,
So God geve you gode fine,
And ye shall herin a gode game
Of yongè Gamelyn.

Now four-and-twenty yongè men,
That holdin them full bolde,
Comin unto the shiregereve,
And seide that they wold

Both Gamelyn and eke Adam
Y fettè be the way;
The shiregereve gafè them leve
Tho soth as I you say,

Thes yongè meinè hidden them
Fast, woldè they not lynne
Tyll that they comin to the gate
There Gamelyn was inne.

Thy knokidin upon the gate,
The porter tho was nye,
And lokid forth out at an hole,
As man that was full flye

The porter had beholdin them
But for a litil while,
He lovid welè Gamelyn,
And was adrad of gile;

And forthi letè the wicket
Y stondin fullè still,
And askid them that stant without
What ywas their will?

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For allè the gret company
Than spake bot one alone,
Undo the gatis, porter, and
Latè us in ygone.

Then seidè to them the porter,
So broukin I my chynne
Ye shullè sayin your errand
Or that ye comin inne.

Say to Gamelyn and Adam,
If that ther wille it be,
We wollè spekin here with them
Two wordis othir thre.

Fellow, seidè the porter tho,
Stondith thou ther ystill,
And I woll wend to Gamelyn
To wetin of his wille.

And in wentè the porter tho
To Gamelyn anon,
And seidè, Sire, I warne you
That here be come your sone;

For lo! the shiregerev'is men
Now ben all at the gate
For to ytekin you bothè;
Shallè ye not escape.

Porter, tho seidè Gamelyn,
So mote I welè the,
I woll allowè the thy wordes
Whan I my timè se.

Go ageyn, porter, to the gate,
And dwell with them a while,
Awaitin, and thou shaltè se
Right sone, porter, a gile.

Adam, tho seidè Gamelyn,
Lokè the to be gon,
We havè foomen at the gate,
And frendis nevir one.

It ben the shiregerev'is men
That hithir ben comin,
They ben yswore togideris,
That we shull be nomin.

To Gamelyn seidè Adam,
Hiè the righte belyve,
And if I failè the this day
Than evil mote I thryve.

And we shullin so welcomè
The shiregerev'is men,
That some of them I trow shall make
Their beddis in the fen.

Then thorough the posternè gate
Yong Gamelyn out went,
And a gode sturdie cartè staffe
In his hondè he hent.

And Adam Spencer hentè sone
Anothir grettè staff
For to helpè young Gamelyn,
And gode strokis he gaffe.

Adam yfellid hath his tweyne,
And Gamelyn felled thre,
The tothir settè on erth,
And fast began to fle.

What? seidin Adam Spencer tho,
So evir hire I masse
I havè right gode reddè wyne,
Pray drinkith er ye passe.

Nai, nai! by God, seidè they tho,
Thy drink is nothing gode,
It woldè makin mann'is brayne
To lyin in his hode.

Yong Gamelyn tho stodè still,
And lokid him about,
And faide, The shiregereve comith
With a full grettè rout.

Adam Spencer, seid Gamelyn,
My rede it is now this,
Abidin we not lengir here
Lest we farin amys.

I rede that we to wode ygonn
Er that we be yfound;
Betir is there lose for to gonn
Than in the tounè ybound.

Adam them tokè by the hond
This yongè Gamelyn,
And echè of them to the othir
Drankin a draft of wyne.

And astirwardistoke their course,
And wentè streight their way;
Tho fond the shiregereve the nest,
But in it was none ay.

The shiregereve lightid adoune,
And went into the Hall,
And fond the lord yfetterid
Full fastè therewithall.

The shireve tho unfetterid
Him rightè sone anon,
And sentin astir a gode leche
To hele his riggè bon.

Letè we now this falsè knight
Lie in his mochill care,
And tellè we of Gamelyn,
And lokè how he fare.

Gamelyn into the wild wode
Ystalkid is full stille,
And Adam le Dispencer it
Ylikid but right ille.

The Adam swore to Gamelyn,
And that be Seint Richere,
Now I say that it is mery
To ben a dispencer;

That muchè levire me werin
The kayis for to bere,
Than walkin in this wildè wode
My clothis all to tere.

Adam, seidè yong Gamelyn,
Dismayè the right noght,
For many a gode mann'is child
In carè is ybrought.

As they thus in the wode stodin,
Ytalking both in fere,
Adam herdè talking of men,
And nigh them thought they were.

Tho Gamelyn undir the wild
Wodè lokid aright,
Full sevin score of yongè men
He saugh right wel ydight;

Allè were sattè at their mete
In a compas about;
Adam, tho seidè Gamelyn,
Now havin ye no doute,

For aftir balè comith bote,
Thorough Godd'is grete might;
Methinkith of mete and of drink
That I havin a fight.

Adam le Dispencer lokid
Tho undir wode bowe,
And whan that he the metè saugh
Tho he was glad inowe;

For now he hopid unto God
For to havin his dele,
And he was ful fore alongid
Aftir a godè mele.

Anon as he seide that word
Streight the maistir outlawe
Saugh Gamelyn and Adam both
Undir the wode shaw.

Lo! yongè men, seide the maistir
Outlaw, by the gode rode
I am aware of some gestis,
Pray God fendin us gode!

Loke! yondir be two yongè men
That ben right wel adight,
A! peradventure they ben mo,
Whofo lokid aright.

Arifeth up quick yongè men,
And fettè them to me,
For it is gode that we wetin
What meinè that they be.

Up thei stertin quik at that word,
Sevin fro the dinnere,
And they mettin with Gamelyn
And Adam Dispencere.

Whan that they werin ney to them
Than seide thus that one,
Yeldith up to us, yonge men
Your bowis and your fione.

Than seide to them Gamelyn,
That yongè was of elde,
Ful mochil sorow mote they have
That unto you shall yelde:

I curse woll none othir wight
But right mine ownè felve
Tho ye may settin unto you
Fyve, andthan be ye twelve.

They herdin by his wordis that
Gret might was in his arme,
And forthi there was non of them
That woldè don him harme,

But sedin unto Gamelyn
Right mildily and still,
Comith aforin our maistir,
And say to him thy will.

Yongè man, seide Gamelyn,
Upon your leaute
Tellith what man your maister is
Which that ye with ybe.

Tho allè they answered him
At ones without lesing,
Our maister is ycoroundid
Of Outlawis is the King.

Adam, seide yongè Gamelyn,
Go we in Crist'is name,
He may nothir metè nor drink
Y wernè us for shame;

And if that he hendè, and
Comin of gentil blode,
He woll geve us both mete and drink,
And doin us some goode.

By Seintè Jame, seide Adam tho,
What harme so that I grete
I will adventure me to the
Dorè that I had mete.

Tho Gamelyn and Adam both
Y wentè forth in fere,
And they both gretè the maistir
Which that they fondè there.

Than seide to them the maistir,
That King was of Outlawes,
What do ye seke, ye yongè men,
Undir the wode shawes?

Yong Gamelyn answerid tho
The King with his coroune,
He mustè nedis walk in wodes
That may not walk in tounne.

Sire, we walkè not here in wodes
Non harmè for to do,
But if peradventure we mete
A dere to sherte thereto,

As meinè that ben right hungry,
And mow no metè fynd,
And very hardè ben bestad
Undir the wode lynd.

Of Gamelyn'is wordis tho
The maister haddè routhe,
And seide to them, Ye shall have
Inow, heve God my trouthe.

Anon he baddè them sittin
Doune for to takè rest,
And baddè them etin and drink,
And that too of the best.

Asthey were eting and drinking
Of the best wele and fine,
Than seide the ton to the tothir
This is yongè Gamelyn.

Tho was the maister of outlawes
Into confaile nomin,
And told how it was Gamelyn
That thither was comin.

Anon as he had herdin all
How that it was befall,
He madè Gamelyn maistir
Undir him o're them all.

Within the third weke aftir this
To him comith tiding,
To the maistir of outlawis,
Which that now was their king,

That he shuldè ycomin home,
For that his pees was made;
And of that joyfull tiding he
Was wonderously glade.

Tho seide he to his yongè men,
The sothè for to tell,
To me be comin tidingis
I may no lengir dwell.

Tho was yong Gamelyn anon,
Withoutin tarying,
Made maistir of outlawis, and
Y coroundid their king:

Tho was yong Gamelyn crounid
The King of the Outlawes,
And among them walkid a while
Undir the wodè shawes.

The falsè knight his brothir now
Was shiregereve and Sire,
And lete his brothir be endite
For hatè and for ire.

Tho werin all his bondmeine
Sory and nothing glad
Whan that Gamelyn their lordè
Wolves Hede was cryed and made,

And sentin outè his meinè
Where they mightin him fynd,
For to sekin yonge Gamelyn
Undir the wodè lynd,

To tellè to him tidingis
The winde was ywent,
And allè his gode revied was,
And all his men yshent.

Whan that they haddè hym foundin
On kneys they them sette,
And adoun with their hodè, and
Gamelyn their lord grette,

They seiden, Sire, now wrathè not
You for the godè rode,
For we have brought you tidingis,
But they be nothing gode.

Now is thy brothir shiregereve,
And he hath the baillie,
And thereto hath enditid the,
And Wolves Hede doth the crie.

Allas! tho seidè Gamelyn,
That e're I was so flak,
That I ne hadd brokin his nek
Whan I his riggè brak.

Goith, and gretith you welè
My housbondis an wif,
I wollè ben at the next shire,
So havè God my lif.

Gamelyn camè well redy
Unto the nextè shire,
And there the falsè knight his brothir
Was bothè Lord and Sire.

Gamelyn camè boldilich
Into the Motè Hall,
And put adoun his hode among
The lordilingis all.

God favè you, Lordilingis!
Which that now herè be;
But as for the, brokebak thereve,
Evil motè thou the!

Why hastè thou doin to me
That shame and villonie
For to latin enditè me,
And Wolf's Hede me crie?

Tho thought the falsè knight on him
For to have ben awreke,
And letè takin Gamelyn;
Must he no more yspeke.

Mightè there be no mannir grace,
But Gamelyn at last
Was into prisoun ycastin,
And fetterid full fast.

This Gamelyn hath a brothir
That cleped was Sir Ote;
As gode and hend a knight he was
As mightin gon on fote.

Right anon yede a messenger
Unto that gode knight,
And toldin him altogethir
How Gamelyn was dight.

Anon as Sir Ote herdin had
How Gamelyn was dight,
He was right passing sory tho,
Ne he was nothing light:

And letè saddle him a stede,
And streit the weie he name,
And unto his tweie bretherin
Right sonè there he came.

Sir, seidè this Sir Ote unto
The shiregerevè tho,
We ben but only thre brethren,
Shall we be nevir mo,

And thus hast thou yprisounid
The bestè of us all;
Soche anothir brothir as thou
Evil mote him befall!

Sir Ote, seidè the falsè knight,
Now letè be thy cars;
By God for these thi wordis he
Shallè farin the wors.

Now to the king's prisoun he
Is lesfully ynome,
And ther he shall abidin
Untill the justice come.

But parde, seidè Sir Ote tho,
Bettir it shall ybe
I biddin him unto maynprise
And that thou grauntè me,

Untill the nextè sitting shall
Come of deliveraunce,
And than lete Gamelyn fairely
Ystondin to his chaunce.

Brothir, in soche a forewardè
I takin him to the,
And by thy fadir's foulè,
That the begat and me,

If that he be not right redy
Whan that the justice sitte,
Thou shaltè berin the judgement,
For all thy grettè wit.

I grauntin it wele, seide Sir Ote,
That it shall so ybe;
Letith delivir him anon,
And takin him to me.

Tho Gamelyn was delivered
To Sir Ote his brothir,
And that night ydwellid in fere
The ton with the tothir.

On the morow seide Gamelyn
Unto Sir Ote the hend,
My brothir, he seidè, forsothe
I motè from the wend,

To lokin how my yongè men
In wode ledin their lif,
And whethir that they liven now
In joie or elles in strif.

Be God, tho answerid Sir Ote,
That is a coldè rede,
Now I se that alle the cark
Shall fallin on my hede;

For whan that the justice sittith,
And thou be not yfound
I shall anon be takin, and
In thy stede be ybound.

Brothir, tho seide Gamelyn,
Dismayè the right noght,
For be Seintè Jame in Galis,
That many man hath sought,
If so that God Almighty hold
Me my lif and my wit
I wollè ben there right redy
Whan that the justice sit.

Than seide Sir Ote to Gamelyn,
God sheldè the fro shame!
Comith whan that thou seist tyme,
And bring us out of blame.

Now lithinith and lestinith,
And holdith you right still,
And ye shullè herin how that
Gamelyn had his will.

Anon Gamelyn wentin his
Way undir the wode rise,
And he yfondè there playing
His yongè men of prise.

Tho was this yongè Gamelyn
In hert right glad inow
Whan that he fond his yongè men
Undir the wode bow.

Gamelyn and his yongè men
Ytalkidin in sere,
And they all haddè right gode game
Their maistir for to here.

His men told him of adventures
Which that they had yfound,
And Gamelyn told them agen
How he was fast ybound.

All the while that Gamelyn was
Outlaw had he no curs;
There ne was no man that for him
Yferid ought the wors,

But abbotis and priouris,
And monkis, and chanon;
In them forsothe ne last he noght
Whan er he might them nom.

While Gamelyn and his yong men
Ymadè mirthis ryve,
The falsè knight his own brothir,
Evil motè he thryve!

For all this while he waft about,
Both one day and othir,
On purpose for to hire the quest
To hangin his brothir.

Gamelyn stod in on a day,
And round him he beheld
The wild wodis and the shawis
Within the wildè feld;

He thoughtin upon his brothir,
How that he him behete
That he ywoldin be redy
Whan that the justice sete;

He thoughtin welè that he wolde,
Withoutin more delay,
Ycomin afore the justice
For to kepin his day;

And seide to his yongè men,
Now dightith you full yare,
For whan that the justice sittith
We mote nedis be there;

For I am undir a borow
Until that I comin,
And my brothir instede of me
To prison shal be nomin.

Be Seint Jame, seide his yongè men,
And that thou rede thereto,
Ordeinith how it shallè be,
And it shall so be do.

While Gamelyn was ycoming
There that the justice satt
The falsè knight his own brothir
Forgattin he not that,

To hire the meinè on his quest
To hangin his brothir,
And though thei haddè not that oon
He wolde han that othir.

Tho comith yongè Gamelyn
From undir the wode rise,
And he broughtin along with him
His yongè men of prise.

I se wele, seide Gamelyn,
The justice is ysette;
Go thou afor us, Adam, and
Lokè how that it spette.

Adam wentè into the Hall,
And lokid all about,
And he saugh there yfondè tho
Lordingis grette and stout,

And Sir Ote, Gamelyn's brothir,
Yferterid wele fast;
Tho wentin Adam out of Hall
As he werin agast.

Adam seide to Gamelyn,
And to his felawes all,
Sir Ote ystondith fetterid
Within the Motè Hall.

Seide Gamelyn, If God geve us
Gracè wel for to do
He shallin it abegge anon
That him broughtin thereto.

Then seidin Adam Dispencer,
That lokkis haddin hore,
Christ's curse motè he havin
That boundin him so fore.

And if thou wiltè, Gamelyn,
Doin astir my rede,
There is none in the Hallè that
Shall bere aweie his hede.

Adam, tho seide Gamelyn,
We wollè not do so;
We woll fle only the giltif,
And lat the othir go.

I will my selve into the Hall,
And hire the justice speke,
And on all them that ben giltif
I wollè ben awreke.

Lat none escapin at the dore ;
Take, yongè meinè, yeme,
For I wolle ben the justice
This day domis to deme.

Pray God spedè me this ilk dai
At this my newè werke!
And Adam, comith thou with me,
For thou shalt be my clerke.

His meinè all answerid him,
And bad hym don his best,
And if thou to us havè nede
Thou shalt fyndin us prest :

For we wollè stondin with the
Whilis that we may dure,
And but that we werkin manly
Payith us then no hure.

Yongè men, seidè Gamelyn,
So mot I wele y the,
As ye a right trusty maistir
Shullè findin of me.

And rightè thereat the justice
Yfattin in the Halle,
In wentè tho yong Gamelyn
Boldly amonges them all.

Gamelyn letè unfettir
His brothir out of bend ;
Than seidè to him Sir Otis,
His brothir that was hende,

Thou haddist almost, Gamelyn,
Dwellid away to long,
For the questè is ygon out
On me that I shulde honge.

Brothir, tho seidè Gamelyn,
God gevè me gode rest,
This gode day they shull ben hongid
That ben upon the quest ;

And thereto the justice bothè,
That is the juggè man,
And eke the sheriff our brothir,
For through him it began.

Than seidè yongè Gamelyn
Unto the false justice,
Now is thi powir at an end,
You must nedis arise.

Thou hast ygevin domis that
Ben evil allè dight ;
I wollè settin in thi fete,
And dreslin them aright.

But the justice sattin stillè,
And roofè not anon,
And Gamelyn with his swardè
Clevid his chekè bone.

Yongè Gamelyn toke him in his
Armis, and no more spak,
But threw him ovir the barrè,
And his armè to brak.

Durst no one unto Gamelyn
Sayè nothing but godè,
For fere of the gret company
That withoutin ystode.

Gamelyn sattè him adoun
In the justic's stede,
(Herkenith now of the bourdè
'That Gamelyn tho dede)

And Sir Otè by him he satte,
And Adam at his fete.

And whan Gamelyn the yong was
Satte in the justice fete,

He letè fettè the justice
And his false brothir,

And letè them come to the barre
The ton with that othir.

Whan Gamelyn had thus ydone
Haddin he tho no rest
Till that he had enquerid who
Werin upon the quest.

For to demin his brothir dere,
Sir Ote, for to be honge,
Er that he wiste which they were
It thoughte him full longe.

But al so sone as Gamelyn
Wiste where that thei were
He didde them everichone
Fetterin fast in fere,

And bringè them unto the barre,
And fettè them in vewe :
By my faith, seidè the justice,
The sheriff is a shrewe.

Than seidè yongè Gamelyn
Unto the false justice,
Thou hastè gevè thy domis
Al of the worst affise :

And the twelve sifouris that
Werin of the inquest
They shulle ben hongid this day,
So God geve me gode rest.

Than seide the sheriff pitously
To yongè Gamelyn,
My Lord, I crie the mercie,
Brothir artè thou myn.

Therefore, seidè yongè Gamelyn,
Havè you Crist's curse,
For if thou werin maistir yet
Shuldin I farè worse.

But for to makè short my Tale,
And not to tary longe,
He ordeynid him there a quest
Of his own men so strong.

The false justice and the sheriff
Bothè were hongid hie,
To weyvin there with the ropis,
And with the winde drie.

And als the twelve sifouris,
Sorow havè that rekk,
Allè they werin yhongid
Full fastè by the nekk.

Thus endid hath the false knight
With all his trécherie,
That evir haddè lad his life
In falseness and folie.

He was hongid up by the nek,
And nought by the purse,
That was the mede that he had haddè
From his fadir's curse.

Sir Ote was the eldist tho,
And Gamelyn was yonge,
They wentin with their frendis, and
Passidin to the king

They madin pece with the kingè
Of the bestè assise ;
The king lovid Sir Otè welè,
And made him a justice.

Aftir the king made Gamèlyn,
Bothè in est and west,
The chiefe justice and ridere of
Allè his fre forest.

Alle his wight yonge men the king
Forgafin them their gilt,
And sithen in gode office the king
Hath allè them ypilt.

Thus has wan yongè Gamèlyn
His londè and his lede,
And wrake of him his enemies,
And quyte them their mede.

And Sir Otè, his brothir dere,
Ymade him hath his heir,
And sithin weddid Gamèlyn
A wife both gode and faire.

They lividin togidir wele
Whilis that Christè wolde,
And sithin that was Gamèlyn
Ygravin undir molde :

And so shallè we allè here;
May there no man yfle
God bringin us unto the jost
That evir shull ybe !

Thus endith the legend of Gamelyn, called The Coke's Tale.



HERE BEGINNETH

THE PLOWMAN'S PROLOGUE.

THE Plowman plucked up his plowe
 Whan midsomer mone was comen in,
 And faied his bestes should ete inowe,
 And lige in grasse up to the chin :
 Thei ben feble both oxen and cowe,
 Of 'hem n'is left but bone and skinne ;
 He shoke of shere, and coulter' off drowe,
 And honged his harnis on a pinne.

He toke his tabarde and staffe eke,
 And on his hedde he set his hat,
 And faied he would Sainct Thomas seke.
 On pilgrimage he goth forth plat ;
 In scrippe he bare bothe bred lekes ;
 He was folfwonke and all forfwat :
 Men might have sene through both his chekes,
 And every wang tothe where it fat.

Our Hoste behelde well all about,
 And sawe this man was funne ibrent ;
 He knewe well by his singid snout,
 And by his clothes, that were to rent,
 He was a man wont walke about,
 He n'as not aye in cloister pent,
 Ne couthe religiouseliche lout,
 And therefore was he full ill shent.

Our Hoste him axed, What man art thou ?
 Sire Hoste, (quod he) I am an hine,
 For I am wont to go to plow,
 And erne my mete yet that I dine :

To swette and swinke I make avowe,
 My wife and babes therewith to finde,
 And servin God and I wist how,
 But we lende men yben full blinde :

For clerkes saie we shullin be fain
 For ther lived to swette and swinke,
 And thei right nought us give again
 Neither to ete ne yet to drinke ;
 Thei mowe by lawe, as that thei fain,
 Us curse and dampne to hell's brinke ;
 And thus thei puttin us to pain
 With candlis quient and bell's clinke.

Thei make us thrallis at their lust,
 And fain we mowe not els be saved ;
 Thei have the corne and we the dust ;
 Who gainsayes then they saye he raved.
 What, man ! (quod our Hoste) canst thou preche ?
 Come nere and tel some holy thing.

Sir, quod he, I herd onis teche
 A preest in pulpit gode preching.

Saie on quod he, I the beseche.
 Sir, I am redy at your bidding.
 I praie that no man me reproche
 While that I am my Tale telling.

Thus endeth the Prologue.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE FIRST PART OF THE TALE*.

A FULL sterne strief is stirrid newe,
In many stedis in a stounde,
Of sondry sedis that ben sewe;
It semith that some ben unsounde,
For some be grete growin on grounde,
Some ben foubel, simple and small:
Whether of 'hem is falsir founde
The falsir foule mote him bifall,
That one side is that I of tell
Popis, cardinals, and prelates,
Parsons, monkis, and freris fell,
Priours, abbotes, of grete estates;
Of heven and hell thei kepe the yeates,
And Peter's successours ben all,
And this is demid by old dates;
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The othir side ben pore and pale,
And peple yput out of prese,
And femin caitiffes fore a cale,
And er in one without encrese
Iclepid Lollers and Londlese;
Who totheth on 'hem thei ben untall;
Thei ben arayid all for pece,
But falshed foule mote it befall

Many a countrey have I fought
To knowe the falsir of these two,
But aye my travaile was for nought
All so ferre as I have ygo,
But as I wandrid in a wro,
Within a wode beside a wall,
Two foulis sawe I sitting tho,
The falsir foule mote him befall.

That one did plete on the Pope's side,
A Griffon of a grimme stature;
A Pellicane withoutin pride
To these Lollers ylaied his lure;
He mused his mattir in mesure
To counsaile, Christ ay gan he call;
The Griffon shewed as sharpe as fire,
But falshed foule mote it befall.

* A complaint against the pride and covetousness of the clergy, made no doubt by Ghaucer, says the editor of Chaucer's Works printed for Ad. Islip at London, A. D. 1602. Urry.

The Pellicane began to preche
Bothe of mercie and of mekenesse,
And saied that Christ so gan us teche,
And meke and merciabie gan bleffe:
The' Evangely berith witnesse
A lambe he likeneth Christ ovre' all,
In tokening that he mekist was
Sith pride was out of hevin fall.

And so should every Cristened be,
Priestis and Peter's successours,
Beth lowliche and of lowe degre,
And usin none yerthly honours,
Ne croune ne curious covertours,
Ne pilloure ne other proude pall,
Ne to cofrin up grete tresours,
For falshed foule mote it befall.

Priestis should for no cattill plede,
But chaften 'hem in charite,
Ne to no battaile should men lede
For inhaunsing ther owne degre,
Nat willin sittenges in hie se,
No soverainte in hous ne hall,
Worldly worship desie and fle;
Who willeth highnes foule shall fall.

Alas! who maie soche sainctis call
That wilnith welde yerthly honour?
Lowe as Lucifere soche shall fall,
In balefull blacknesse build ther boure
That eggith peple to erreure,
And makith them unto 'hem thrall;
To Crist I holde soche one traitour;
Lowe as Lucifer soche shall fall,

That willith to be kingis peres,
And higher than the Emperour,
And some that werin but pore freres
Now wollin waxe a warriour;
God ne is not ther governour
That holdith none his permagall,
While cove'tise is ther consailour;
All soche falskede mote nedis fall,

That hie on horse willith to ride
In glitterande golde of grete araie,
Painted and portrid alle in pride,
No common knight maie go so gaie,

Chaunge of clothing every daie,
With goldin girdils grete and small,
As boistous as is bere at baie;
All soche falschede mote nedis fall.

With pride punishith thei the pore,
And some one thei sustain with sale,
Of holie churche makith an hore,
And fill ther wombe with wine and ale;
With money fille thei many a male,
And chaffrin churchis when thei fall,
And telle the peple a leude tale;
Soche false faitours foule 'hem befall.

Thei sede of many manir metes,
With song and solas sitting long,
And filleth ther wombe, and faste fretes,
And from the mete unto the gong,
And astir mete with harpe and song,
And eche man mote 'hem Lordis call,
And hote spicis evir emong;
Soche false faitours foule 'hem befall.

Miters thei werin mo than two
Iperlid as the quen'is hedde,
A staffe of golde, and pirrie lo!
As hevie as' it were made of ledde;
With clothe of gold bothe new and redde,
With glitterande gold as grene as gall,
By dome thei dampne men to be dedde;
All soche faitours foule 'hem befall.

And Crist'is peple proudly curse
With brode boke and braying bell,
And to put pennies in ther purse
'Thei woll sell bothe hevin and hell:
In ther sentence and thou wilt dwell
'Thei willin gesse in ther gaie hall,
And though the soth thou of 'hem tell
In the grete cursing shalt thou fall.

That is yblessid that thei bleffe,
And cursid that thei cursin woll,
And thus the peple thei oppresse,
And have ther lordshippis at full:
And many be merchautes of woll,
And to purs pennies woll come thrall,
The pore peple thei al to pull;
Such false faitours foule 'hem befall,

Lordis also mote to 'hem loute,
Obeysaunt to ther brode blessing,
Thei ridin with ther royal route
On a coursir as' it were a king,
With fadle of golde glittering,
With curious harneis quaintly crallit,
Stiropis gaie of golde mastling;
All suche falsched foule may befall it.

Christes Ministers clepid thei bene,
And rulin al in robberie,
But Antichriste thei servin clene,
Attirid al in tirannie,
Witnesse of John his prophecie;
Antichriste is ther admirall,
Tiffelers attired in trecherie;
Al suche faitours foule 'hem befall.

Who faith that some of 'hem may sinne
He shal be domid to be ded;
Some of 'hem wollin gladly winne
Al ayenst that which God forbed,

Al Holiest they clepe ther hed,
That of ther rule is full regall;
Alas that evir thei ete bred!
For al such falsched wol foule fall.

Ther hed covitith al honour,
To be worshipped in worde and dede,
Kingis mote to him knele and coure,
To the' apostles that Christ forbode:
To Popis heste such take more hede
Than to kepe Christes commaundement,
Of gold and silvir ben ther wede,
Thei holde him hole omnipotent.

He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To parishe priestis a powere,
To' anothir a gretir avaunce,
A gretir point to his mistere;
But for he' is highist in erth here
To him reserveth he many' a point,
But unto Christ, that hath no pere,
Reservith he no pin no joynt.

So semith he abovin all,
And Christ abovin him nothings,
Whan that he sittith in his stall
Dampnith and savith as him thinke;
Suche pride tofore hie God doth stinke:
An angel bad John to' him not knele,
Only to God to do his bowinge;
Soche worship-willers mote ill sele.

Thei ne clepe Christ but *Sanctus Deus*,
And clepe ther hed *Sanctissimus*;
All they that suche a secte sewis
I trowe thei taken 'hem amisse:
In erth here they havin ther blisse,
Ther hie mastir is Beliall;
Christ his pore peple from 'hem wisse,
For al suche false will foule befall.

They mowin both ybinde and lose,
And all is for ther holy life;
To save or dampne they mowen chose;
Betwene 'hem now is a grete strife;
Many' a man is killed with a knife
To wete which havin lordship shall;
For suche Christ suffrid woundis five,
For all suche falsched will foule fall.

Christ said, *Qui gladio percutit*,
With swerde surely he shall die;
He bad his priestis pece and grith,
And bad 'hem not drede for to die,
And bad them be both simple' and sie,
And carkè not for no cattell,
And truste on God that sittith on hie,
For al false shal full foule befall.

These wollin makè men to swere
Ayenst Christ'is commaundiment,
And Christ'is members al to tere,
On rode as he were new yrent;
Suche lawes thei maken by assent,
Eche on it trowith as a ball,
And thus the pore be fully shent,
But falsched foule it shulle befall.

Ne usin thei no simonie,
But selle churchis and priories,
Ne they usin to none envie,
But cursin al 'hem contraries,

And hirith men by daies and yeres
With strength to hold 'hem in ther stall,
And culle all ther advarsaries,
Therefore falsched foule thou them fall.

With purse they purchase personage,
With purse thei payin 'hem to plede,
And men of warre thei wollin wage
To bring ther enemies to dede,
And lordis livis they wol lede,
And muchil take, and give but small,
But he' it so get from it shal shede,
And make fuche false right foule yfall.

They halowe nothing but for hire,
Ne churche, ne font, ne vestiment,
And make orders in every shire,
But priestis pay for the parchment;
Of riatours they taken rent,
Therwith they smere the shep'is skall,
For many churches ben suspent;
All fuche falsched foule it befall.

Some livith not in lecherie,
But haunte wenchis, widows, and wives,
And punish the pore for putre,
Themselfe it useth al ther lives;
And but a man to them him shrives
To hevin come he nevir shall,
He shal be cursed as be catives;
To hel thei faine that he shal fall.

Ther was more mercy' in Maximine,
And Nero, that never was gode,
Than there is now in some of them;
Whan he hath on his furrid hode;
They folowe Christ that shede his blode
To heven, as bucket to the wall;
Suche wrechis yben worse than wode,
And al fuche faitours foule 'hem fall.

They give ther almis to the riche,
To mainteynours and men of lawe,
For to lordis they wol be liche,
And harlots sonne not worthe an hawe;
Sothfastnesse alle fuche han slawe;
They kembe ther crockettes with cristall,
And drede of God they have doune drawe;
Al fuche faitours foule 'hem befall.

They make parsons for the pennie,
And canons and their cardinals;
Unnethe amongst 'hem al is any
That ne hath glosed the gospel fals,
For Christ made ner no cathedrals,
Ne with him was no cardinall
With a redde hatte, as use minstrals;
But falsched foule mote it befall.

Ther tithing and ther offering bothe
They clemith by possession,
Ne therof n'il they none forgo,
But robbin men as a raunsome:
The tithing of *turpe lucrum*
With these maisters is veniall;
Tithinge of bribry and larson
Will make falsched full foule to fall.

They takin to ferme ther sompnours
To harme the peple what they may,
To pardoners and false faitours
Thei sell ther seles I dare well say,

And all to holdin gret arraie,
To multiplie 'hem more metall,
They drede ful litel dom'is day,
Whan al fuche falsched shal foule fall.

Suche harlottes shul men disclaunder,
For that they shullin make them gre,
And ben as proud as Alexander,
And fain to the pore Wo be ye!
By yere eche priest shal paie his fe
For to encrese his lemmans call;
Suche herdis shul wel ilvil the,
And al fuche false shal foule befall.

And if a man be falsely famed,
And wol ymake purgacioun,
Than wol the' officers be agramed,
And assign him fro toun to toun;
So nede he must payin raunsome,
Though he be clene as is cristall,
And than have an absolution;
But al fuche false shal foule befall.

Though he be giltye of the dede,
And that he may the money paie,
Al the while his purse wol yblede
He may use it fro day to day.
The bishopes officers gone gay,
And this game they use ovir all,
The pore to pil is al their pray;
But al fuche false shul foule befall.

Alas! God ordained no fuche lawe,
Ne no fuche crafte of covetise,
But he forbad it by his lawe;
Suche rulers mowen of God agrise,
For al his rulis ben rightwise:
These newe pointis ben pure papall,
And Godd'is lawe they all dispice,
And al fuche faitours shul foule fall.

They faine that Peter had the key
Of heven and hel, to have and holde;
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no finnis that he yfolde:
Suche succeffours yben to bolde,
In winning all ther witte they wral,
Ther conscience is waxin colde,
And al such faitours foul 'hem fall.

Peter was ner so grete a sole
To leve his key with fuche a lorell,
Or take fuche cursid soc or tole,
He was advisid nothing well;
I trowe they have the key of hell,
Their maistir is of that marshall,
For there thei dreslin 'hem to dwell,
And with false Lucifer to fall.

Thei ben as proude as Lucifarre,
As angry and as envious;
From a gode faith they ben ful farre;
In cove'tise they ben curious;
To catche catil as covitous
As hounde that for hungre wol yall,
Ungodly and ungracious;
And nedely fuche false shal foule fall.

The Pope, and he were Peter's heire,
Me thinke he errith in this case,
Whan choise of bishop's in dispaire
To chosin 'hem in divers place,

A lorde shal write to him for grace,
For his clerke anone praye he shall,
So shal he sped in his purchase;
And al fuche false foule 'hem befall.

Although he can ne manir gode
A lord's prayir shal be spedde,
Though he be wilde of wil or wode,
Nat understanding what men redde,
A leude bostir, that God forbedde,
As gode a bishoppe is my horse Ball;
Suche a Pope is full foule bestede,
And at the laste wol foule yfall.

He makith priestes for erthly thanke,
And not at all for Christ's sake;
Suche that yben ful fat and ranke,
To foul's hele none hede they take;
Al is wel done what er they make,
For they shal answere ones for all;
For world's thank such worch and wake,
And al fuche false shal foule befall.

Suche that can nat yfay ther crede
With prayir shul be made prelates,
Nothir can thei the gospell rede,
Suche shul now weldin hie estates;
The hie godes frendship 'hem makes,
Thei totith on ther summe totall;
Suche bere the keyes of hell's yates,
And all fuche false shal foule befall.

Thei forsakin for Christ's love
Travaile, and hungré, thurste, and colde;
They ben ordrid or al above
Out of youthed til they ben olde;
By the dore they go nat to the folde,
To helpe ther shepe they nought traval,
For hirid men al fuche I holde,
And al fuche false foule 'hem befall.

For Christ our King thei wol forsake,
And knowe him nought for his poverté,
For Christ's love they wol awake,
And drinke piement al aperte:
Of God they seme nothing aferde,
As lusty live as Lamual,
And drive ther shepe into desert;
Al fuche false faitours shul foule fal.

Christ yhad twelve apostles here,
Nowe say they Ther may be but one
That may not erre in no manere,
Who leve not this ben lost echone:
Peter errid, so did not John;
Why is he cleped the Principall?
Christe cleped him Peter, not the Stone;
Al false faitours foule 'hem befall.

Why cursin they the croifery
Christ's Christian creturis?
For bytwene them is now envy
To be enhaunsid in honours;
Christin livers with ther labours,
For they levin on no mortal,
Ben do to deth with dishonours,
And al fuche false foule 'hem befall.

What knoweth a tilloure at the plowe
The Pop's name, and what he hate?
His crede suffiseth to 'him inowe,
And knoweth a cardi'nal by his hatte.

Rough is the pore unrightly latte;
That knowith Christ his God royal;
Suche maters be not worth a gnatte,
But fuche false faitours foule 'hem fal.

A king shal knele and kisse his shewe,
Christ let a sinful kisse his fete,
Me thinke he holdeth him hie inowe,
So Lucifer did, that hie set:
Suche one me thinke himselfe foryet,
Or to the trouthe he was nat cal:
Christe that suffrid woundis wete,
Shall make all fuche falsched foule fall.

They layith out ther large nettes
For to takin silvir and golde,
Thei fillin coffers, and sackes fettes
Ther as they foulis catchin sholde;
Ther servautes be to them unholde,
But they can doublin ther rental;
To bigge 'hem castles bigge 'hem holde;
And al fuche false foule 'hem befall.

Here endeth the first parte of this Tale, and hereafter

foloweth the seconde parte.

To accorde what this wordé fall
No more Englishe ne can I finde;
Shewing anothir nowé I shall,
For I have moche to faye behinde;
How priestis han the peple pinde,
As curteis Christe yhath me kinde,
And put this matter in my minde,
To make this manir men amende.

Shortely to shende 'hem, and shewe nowé
How wrongfully they werche and walke,
Of hie God nothing tell, ne howe,
But in Goddes worde tell many a balke,
In harnis holde 'hem and in halke,
And prechen' of tithis and offrende,
And untruely of the gospel talke;
For his mercy God it amende!

What els is Antichriste to saie
But even Christ's adversarie?
Suche hath now ben many a daie
To Christ's bidding ful contrarie,
That from the trouthe clene ywarry;
Out of the way they ben ywende,
And Christ's peple untruely cary;
God for his pitie it amende!

They live contrary to Christes life,
In hie pride against mekenesse,
Against suffraunce they usin strife,
And angre ayenst sobrenesse,
Ayenist wisdom wilfulnesse;
To Christ's talis litil tende,
Against mesure outrigousnesse;
But whan God wol it may amende.

Lordely life ayenst lowlineffe,
And demin al without mercy,
And covetise ayenst largesse,
Ayenist trouthe trechery,

And ayenist almesse' envy ;
 Ayenist Christ they comprehende ;
 For chastite mainteine leche'ry ;
 God for his grace this amende !

Against penaunce thei use delightes,
 Ayenst suffraunce strong defence,
 Ayenst God they usin ill rightes,
 Ayenist pitie punishmentes,
 Open' evil ayenst continence ;
 Ther wickid winning worse dispence,
 Sobirnesse fette in to dispence ;
 God for his godenesse it amende !

Why cleimin they holy' his powere,
 And wranglin ayenst al his hestes ?
 His living folowe thei nought here,
 But livin worse than witleffe bestes ;
 Of fishe and fleshe they lovin festes ;
 As lordis thei ben brode ikende ;
 Of Godd'is pore thei hatin gestes ;
 God for his mercy this amende !

With Dives suche shal have ther dome,
 That saine that they be Christ'is frendes,
 And do nothing as they should done,
 Al suche ben falsir than ben fendes ;
 On the peple they ley suche bendes
 As God in erth they han offende ;
 Succour for such Christe now send us,
 And for his mercy this amende !

A token' of Antichrist they be ;
 His careckes ben now wide iknowe,
 Receved to preche shal no man be
 Without token of him I trowe :
 Eche Christin priest to prechin owe,
 From God above thei ben yfende
 Goddes word to al folke for to showe,
 And sinful man for to amende.

Christ sent the pore for to preche,
 The royal riche he did not so,
 Now dare no pore the peple teche,
 For Antichrist is al ther foe ;
 Among the peple he mote go,
 He hath biddin al suche suspende,
 Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo ;
 But al this God may wel amende.

Al tho that han the worlde forsake,
 And livin lowly, as God badde,
 Into ther prison shulle be take,
 Betin and boundin, and forth ladde :
 Hereof I rede no man be dradde,
 Christ said that his should be yshende ;
 Eche man ought hereof to be gladde,
 For God ful wel it wol amende.

They take on 'hem royall power,
 And say they havin swerdis two,
 One curse to hel, one sle men here :
 At his taking Christ had no mo,
 Yet Peter had but one of tho,
 And Christ to him smite gan defende,
 And into the' sheth badde put it tho ;
 And al suche mischeves God amende !

Christ bad Peter to kepe his shepe,
 And with his sworde forbade 'hem smite ;
 Swerde is no tole with shepe to kepe,
 But to shepherdes that shepe wol bite ;

Me thinke suche shepherdes ben to wite
 Who' ayen ther shepe with swerde contende ;
 They drive ther shepe with grete despise ;
 But al this God may well amende.

Peter's successours be thei nought
 Whom Christ ymade his chefe pastoure ;
 A swerde no shepherde usin ought
 But he would sle as a bochoure :
 Who so were Peter's successoure
 Should bere his shepe til his backe bende,
 And shadowe 'hem from every shoure ;
 And al this God may wel amende.

Successours to Peter ben these
 In that, that Peter Christe forsoke,
 That levir had God's love to lese
 Than shepherde had to lese his hoke ;
 He culleth the shepe as doth the coke ;
 Of 'em takin they woll untrende,
 And falsely glose the Gospell boke ;
 God for his mercy them amende !

Whan Christ had take Peter the kay
 Christ saide he must ydie for man ;
 That Peter to Christ gan withsay,
 Christe bad him Go behinde, Sathan :
 Suche counsailours many' of these han,
 For world'is wele God to offende ;
 Peter's successours they ben than
 But al suche God may wel amende.

For Sathan is to say no more
 But he that contrary to Christ is,
 In this they lernin Peter's lore,
 They sewin him whan he did misse ;
 They folowe him forsoth in this
 That Christ would Peter reprehende,
 But nat that longith to' hevin blisse ;
 God for his mercie 'hem amende !

Thei none apostle sewen, in case
 Of ought that I can understonde,
 But him that betraieth Christ, Judas,
 That bare the purse in every londe,
 And al that he might sette on honde
 He hidde and stale, and it mispende ;
 His rule these traitours han in honde ;
 Almighty God all suche amende !

And at the last his lorde gan tray
 Cursidly through false covetise,
 So would these traine him for money
 And they ywistin in what wise ;
 They be sikre' of the fele' ensife.
 From all sothnesse they ben yfrende,
 And covetise chaunge with quentise ;
 Almighty God al suche amende !

Were Christ upon erth, here este sone,
 These wouldin dampne him to die ;
 All his hestis they han fordone,
 And saine his sawes ben heresie ;
 Ayenst his commaundementes they crie,
 And dampnin all his to be brende,
 For thei ne like suche losengrie ;
 God Almighty all suche amende !

These han more might in Englande here
 Than hath the king and all his lawe,
 They han purchasid suche powere
 To takin 'hem whom list not knawe,

And say that heresie' is ther sawe,
And so to prifon wol 'hem sende;
It was not so by eldir dawe;
God for his mercy it amende!

The king'is lawe wol no man deme
Angerliche withoutin answere,
But if any man these misqueme
He shall be baightid as a bere,
And yet wel worse they wol him tere,
And in prifon wollin him pende
In ginis, and in othir gere;
Whan that God woll it may amende.

The king ne taxith nat his men
But by assent of the commi'nalte,
But these eche yere wol raunfom 'hem
Maistirfully, more than dothe he:
Ther felis by yere bettir be
Than is the king'is in extende,
Ther officers han gretir fe;
But alle this mischese God amende!

Who so wol prove a testament
That is nat al worth tennè ponde,
He shal paye for the parchement
The thirde of the money all rounde;
Thus the pore peple is ranfoude,
They say fuche parte t'em should apende,
There as they gripen' it goeth to grounde;
God for his mercy it amende!

A simple fornication
Twenty shillingis he shall pay,
And than have absolucion
And al the yere use it he may:
Thus thei lettin' 'hem go astray;
Thei recke nat though the foule be brende;
These kepin evill Peter's kay;
And al fuche shepherdes God amende!

Wondir is that the parliamente,
And all the lordis of this londe,
Here to takin so lite entente
To helpe the peple' out of ther honde,
For thei ben hardir in ther bonde,
Worse bete, and cruellir ybrende,
Than to the king is understand;
God him helpe this for to amende!

What bishoppes, what religions,
Han in this lande as muche lay fe,
Lordeshippis and possessions,
More than lordis it semith me;
That makith 'hem lese charite:
They mowin not to God attende,
In erth thei have so highe degre;
God for his mercy it amende!

The Empe'rour yafe the Pope somtime
So highè lordeship him about,
That at the last the sely kime
The proude Pope yput him out,
So of this relme is in grete dout;
But, Lordes, beware, and them defende,
For nowe these folke be wondir stoute;
The king and lords now this amende.

*Thus endeth the seconde parte of this Tale, and hereafter
foloweth the thirde.*

MOYSES lawe forbode it tho
That prestis should no lordshippes welde,
Christ'is gospels biddith also
That they should no lordshippis helde;
Christes apostels were ner so bolde,
No fuche lordshippes to 'hem embrace,
But sklere ther shepe and kepe ther folde;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

For thei ne ben but counterfete,
Men may yknow 'hem by ther fruite,
Ther greteneffe maketh 'hem God foryete,
And take his mekenesse in despyte;
And thei were pore and had but lite
Thei n'old nat demen' aftir the face,
Norishe ther shepe, and 'hem nat bite;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

Griffon.

What canst thou preche ayenst chanons
That men yclepin Seculere?

Pellican.

Thei ben curates of many tounes,
On yerth they havin grete powere,
They have grete prebendis and dere,
Some two or thre, and some have mo,
A parsonage to ben playing sere,
And yet thei serve the king also,

And let to-fermè all that fare
To whom that wol moste give therfore,
Some wollin spende, and some woll spare,
And some wol laye it up in store;
A cure of foule they care not fore,
So that they mowin money take;
Whethir ther foules be wonne or lore
Ther profites they woll not forsake.

They have a gedering procuratour,
That can the pore peple enplede,
And roble 'hem as a ravinour,
And to his lorde the mony lede,
And catche of quicke and eke of dede,
And richin him and his lorde eke,
And to robbe the pore give gode rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and sicke.

Therwith they purchase 'hem lay fe
In londe, there as 'hem likith best,
And buildin brode as a cite
Both in the est and in the west;
To purchase thus they ben ful prest,
But on the pore they woll nought spende,
Ne no gode give to Godd'is gest,
Ne sende him some that all hath sende.

By ther service soche wollin live,
And trust that othir to trefure;
Though all ther parishe die unshrive
Thei woll nat givin a rose floure;
Ther life should be as a mirrour
Both to lerid and leude also,
And teche the folke ther lele labour;
Soche maister men ben all misgo.

Some of 'hem yben full harde nigges,
And some of 'hem ben proude and gaie,
Some spendin ther gode upon gigges,
And findin 'hem of grete araie.

Alas! what thinke these men to saie
That thus dispendin Godd'is gode?
At the grete dredefull dom'is daie
Soche wretchis shall be worse than wode.

Some ther churchis nevir ne sie,
Ne ner o penie thidir sende;
Though that the pore for hungir die,
O penie' on 'hem will thei not spende:
Have thei receiving of the rente
Thei recke ner of the remenaunt;
Alas! the devill hath clene 'hem blente;
Soche one is Sathanes sojournaunt.

And use horedome and harlottrie,
And covetise, and pompe, and pride,
And slothe, and wrathe, and eke envie,
And sewin sinne by every side;
Alas! where thinkin soche t' abide?
How woll thei ther accomptis yeld?
From hie God thei mowe 'hem not hide;
Soche willers witte' is not worth a nelde.

Thei ben so rotid in richeffe
That Christ'is povert is foryet;
Yservid with so many messe
Hem thinke that manna is no mete:
All is gode that thei mowin gete;
Thei wene to livin evirmore;
But whan that God at dome is sete
Soche tresour is a feble store.

Unnethis mote thei matins saie
For counting and for courtholding;
And yet he jangilith as jaie,
And understont himself nothing;
He woll yserve bothe erle and king
For his finding and for his fe,
And hide his tithing and offring;
This is a feble charite.

Othir thei ben proude or cove'tous,
Or elles thei ben hard or hungrie,
Or thei ben libe'rall or lecherous,
Or els medlers with marchandrie,
Maintainers of men with maistrise,
Or stewardes, countours, or pledours,
And serve God in ypocrisie;
Soche priestis ben Christes false traitours.

Thei ben false, thei ben vengeable;
And begile men in Christ'is name;
Thei ben unstedfast and unstable;
To traie ther Lorde 'hem thinke no shame;
To servin God thei ben full lame;
Godd'is thevis, and falsely stele,
And falsely Godd'is wordē defame;
In winning is ther world'is wele.

Antichrist these priestis serve all;
I praie the who maie sayin Naie?
With Antichrist soche shullin fall,
Thei folowen him in dede and faie;
Thei servin him in riche araie,
To servin Christ soche falsely fain;
Why at the dredfull dom'is daie
Shall thei not folowe him to pain?

That knowen 'hem self that thei doen ill
Ayenst Christ'is commaundement,
And amende 'hem ner ne will,
But serve Sathan by one assent.

VOL. I.

Who sayith sothe he shall be shent,
Or speketh ayenst ther false living;
Who so well livith shall be brent,
For soche ben gretir than the king.

Popis, bishops, and cardinals,
Chanons, and parsons, and vicare,
In Goddes service I trowe ben fals
That sacramentis sellin here,
And ben as proude as Lucifere:
Eche man loke whethir that I lie;
Who so spekith ayenst ther powerē
It shall be holdin heresie.

Lokith how many orders take
Onely of Christ for his service,
That the world'is godis forsake;
Who so take ordirs othir wise
I trowe that thei shall sore agrise;
For all the glose that thei conne,
All ne sewin not this assise;
In evill time thei thus begonne.

Loke how many among hem all
Ne holdin not this hie waie
With Antichrist thei shullin fall,
For that thei wollin God betraie;
God amende 'hem, that best ymaie!
For many men thei makin shende;
Thei wetin well the sothe I saie,
But the devill hath foule 'hem blende.

Som of 'hem on ther churchis dwell
Apparailled porely; proude of porte;
The seven sacramentes thei doen sell;
In cattell catching' is ther comfort:
Of eche mattir thei wollin mell;
To doen 'hem wrong is ther disport;
To afraie the peple thei ben fell,
And hold 'hem lower than doeth the lorde.

And for the tithing of a ducke,
Or of an apple or an aie,
Thei make men swere upon a boke;
Lo! thus thei foulin Christ'is faie:
Soche berin evill hevin kaie;
Thei mowin affoile, thei mowe shrive;
With mennis wivis strongly plaie,
And with true tillers, sturte and strive;

At the wrestling and at the wake,
And the chief chauntours at the nale,
Market beters, and medling make,
Hoppen' and houtin with heve and hale;
At faire freshe, and at wine stale,
Thei dine and drinke, and make debate,
The seven sacramentes set a faile;
Kepe soche the kaies of hevin gate?

Mennis wivis thei wollin hold,
And though that thei ben right sory,
To speke thei shull not be so bold,
For sompning to the consistory,
And make 'hem saie with mouthe I lie;
Though thei it sawin with ther eye
His lemman holdin opinly
No man so harde to aske why.

He woll have tithing and offring
Maugre whosoever it grutche,
And twise on the daie he woll sing:
Godd'is priestis ne were none sothe;

P

He mote go hunte with dogge and biche,
And blowen his horne and cryin Héy,
And forcerie usen as a witche;
Soche kepin evill Peter's key.

Yet thei mote have some stocke or stone
Gaily paintid and proudly dight,
To makin men livin upon,
And saie that it is full of might,
About soche men set up grete light,
Other soche stockes shull stande therby
As darke as if it were midnight,
For it maie makin no mastrie.

That it the leude peple se mowe,
Thou Mary, thou worchest wondir thinges,
About that that men offrin to
Hongin brochis, ouchis, and ringes;
The priest purchasith the offringes,
But he n'ill offir to' none image:
Wo is the soule that he forfinges
That prechith for soche pilgrimage!

To men and women that ben pore,
Which that ben Christ's owne likenesse,
Men shullen offir at ther dore,
That suffre hungir and distresse,
And to soche image offir lesse,
That mowe not fele ne thirstene cold;
The pore in spirite gan Christ blesse,
Therefore offirith to feble' and old.

Buckilers brode and swardis long,
Baudrike, with baselardis kene,
Soche toles about ther necke thei hong:
With Antichrist soche priestis ben;
Upon ther dedes it is well fene
Whom thei servin, whom thei honouren;
Antichrist is thei ben all clene,
And Godd's godes falsly devouren.

Of scarlet and grene gaië gounes,
That mote be shapin for the newe,
To clippin and kessin in tounes
The damoseles that to the daunce sewe,
Cuttid clothes to sewe ther hewe,
With long pikis on ther shone:
Our Godd's gospell is not true;
Either thei serve the devill or none.

Now ben the priestis pokes so wide
Men must enlarge the vestiment,
The holy gospell they doen hide
For the contrarien in raiment;
Such pristes of Lucifer ben sent:
Like conquerours thei ben araied,
The proude pendautes at ther ars pent,
Falsely the trueth thei han betraied.

Shrift silvir soche wollin askeis,
And wollin men crepe to the crouche;
None of the sacramentes save askis
Withouten moede shull no man touche;
On ther bishop ther warant vouche,
That is a law of the decre:
With mede and money thus thei mouche,
And thus thei sain is charite.

Within the middis of ther masse
Thei n'ill have no man but for hire,
And full shortly let forth ypassse;
Soche shull men findin in eche shire

That parsonages for gaine desire
To live in liking and in lustes;
I dare not sain *sans ose jeo dire*
That soche ben Antichrist's priestis.

Or thei yef the bishoppis why,
Or thei mote ben in his service,
And holdin forth ther harlottrie,
Soche prelates ben of feble' emprise;
Of Godd's grame soche men agrise,
For soche mattirs that takin mede,
How thei' excuse hem, and in what wise,
Methinketh thei ought gretely drede.

Thei sain that it to no man longeth
To reprove them though that thei erre,
But falsly Godd's godes thei songeth,
And therwith maintein wo and werre;
Ther dedes should be as bright as sterre,
Ther living leud mann's light:
Thei saie the Pope ne maie not erre;
Nede must that passin mann's might.

Though' a priest lie with his lemman' at night,
And tellen his felowe and he him,
He goith to masse anon right,
And saith he singeth out of sinne;
His birde abideth him at his inne,
And dighteth his diner the mene while,
He singeth his masse for he would winne,
And so he wenith God begile.

'Hem thinkith long till thei be met,
And that thei use forth all the yere;
Emong the folke whan he is set
He holdith no man half his pere:
Of the bishop he hath powere
To soile men, or els thei ben lore,
His absolucion maketh them skere;
Wo is the soule that he singeth for!

The Griffon began for to threte,
And saied, Of monkis canst thou ought?
The Pelli'can saied, Thei ben full grete,
And in this world moche wo hath wrought;
Saint Benet, that ther ordir brought,
Ne made 'hem ner in soche manere,
I trowe it came ner in his thought
That thei should use so grete powere.

That a man should a monke Lorde call,
Ne serve him on knees as a king;
He is as proude as prince in pall,
In mete and drinke, and in all thing:
Some weren a miter and ring,
With double worstid well idight,
With roiall mete and richè drinke,
And ride on courser as a knight.

With haukis and with houndis eke,
With broche or ouchis on his hode;
Some saie no masse in all a weke;
Of deintees is ther mostè fode
With lordshippis and with bondmen;
This is a roiall regioun;
Saint Benet made ner non of 'hem
To have lordship of man ne toun.

Now thei ben queint and curious,
With fine clothe clad and servid clene,
Proude, and angrie, and envious,
Malice is mochil that thei mene;

In catching craftie and covetous,
Lordly livin in grete liking;
This living' is not religious
According to Benet's living.

Thei ben clerkes, and courts ovir se;
Ther pore tenaunce fully thei flite;
The hier a man amercid be
The gladlyir thei woll it write:
This is farre from Christes poverté,
For all with cove'tise thei endite;
On the pore thei have no pite,
Ne ner 'hem cherishe but or bite.

And comunly soche ben comen
Of pore peple', and of 'hem begete,
That this perfection han inomen:
Ther fathirs ride but on their fete,
And travaile fore for that thei ete,
In povert livith yong and old;
Ther fathirs suffreth drought and wete,
Many hungrie meles, thursté, and cold.

And all this the monkes han forsake
For Christ's love and Sainct Benete,
To pride and ese have 'hem betake;
This religion is ill besete:
Had thei ben out of gret religion
Thei must have hangid at the plowe,
Threshid and diked fro toun to toun,
With sorie mete not halfe inowe.

Therefore thei han this all forsake,
And take to riches, pride, and ese;
Full fewe for God wol monkes 'hem make,
Lite is soche ordir for to praise;
Sainct Benet ordained it not so,
But bad hem to the chereliche,
In churchliche manir live and go,
Boistous in yerth, and not lordliche.

Thei disclaunderin Sainct Benet,
Therefore thei have his holy curse;
Sainct Benet with hem never met
But if thei thought to robbe his purse.
I can no more here of 'hem tell
But that thei ben like tho before,
And clene serve the devill of hell,
And ben his trefure and his store;

And all soche othir counterfaitours,
Chanons, canons, and soche disgised,
Ben Godd's enemies and traitours,
His religion han foule dispised;
And of freris I have before
Told in a makin of a crede,
And yet I could tell worse and more,
But men would werien it to rede.

As Goddes godenes no man tell might,
Ne write ne speke, ne thinke in thought,
So ther falsched and ther unright
Maie no man tell that ere God wrought.
The Griffon saied, Thou canst no gode,
Thou came ner of no gentill kinde;
Othir I trowe thou waxist wode
Or ellis thou hast loste thy minde.

Should holy churché yhave no hedde
Who should ybe her governaile,
Who should her rule, who should her redde,
Who should her forthren, who availe?

Eche man shall live by his travaile;
Who best doith shall have most mede:
With strength if men the churché assaile
With strength men must defende her nede.

And if the Pope were purely pore
And nedy, and nothing he had,
He shuld be drive from dore to dore;
The wickid of him n'olde not drad;
Of soche an hedde men would be fadé,
And sinfully liven' as 'hem lust;
With strength amendis soche be made,
With wepin wolves from shepe be wust.

If that the Pope and prelates would
So begge and bid, bowe and borowe,
Holy churché should ystande full cold,
Her servauntes sit and soupe sorowe;
And thei were noughtie, foule, and horowe,
To worship God men would wlate
Both on evin and on morowe:
Soche harlotrie men would hate.

And therefore men of holy churché
Shouldin be honeste in all thing,
And worshipfull God's workis werche;
So semeth it to serve Christ ther king
In honest and in clene clothing,
With vessels of gold and clothes riche
To God honestly to' make offring,
For to his lordship none is liche.

The Pellican cast an hougé crie,
And saied, Alas! why saiest thou so?
Christ is our hede that sitteth on hie,
Heddis he ought we have no mo;
We ben his membres bothe also,
Fathir he taught us call him als,
Maisters to call forbad he tho;
All maisters ben wickid and fals

That takith maistrice in his name
Ghostly, and to win yerthly gode;
Kings and lordes should lordship have,
And rule the peple with milde mode,
But Christ, for us that shed his blode,
Bad his priests no maistrice have,
Ne carke not for clothis ne fode;
From all mischief he woll 'hem save.

Ther riche clothes shall be rightwifnesse,
Ther trefure a true life shall be,
Charite shal be ther richesse,
Ther Lordship shall be unite,
And hope in God ther honeste,
Ther vessell a clene conscience;
Pore in sprite, and humilite,
Shall be holy church's defence.

What! saied the Griffon, maie the greve
That othir folkis faren wele?
What hast thou to doin with ther live?
Thy falsched every man maie fele,
For thou ne canst no cattell gete,
But livest in londe as a lorell,
With glosing gettist thou thy mete;
So farith the devil in hell.

He would that eche man there should dwell,
For he livith in clene envie,
So with the tales that thou doest tell
Thou wouldest othir peple destric

With your glose and your heresie,
For ye can live no bettir life
But clene in fals hypocrisie,
And bringist the in wo and strife.

And therwith have ye not doon,
For ye ne havin here ne cure;
Ye serve the devill, not God ne man;
And he shall payin you your hire;
For ye wol farin wel at festes,
And be warm clothid for the cold;
Therefore ye glosin Godd'is hestes,
And begile peple yong and old.

And all the seven sacramentes
Ye speke ayenst as ye were flie,
Tithings, offringes, with your ententes,
And on your Lord'is body lie:
All this ye doon to live in ese,
As who sayith ther ben none soche,
And fain The Pope' is not worth a pese,
To make the peple' ayen him groche.

And this ycommith in by fendes
To bring the Christin in distaunce,
For thei would that no man were frendes,
Levith thy chattring with mischaunce!
If thou live well what wilt thou more?
Let othir men live as 'hem list,
Spendin ther gode or kepe in store;
Othir mennes conscience ner thou n'ist.

Ye han no cure to answe're fore;
What meddle' ye that han not to doon?
Let men live as thei han doon yore,
For thou shalt answe're for no man.
The Pellican sayid, Sir, naie,
I ne dispisid not the Pope
Ne no sacrament, sothe to saie,
But speke in charite' and gode hope:

But I dispise ther hið pride,
Ther welthe that should be pore in sprite;
Ther wickidnesse is knowe so wide,
Thei servin God in false habite,
And tournin mekenesse into pride,
And lowlinesse into hie degre,
And Godd'is wordis tourne and hide,
And I am moved by charite

To lettin men to livin so
With all my conning and my might,
And to warnin men of ther wo,
And to tellin 'hem trowth and right.
The sacramentes be soul'is hele
If thei ben usid in gode use;
Ayenst that speke I ner a dele,
For than ne were I nothing wise;

But thei that use 'hem in misse manere,
Or set 'hem up to any sale,
I trowe thei shall abie 'hem dere;
This is my reson, this my tale:
Who so taketh hem unrightfulliche
Ayenst the ten commandementes,
Or elles by glose wrechidliche
Selleth any of the sacramentes,

I trowe thei doe the devill homage,
In that thei wetin thei doe wrong,
And therto I dare well to wage
Thei serve Sathan for all their song.

To tithen' and offre' is holsome life,
So it be doon in due manere,
A man to houselin and to thrive,
Wedding, and all othir in fere.

So it be nother solde ne bought,
Ne takè ne give for covetise,
And it be so taken' it is nought;
Who selleth him so maie fore agrise:
On our Lordes body' I doe not lie,
I saie the sothe thorough true rede,
His fleshe and blode, through his misterie,
Is there all in the forme of brede.

How it is there it nedeth not strive,
Whethre' it be subget or accident,
But as Christ was whan he' was on live
So is he there in verament.
If Pope or cardi'nall live gode live,
As Christ us bad in his gospels,
Ayenst that ne woll I not strive,
But me thinkith thei live not well;

For if the Pope lived as God bedde,
Pride and highnesse he should dispise,
Richesse, covetise, and croune on hedde;
Mekenesse and poverté' he should use.
The Griffon saied he should abaie,
Thou shalt be brent in balefull fire,
And all thy sect I shall distrie;
Ye shall be hangid by the swire.

Ye shulle be hangid and to drawe:
Who givith you leve for to preche,
Or spekin ayenst Godd'is lawe,
And the peple thus falsely teche?
Thou shalt be curfed with boke and bell,
And dissevered from holie church,
And clene idampnid into hell,
Othirwise but ye wollin worche.

The Pelli'can saied, That I ne drede;
Your cursing is of lite value;
Of God I hope to have my mede,
For it is falsed that ye shewe,
For ye ben out of charite,
And wilne vengeance, as did Nero:
To suffrin I wol redy be;
I drede not all that thou canst do.

Christ bad ones suffre for his love,
And so he taught all his servautes,
But thou' amende for his sake above;
I drede not all thy maintenaunce;
For if I drede the world'is hate,
Me thinkith I were lite to praise:
I drede nothing your hie estate,
Ne I ne drede not your disese.

Wollin ye tourne and leve your pride,
And your hie porte and your richesse,
Your cursing should not go so wide;
God bring you into right wisenesse!
For I drede not your tirannie,
For nothing that ye can ydoen;
To suffre I am all redie,
Sikir I recke nevir how fone.

The Griffon grinned as he were wode,
And lokid lovely as an owle,
And swore by cock'is herte and blode
He wold him tere every doule;

Holy churche thou disclaundrist foule;
For thy speche I woll the to race,
And make thy flesh to rote and moule;
Lofell, thou shalt have hardè grace.

The Griffon flewe forth on his waie,
The Pellican did sit and wepe,
And to himself he gan to saie,
God would that any of Christes shepe
Had herdin, and itaken kepe
Eche a word that here sayid was,
And would it write and well ikepe;
God would it were all for his grace!

Plowman.

I answerid, and saied I would,
If for my travaile one would pey.

Pellican.

He saied yes; these ther God han sold,
For thei han grete store of money.

Plowman.

I sayid, Tell me and thou maie,
Why tellist thou menn'is trespase?

Pellican.

He said, To' amende hem in gode fay,
If God woll give me any grace;

For Christ himself is liken to me,
That for his peple died on rode;
As fare I right so farith he,
He fedith his birdes with his blode:
But these doon evill ayenst Gode,
And ben his foen undir frendes face;
I told 'hem how ther living stode,
And God amende 'hem for his grace!

Plowman.

What ailith the Griffon, tell why
That he holdith on the' othir side,
For thei two yben likily
And with kindis yrobin wide.

Pellican.

The foulè betokinith pride,
As Lucifer that high flewe was,
And sith he did him in ill hide,
For he agilted Godd'is grace.

As birde flyith up in the aire,
And livith by birdes that ben meke,
So these ben flowe up in dispaire,
And shendin sely foulis eke;
The foulis that ben in finnes eke
He culleth 'hem; knele therefore, alas!
For bribrie Godd'is forbode breke;
But God amende it for his grace!

The hinder parte is a loun,
A robber and a raviner,
That robbeth the peple in yerth doune,
And in yerth holdith none his pere:
So fareth this foule both ferre and nere,
With tempo'rel strength the peple chafe
As a lion proude in yerth here;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

Pellican.

He flewe forth with his wingis twain
All drouping and dafid, and dull,
But sone the Griffon came again,
Of his foulis the yerth was full;
The Pelli'can he had cast to pull,
So grete nombre ner sene ther was,
What manir of foules telle I woll,
If God wol give me of his grace.

With the Griffon come foulis sele,
Ravins, rokis, crowis, and pic,
And graie foulis, agadrid wele,
Igurde above they wouldin hie,
Gledis and bosardes weren 'hem by,
White molles and puttockes toke ther place,
And lapwinges, that wel conith lie;
This company' han forlete ther grace.

Long while the Pellican was oute,
But at last he commith againe,
And brought with him the phenix stoute;
The Griffon would have flow ful faine,
His foulis flewen as thicke as raine,
The phenix tho began 'hem chace;
To flie from him it was in vaine,
For he did vengeaunce and no grace.

He flewe 'hem doune without mercy;
There estarte neither fre ne thrall;
On him they cast a rufull crie
Whan that the Griffon down was fall;
He bete him not, but flewe hem all:
Where he 'hem drove no man may trace:
Under the erth methought they yall;
Alas, they had a feble grace!

The Pellican then axid right
For my writing if I have blame
Who then wol for me sight of flight?
Who shullin sheldè me from shame?
He that yhad a maide to dame,
And the Lambè that flaine ywas,
Shal sheldin me from gostly blame,
For erthely harme is Godd'is grace.

Therefore I pray evèry man
Of my writing have me excused,
This writing writeth the Pellican,
That thus these peple hath dispised;
For I am freshe fully advised
I n'ill not maintene his menace,
For the devill is ofte disguised
To bring a man to evil grace.

Witith the Pelli'can and not me,
For herof I n'il not avowe
In hie ne lowe, ne no degre,
But as fable take it ye mowe.
To holy churche I will me bowe;
Eche man to' amende him Christe sende space!
And for my writing me alowe
He that' is almighty for his grace.

Here endeth the Plowman's Tale.

THE PROLOGUE;

Or, The mery adventure of the Pardonere and Tapstere at the Inn at Canterbury.

WHEN all this fresh feleship were come to Cantirbury,
As ye have herde to fore, with Talys glad and merry,
Som of sotill sentence of vertue and of lore,
And som of othir mirthis, for them that hold no
Of wisdom, ne of holynes, ne of chivalry, [store
Nethir of vertuouse matere, but to foly
Leyd wit and lustis all to such japis
As hurlewaynes meyne in every hegg that rapes
Thorough unstabill mynde, ryght as the levis grene
Stondewn ageyn the wedir, ryght so by them I mene:
But no more hereof nowe at this ilche tyme,
In saving of my sentence, my Prolog, and my ryme.
They toke ther in, and loggit them at mydmorowe I trowe,
Alle cheker of the hope that many a man doth knowe;
Their Hooft of Southworke, that with them went,
as ye have herde to fore,
That was rewler of them al, of las and eke of more,
Ordeyned their dyner wisely or they to chirch went,
Such vitailis as he fonde in town, and for noon othir sent.
The Pardonere behelde the besynes, how statis wer iservid,
Diskennying hym al prively, and a fyde swervid;
The hostelere was so halowid fro o plase to another,
He toke his staffe to the Tapstere: Welcom myn own brother,
Quod she, with a frendly loke, al redy for to kys;
And he, as a man i lerned of such kyndnes,
Bracyd hir by the myddyll, and made hir gladly chere;

As thoughe he had iknowen hir al the rathir yeer:
She halid hym into the tapstry there hir bed way was makid;
Lo, here I ligg, (quod she) myself al nyght al nakid,
Without manny's company syn my love was dede,
Jenkyn Harpoure, yf ye hym knewe: from fete to the hede
Was not a lustier persone to daunce ne to lepe
Then he was, thoughe I it sey; and therwith to wepe
She made, and with hir napron feir and white ywash
She wyped soft hir eyen for teris that she out lash
As grete as any myllstone: upward gon they stert
For love of her swetyng, that fat so nighe hir hert:
She wept and waylid, and wrong her hondis, and made much to done,
For they that loven so passyngly such trowes they have echon:
She snyffith, sighith, and shoke hire hede, and made rouful cher:
Benedicite! quod the Pardonere, and toke hir by the swere,
Yee make sorwe inowgh, quod he, your life though ye shuld lese.
It is no wondir, quod she than; and therwith she gan to snefe.
Aha! al hole, quod the Pardonere; your penaunce is somewhat passid.
God forbede it els! quod she, but it were somewhat lassid;
I might nat lyve els, thowe wotist, and it shuld long endure:
Now blessid be God of mendement of hele and eke of cure!

Quod the Pardonere tho anoon, and toke hir by
the chynne,
And sayd to hir these wordis tho; Alas that love
is syn!
So kynd a lover as ye be oon, and so trew of
herte,
For be my trewe conscience yit for yewe I smerte,
And shall this month hereafter, for your soden
disese;
Now wele wer hym ye lovid so he coud you
plese;
I durst swere upon a book that trewe he shuld yewe
fynd,
For he that is so yore dede is grene in your mynd.
Ye made me a sory man; I dred ye wold have
stervid.
Graunt mercy, gentil Sir, quod she, that ye un-
aservid:
Yee be a nobile man, iblessid mut yee be:
Sit down; ye shul drynk. Nay I wis (quod he)
I am fastyng yit, myne own hert'is rote.
Fastyng yit, alafs! quod she; therof I can gode
bote.
She stert into the town and set a py al hote,
And set to fore the Pardonere; Jenken, I ween
I n'ote
Is that your name I yow prey. I wis, myn own
fustir,
So was I enformed of them that did me fostir.
And what is yowrs? Kitt, iwis; so cleped me
my dame.
And Godd'is blessing have thou, Kitt; now broke
wel thy name;
And privylich unlasid his both eyen liddes,
And lokid hir in the visage paramour and amyddis,
And fighed there with a litil time that she it here
myghte,
And gan to rown and scyn this song, *Now, love,
then do me righte.*
Ete and be merry, quod she; why breke ye nowt
your fast?
To wait more feleship it were but work in waste.
Whi make ye so dull chere? for your love at
home?
Nay, forsooth, myne own hert, it is for you aloon.
For me? alas! what sey ye? that wer a simple prey.
Trewlich yit, quod the Pardonere, it is as I yewe
sey.
Ye, etith and beth mery; we wol speke therof
sone;
Brennyd cat dredith feir: it is mery to be a loon;
For by our Lady Mary, that bare Jesus on hir
I coud nevir love yit but it did me harm, [arm,
For evir my manere hath be to love ovirmuch.
Now Crist'is blessing, quod the Pardonere, go with
al such.
Lo! how the clowdis worchyn ech man to mete
his mach,
For trewly, gentil Cristian, I use the same tach,
And have ydo many a yer: I may it nat forbere,
For *Kynd wold have his cours* though men the con-
trary swere:

And therwith he stert up smertly and cast down
a grote.
What shal this do, gentil Sir? Nay, Sir, for my
I n'old ye payd a peny her and so sone pas. [cote
The Pardonere swore his grette othe he wold pay
no las.
I wis, Sir, it is ovir do, but sith it is your will
I woll putt it in my purse lest yee it take in ill
To refuse your curtesy: and therwith she gan to
bowe.
Now trewly, quod the Pardonere, your maners
been to lowe,
For had ye countid streytly, and nothing left behind,
I might have wele ydemed that ye be unkind,
And eke untrew of hert, and sooner me forgete,
But ye list be my tresorer, for we shall offer mete.
Now certen, quod the Tapster, ye have a rede ful
even,
As wold to God ye couth as wele undo my sweven
That I my self did mete this nyght that is ypassid,
How I was in a chirch when it was all ymassid,
And was in my devocioun tyl service was al doon,
Tyl the preest and the clerk boystly bad me goon,
And put me out of the chirch with an egir mode.
Now Seynt Daniel, quod the Pardonere, your
swevyn turn to gode,
And I woll halfow it to the best, have it in your
mynd,
For comyngly of these swevyngs the contrary men
shul fynd.
Ye have be a lover glad, and litil joy yhad;
Plick up a lusty hert, and be mery and glad,
For ye shul have an husbond that shall yewe wed
to wyve,
That shal love yewe as hertly as his own lyve.
The preest that put yew out of chirch shall lede
you in ageyne,
And helpe to your mariage with al his might and
main.
This is the sweven al and som Kit; how likith the?
Bemytrowith wondir wele, blessid mut thou we be?
Then toke he leve at that tyme, tyll he come effe-
sone,
And went to his feleship (as it was to doon)
Thoughe it be no grete holynes to prech this ilk
matere,
And that som list to her it, yit, Sirs, ner the latter
Endurith for a while and suffrith them that woll,
And ye shull her how the Tapster made the Par-
doner pull
Garlik all the long nyghte til it was ner end day;
For the more chere she made of love the falsir
was her lay;
But litil charge gaff she therof, tho she acquit his
while,
For ethir is thought and tent was othir to begile,
As ye shul here hereafter, when tyme comith and
spase
To meve such matere.—But now a litil spase
I wol return me ageyn to the company,
The Knyghte and al the feleship, and nothing for
to ly.

Whan they wer al yloggit, as skil wold and reson,
Everich aftir his degre, to chirch then was feson
To pas and to wend to make their offringis,
Righte as their devocioun was, of silver broch
and rynges;

Then at chirch dorr the curtesy gan to ryse
Tyl the Knyght, of gentilnes that knewe right
wele the guyse,

Put forth the prelatys, the Parson, and his fere,
A Monk that took the spryngill with a manly chere,
And did as the manere is, moilid al their patis
Everich aftir othir, righte as they were of statis :
The Frer feynyd fetously the spryngill for to hold
To spryng oppon the remnaunt, that for his cope
he n'old

Have last that occupacioun in that holy plase,
So longid his holy conscience to se the Nonn's safe.
The Knyght went with his compers toward the
holy shryne

To do that they wer com for, and aftir for to
dyne :

The Pardonere and the Miller, and othir lewde
fotes,

Sought hem self in the chirch right as lewd gotes,
Pyrid fast and pourid high upon the glase,
Counterfetyng gentilmen the armies for to blase,
Diskynering fast the peyntur, and for the story
mournid,

And a red al so right as rammys hornyd.

He berith a balstaff, quod the toon, and els a ra-
kid end;

Thow failest, quod the Miller, thow hast nat wel
thy mynd;

It is a spere, yf thow canst se, with a prik tofore,
To push a down his enny, and through the shoul-
der bore.

Pese, quod the Hooft of Southwork; let stond the
wyndow glased;

Goith up and doith your offerynge; ye semith
half amased :

Sith ye be in company of honest men and good
Worchith somwhat aftir them, and let the kynd
of brode

Pas for a tyme; I hold it for the best,

For who doith aftir company may live the bet in
rest.

Then passid they forth boystly gogling with their
hedis,

Knelid adown to fore the shrine, and hertlich their
bedis

They preyd to Seint Thomas in suche wyse as they
couth;

And sith the holy reliques ech man with his mowith
Kissid, as a goodly monk the names told and
taught,

And sith to othir places of holynes they raught,
And wer in their devocioun tyl service wer al
doon,

And sith they drowgh to dynerward as it drew to
noon,

Then, as manere and custom is, signes there they
bought,

For men of contre shuld know whome they had
sought.

Eche man set his silver in such thing as they likid,
And in the meen while the Miller had ypidid
His bosom ful of signys of Caunterbury brochis,
Though the Pardonere and he pryvely in hir pou-
chis,

They put them afterwards, that noon of them it
wist,

Save the Sompner seid somwhat, and seyde to he
list

Halff part, quod he, prively rowning on their
ere;

Husht! pees, quod the Miller, seist thou nat the
Frere,

How he lowrith undir his hood with a doggish
eye?

Hit shuld be a privy thing that he coud nat aspy;
Of every craft he can somwhat our Lady gave
hym sorowe!

Amen, tho quod the Sompner, on eve and eke
on morowe :

So cursid a Tale he told of me the devill of hell
hem spede,

And me, but yf I pay him wele and quyte wele
his mede.

Yf it hap homward that ech man tell his Tale,
As we did hiderward, though we shuld set at sale
All the shrewdnes that I can, I woll hym nothing
spare,

That I n'ol touch his takerd somwhat of his care.

They set their signys upon their hedes, and som
oppon their capp,

And sith to the dynerward they gan for to stapp.

Every man in his degre wish and toke his sete,

As they were wont to doon at soper and at mete,

And wer in silence for a tyme tyl good ale gan
arise,

And then, as nature axith, as these old wise

Knownen wele, when veynys been somwhat re-
plete,

The spirits wol stere, and also metis swete

Causen oft myrthis for to be ymevid,

And eke it was no tyme tho for to be ygrevid :

Every man in his wyse made hertly chere,

Telling his felowe of sportys and of chere,

And of othir mirthis that fellyn by the wey,

As custom is of pylgryms, and hath been many a
dey.

The Hooft leid to his ere, of Southworke as ye
knowe,

And thenkid al the company both high and lowe,

So wele kepeing the covenaut in Southwork that
was made,

That every man shuld by the wey with a Tale
glade

All the whole company in shorting of the wey;

And al is wele performed : but than now thus I
sey,

That we must so homeward eche man tel anothir.

Thus we wer accordit, and I shuld be a rathir

To set yewe in governaunce by right ful juge-
ment.

Trewly Hooft, quod the Frer, that was all our
assent,

With a litil more that I shall sey therto :
 Yee graunted of your curtesy that we shuld also
 All the hole company sope with yewe at nyght ?
 Thus I trowe that it was ; what sey you, Sir
 Knyght ?
 It shal nat nede, quod the Hooft, to axe no wit-
 nes ;
 Your record is good I nowe ; and of your gen-
 tilnes
 Yit I prey yew efft ageyn ; for by Seynt Thomas
 shryne
 And ye woll hold covenaut I woll hold myne.
 Now trewely Hooft, quod the Knyght, ye have
 right welyseyd ;
 And as towching my persone I hold me payde ;
 And so I trowe that al doith : Sirs, what sey yee ?
 The Monk and eke the Marchaunte and al seid Ye.
 Then al this aftir-mete, I hold it for the best ;
 To sport and pley us, quod the Hooft, eche man
 as hym lest,
 And go by tyme to soper and to bed also,
 So mowe we erly rysen our journey for to do.
 The Knyght arose therewithal, and cast on a fresher
 gown,
 And his sone anothir, to walk in the town,
 And so did all the remnaunt that were of that
 aray,
 That had their chaungis with them, they made
 them fresh and gay,
 Sortid them togidir, right as their lustis lay,
 As they were more usid travelling by the way.
 The Knyght with his meyne went to see the walle
 And the wards of the town, as to a knyght befall,
 Devising ententiflich the strengthis al about,
 And apointid to his sone the perell and the dout
 For shot of arblast and of bowe, and eke for shot
 of gonne,
 Unto the wardis of the town, and how it might
 be wone ;
 And al defence ther ageyn aftir his intent
 He declarid compendiously, and al that evir he
 ment
 He sone perseyvid every poynt, as he was ful abil.
 To armes and to travaile and persone covenabill
 He was of all factur aftir fourm of kynd,
 And for to deme his governaunce it semed that
 his mynd
 Was much in his lady that he lovid best,
 That made hym oft to wake when he shuld have
 his rest,
 The Clerk that was of Oxenforth onto the Somp-
 nore seyde ;
 Me semeth of grete clerge that thou art amayde,
 For thou puttest on the Frer in maner of repreff,
 That he knoweth falskede, vice, and eke a theff ;
 And I it hold vertuouse and right commendabill
 To have very knowlech of thinges reprovabill ;
 For who so may eschew it, and let it pas by,
 And els he might fall theron unward and sodenly.
 And thoughe the Frer told a Tale of a Somp-
 nour,
 Thow oughtist for to take it for no dishonour,
 For of al craftis and of eche degre
 They be not al perfite, but som nyce be.

Lo ! what is worthy, seyde the Knight, for to be
 a clerk ;
 To sommon among us them this mocioune was ful
 I comend his wittis and eke his clerge, [derke :
 For of ether part he saveth honeste.
 The Monk toke the Parfone then and the grey
 Frer,
 And preyde them for curtesy for to go in fere :
 I have ther acquaintaunce that al this yeres thre
 Hath preyde hym by his lettris that I hym wold se ;
 And ye my brothir in habit and in possessioun,
 And now I am here methinketh it is to doon,
 To preve it in dede what chere he wold me make,
 And to yew my frende also for my sake.
 They went forth togidir talking of holy matere,
 But woot ye wele in certeyn they had no mind on
 watere
 To drynk at that tyme, when they wer met in fere,
 For of the best that myght be founde, and there-
 with mery chere,
 They had, it is no doubte ; for spycys and eke wine
 Went round about the gastyoun and eke the ruyne.
 The Wyfe of Bath was so wery, she had no wyl to
 walk,
 She toke the Piores by the honde ; Madam, wol
 ye stalk,
 Pryvely into the garden to se the herbes growe,
 And aftir with our host's wife in hir parlour
 rowe ?
 I wol gyve yewe the wyne and ye shul me also,
 For tyl we go to soper we have naughs ellis to do.
 The Piores, as woman taught of gentil blood and
 hend,
 Assentid to hir counsel, and forth gon they wend,
 Passyng forth softly into the herbery,
 For many a herb grewe for sewe and surgery,
 And all the aleys feir, and parid, and raylid, and
 ymakid,
 The savige and the isope yfrethid and yslakid,
 And othir beddis by and by fresh ydight,
 For comers to the hooft righte a sportful sight.
 The Marchaunt and the Mancipill, the Miller and
 the Reve,
 And the Clerk of Oxenforth, to townward gan
 they meve,
 And al the othir meyne, and lastt noon at home
 Save the Pardonere, that pryvelich when al they
 wer goon
 Stalkid into the tapstry ; for nothing wold he leve
 To make his covenante in certeyn that same eve ;
 He wold be loggit with hir, that was his hole en-
 tentioun.
 But hap and eke Fortune, and all the constellaci-
 oune,
 Was clere hym ageyns, as ye shul aftir here ;
 For hym had better be yloggit al nyght in a myere
 Then he was the same nyght or the sun was up ;
 For such was his fortune he drank without the
 cupp ;
 But thereof wist he no delay ; ne *No man of us alle*
May have that bigg connyng to knowe what shal befall.
 He stappid into the tapstry wondir pryvely,
 And fond hir ligging liryng with half slopy
 eye ;

Pourid fellich undir hir hood, and sawe all his comyng,
And lay ay still, as naught she knewe, but feynid hir slepyng.

He put his hond to hir brest; Awake, quod he, awake.

A, *benedicite*! Sir, who wist yew her? out tho I myght betake

Prisoner, quod the Tapstere, being al aloon;
And therwith breyd up in a frite, and began to groon.

Now sith ye be my prisoner yeld yew now, quod he. I must nedis, quod she, I may nothyng fle;
And eke I have no strength, and am but yong of
And also *It is no mastery to catch a mouse in a cage* [age,
That may no where stert out, but closid wondir fast;
And eke, Sir, I tell yew though I had grete hast
Ye shuld have coughed when ye com. Wher lern you curtesy?

Now trewlich I must chide, for of right pryvety
Women ben som tyme of day when they be aloon.
Wher coud I yew prey when ye com efftione?

Nowe mercy, dere swetyng! I wol do so no more;
I thank you an hundrit sithis; and also by your lore

I wol do hereaftir in what plase that I com:
But lovers, Kitt, ben evil avysid full oft, and to lom;

Wherfore I prey you hertlich hold me excused,
And I behote yew trewly it shall no more be usid.
But now to our purpose: how have ye fare
Sith I was wyth you last? that is my most care;
For yf yee eylid eny thing othir wise then good,
Trewly it wold chaunge my chere and my blood.
I have farid the wers for yewe, quod Kitt; do ye no drede

God that is above? and eke ye had no nede
For to congrir me, God woot, wyth your nygro-mancy,

That have no more to vaunte me but oonly my
And yf it were disteynid then wer I ondo: [body,
I wis I trowe, Jenkyn, ye be nat to trust to;
For evir more ye clerkis con so much in book
Yee wol wynn a woman at first look.

Thought the Pardonere, this goth wele, and made his beter chere,

And axid of hir softly, Love! who shall ligg here
This nyght that is to comyng? I prey yewe tell
I wis it is grete nede to tell yewe, quod she: [me.
Make it nat overqueynt though you be a clerk;
Ye knowe wele inough iwis by loke, by word, by work.

Shal I com than, Cristian, and fese away the cat?
Shal ye com? *per benedicite*! what question is that?

Wherfor I prey you hertly to be my counsail?
Comyth somwhat late, and for nothing fail;
The dorr shall stond that up; put it from you soft,
But be wele avysid ye wake nat them on lofft,
Care ye nat, quod Jenkin, I can theron at best;
Shal no man for my stepyng be wakid of his rest.
Anon they dronk the beverage, and were of oone accord,

As it semed by their chere and also by their word;

And al a staunce she lovid hym wele, she toke hym by the swere,
As though he had lernyd cury favel of som old frere.

The Pardonere plukkid out of his purs I trow the dowry,

And toke it Kitt in hir hond, and bad her pryvely
To orden a rere soper for them both to, [also,
A cawdell ymade with swete wyne and with sugir
For trewly I have no talent to ete in your absence,
So longith my hert toward yew to be in yewr presence.

He toke his leve, and went his wey as though no-thing wer,

And met wyth al the felship; but in what plase ne wher

He spake no word therof, but held hym close and styll,

As he that hopid sikirlich to have had al his wyll,
And thought many a mery thought by hymself aloon:

I am a loggit, thought he best, how so evir it goon;

And thoughe it have costid me, yit wol I do my peyn.

For to pike hir purs to nyghte and win my cost ageyn.

Now leve I the Pardonere tyll that it be eve,
And wol returne me ageyn righte, ther as I did leve.
Whan al wer com togider in their herbergage
The Hooft of Southwork, as ye knowe, that had no spice of rage,

But al thing wrought prudencially, as sobir man and wise;

Now wol we to the soup, Sir Knyght, seith your avyse,

Quod the Hooft ful curteysly, and in the same wise.
The Knyght answer'd him ageyn, Sir as ye devyse
I must obey, ye woot wele; but yf I faill wytt
Then takith these prelatis to yewe, and washith and go sit;

For I woll be yewr Marchall and serve yewe, ech one,

And then the officers and I to soper shall we gone.
They wish, and sett right as he bad, eche man wyth his fere,

And begonne to talk of sportis and of chere
That they had the astir-mete whiles they wer out,
For othir occupacione tyll they wer servid about
They had nat at that tyme, but every man kitt a loff;

But the Pardonere kept hym close, and told no-thing of

The myrth and hope that he had, but kept it for hymself;

And thoughe he did it is no fors, for he had nede to solve

Long or it were mydnyght, as ye shul her sone,
For he met with his love in crokeing of the moon.
They wer yservyd honestly, and eche man held hym payde,

For of o manere of service their soper was araide,
As skill wold and reson, sith the left of all
Payid ylike much, for growing of the gall:

But yit as curtesy axith, though it were som dele
streight,
The statis that were above had of the feyrest en-
dreyte;
Wherfor they did their gentilnes ageyn to all the
rout,
They dronken wyne at their cost onys round
about.
Now pass I lightly ovir. When they soupid had
Tho that were of governaunce, as wise men and
sad,
Went to their rest, and made no more to doon,
But Miller and the Coke dronken by the moon
Twyces to eche othir in the repenyng; [to sing
And when the Pardonere them espy'd anoon hegan
Doubill me this bourden, chokelyng in his throte,
For the Tapster shuld here of his mery note:
He clepid to hym the Sompnour, that was his own
discipill,
The Yeman and the Reve, and the Mancipill,
And stoden so holowyng; for nothing wold they
Tyl the tyme that it was well within eve. [leve
The Hooft of Southwork herd them wele, and
the Marchaunt both,
As they wer at a countis, and wexen somewhat
wroth,
But yet they preyd them curteysly to rest for to
wend.
And so they did all the rout; they dronk and made
an end.
And eche man droughe to *cusky* to slepe and take
his rest
Save the Pardonere, that drew apart, and weytid
by a cheste
For to hide hymself tyl the candill wer out:
And in the meen while, have ye no doute,
The Tapster and hir paramour, and the hosteler
of the house,
Sitt togidir pryvelich, and of the best gouse
That was yfound in town and yset at sale
They had there of sufficiant, and dronk but litill
ale;
And sit and ete the cawdell for the Pardonere that
was made,
With fugir and with swete wyne, right as hym-
self bade;
So he that payd for all in feer had not a twynt,
For oft is more better ymerkid then ymynt:
And so farid he ful right as ye have yherd,
But *Who is that a woman could not make his berd*,
And she wer therabout, and set hir wytt therto?
Ye woot wele I ly nat, and wher I do or no
I wol nat here termyn it, lest ladies stond in plase
Or els gentil women, for lesing of my grace
Of daliaunce and of sportis and of goodly chere;
Therfor anenst their estatys I wol in no manere
Deme ne determyn, but of lewd kitts,
As tapsters, and othir such that hath wyly wyttis,
To pike mennys pursis, and eke to bler their eye;
So wele they make seme soth when they falsest
by.
Now of Kitt Tapster, and of hir paramour,
And the hosteler of the house, that sit in Kittis
bour,

When they had ete and dronk right in the same
plase,
Kitt began to rendir out all things as it was;
The wowing of the Pardoners and his cost also,
And how he hopid for to lygg al nyght wyth hir
also;
But therof he shall be sikir as of God's cope;
And sodenly kissid her paramour, and seyde, *We*
shul sclope
Togidir hul by hul, as we have many a nyght,
And yf he com and make noyse, I prey yewe
dub hym Knyght.
Yes, Dame, quod hir paramour, be thou not agast;
This is his own staff thou seyest, therof he shall
atast.
Now trewly, quod the hostler, and he com by my
lot
He shall drink for Kittis love wythout cup or pot;
And he be so hardy to wake eny gite [mist;
I make a vowe to the peacock there shal wake a foul
And arose up therewithal and toke his leve anoon:
It was a shrewid company; they had servid so
many oon.
With such manere of feleship ne kepe I never to dele,
Ne no man that lovith his worship and his hele.
Quod Kitt to hir paramour, Ye must wake a
whyle,
For trewlich I am sikir that within this myle
The Pardonere wol be comyng, his hete to aswage,
But loke ye pay hym redelich to kele his corage;
And therfor, love, dischance yewe not tyll this chek
No, for God, Kitt, that wol I no. [be do.
Then Kitt went to bed, and blewe out all the
light,
And by that tyme it was ner hond quarter nyght.
Whan all was still, the Pardonere gan to walk,
As glad as eny goldfynch that he herd no man
talk,
And dorwge to Kittis droward to herken and to
list,
And went to have fond the dor up; but the hasp
and eke the twist
Held hym out a whils, and the lok also;
Yit trowid he no gile, but went ner to,
And scrapid the dorr welplich, and wynyd wyth
his mowith
After a doggis lyden, as nere as he couith.
Away, dog, with evill deth! quod he that was
within,
And made hym all redy the dorr to unpin.
A! thought the Pardonere, tho I trow my berd be
made;
The Tapster hath a paramour, and hath made
them glade
With the cawdell that I ordeyned for me, as I
guesse;
Now the devill hir spede, such oon as she is,
She seid I had ycongerid hir; our Lady gyve hir
forowe;
Now wold to God she wer in stokis tyl I shuld hir
borowe,
For she is the falsest that evir yit I knewe;
To pik the mony out of my purs, Lord! she made
hir trewe.

And therewyth he caught a cardiakill and a cold
fot,

For who have love longing, and is of corage hote,
He hath ful many a myry thought tofore his
delyte;

And right so had the Pardonere, and was in evil
plight;

For fayling of his purpose he was nothing in ese,
Wherfor he fill sodenlich into a wood rese,

Entryng wondir fast into a frensy

For pur very angir and for jelousy; [wood,

For when he herd a man within, he was almost

And because the cost was his no mervel tho the
moud

Wer turned into vengauunce, of it myght be :

But this was the myschief; all so strong as he

Was he that was within, and lighter man also,

As provid wele the bataile betwene them both to.

The Pardonere scrapid eftt ageyn; for nothyng
wold he blyn,

So feyn he wold have herd more of hym that
was within.

What dog is that? quod the paramour; Kit, wost
thou ere?

Have God my trowith, quod she, it is the Pardonere.

The Pardonere, with myscheff! God gyve hym evil
preff!

Sir, she seid; by my trowith he is the same theff.

Therof thou liest, quod the Pardonere, and might
nat long forbere.

A thy fals body! quod he; the devil of hell the
tere!

For by my trowith a falssher sawe I nevir noon,

And nempnid hir namys many mo then oon,

Though to rech hir wer noon honeste

Among men of good worship and degre

But, shortly to conclude; when he had chid inowe

He axid his staff spitouflich, with wordis sharp and
rowe.

Go to bed, quod he within; no more noyse thou
make;

Thy staff shal be redy to morowe I undertake,

In soth, quod he, I wol nat fro the dorr wend

Tyl I have my staff. Thow bribour, then have the
todir end,

Quod he that was within; and leyd it on his back,

Right in the same plase as chapmen berith their

And so he did to mo, as he coud a rede, [pak;

Graspyng astir with the staff in length and eke in
brede;

And fond hym othir whyle redlich inoughe

With the staffys end high upon the browe.

The hosteler ley oppon his bed and herd of this
affray,

And stert hym up lightlich, and thought he wold
asay :

He toke a staff in his hond, and highed wondir
blyve

Tyl he wer with the seleship that shuld nevir
thryve.

What be yee? quod the hosteler; and knew them
both wele.

Hyust! pefe, quod the paramour: Jak, thow must
be fele;

Ther is a theff, I tell the, within this hall dorr.

A theff? quod Jak; this is a nobill chere
That thou hym hast yfound, yf wee hym myght
cach.

Yis, yis, care the nought; with hym we shul mach
Wele inowe or he be go, yf so we had lighte,

For we to be strong inowe with o man for to
fichte.

The devil of hell, quod Jak breke this thev'is
bonis!

The key of the kitchen, as it wer for the nonys,
Is above with our dame: and she hath such usage,

And she be wake of her slepe, she fallith in such a
rage

That al the weke astir there may no man hir plese,
So she sterith aboute this house in a wood rese.

But now I am avisid but how we shul have lyte;

I have too giftis within that this same nyght

Supid in the halle, and had a litill feir: [pire,

Go up, quod Jak, and loke, and in the ashis

And I wol kepe the dorr; he shall not stert out.

Nay, for God that wol I nat, lest I cach a clout,

Seid the todir to Jak, for thou knowist bettir then I

All the estris of this house; go up thyself and spy.

Nay, for soth, quod Jak, that were grete unrighte

To aventur oppon a man that with hym did not
fichte;

Sithens thou hast hym bete and with thy staff ypilt,
Me thinkith it wer no reson that I shuld ber the
gilt;

For by the blysyng of the cole he myght se myne

hede,

And lightly lene me such a stroke my hond to be
dede.

Then wol we do by common assent sech hymal

about;

Who that metith hym first pay him on the snout;

For methought I herd hym here last among the
pannyys.

Kepe thou the toder side, but ware the watir

cannys,

And if he be herein ryghtsone we shull hym fynde,

And we to be strong inowghe o theffe for to bynde.

Aha ha! thought the Pardonere, beth the pannys

aryn

And drowhe oppon that side, and thought oppon
a gynne;

So at last he fond oon, and set it on his hede,

For as the case was fall ther' to be had grete nede:

But yit he graspit ferthirmore to have somewhat
in honde,

And fond a grete ladill right as he was gonde,

And thought for to sterte out betwene them both

to

And waytid wele the paramour that had doon
hym woo,

And set him with the ladill on the grufcill on the

nose,

That all the week after he had such a pose,

That both his eyin waterid erlich by the morowe,

But she that was the cause of it had ther'of no

forowe.

But now to the Pardonere. As he wold stert away

The hosteler met with hym, but nothyng to his pay:

The Pardonere ran so swith the pan fill him fro,
 And Jak hosteler aftir hym as blyve as he myght go,
 And stapid oppon a brondeal unware, [asware,
 That hym had bin beter to have goon more
 For the egg of the pann met with his shynne,
 And karff atoo a veyn and the next syn :
 But whils that it was grene he thought litil on,
 But when the grenenefs was apast the greff sat ner
 the bone ;
 Yit Jak leyd to his hond to grope wher it sete,
 And when he fond he was yhurt the Pardonere he
 gan to threte,
 And swore by Seynt Amyas that he shuld abigg
 With stroks hard and fore even oppon the rigg ;
 Yf he hym myght fynd he nothyng would hym
 spare :
 That herd the Pardonere wele, and held hym bettir
 a square,
 And thought that he had strokis ryght inough.
 Wytnes on his armis, his back, and his browe.
 Jak then, quod the paramour, where is the theff
 ago ?
 I n'ote, quod tho Jak ; right now he lept me fro,
 That Crist'is curs go with hym, for I have harm
 and spite :
 Be my trowith and I also and he goith nat al quyte :
 But and we myght hym fynd we wold aray him so
 That he shuld have leggne foot to morrowe on to go.
 But how shull we hym fynd ? the moon is adown,
 (As grace was for the Pardonere) and eke when
 they did roun
 He herd them evir wel inowe, and went the more
 asyde,
 And drew him ever bakward, and let the strokis
 glide.
 Jak, quod the paramour, I hold it for the best,
 Sith the moon is down, for to go to rest,
 And make the gatis fast ; he may not then astert,
 And eke of his own staff he berith a redy mark,
 Wherby thou mayest him knowe among all the
 route,
 And thou ber a redy ey, and weyt wele aboute
 To morowe when they shul wend ; this is the best
 rede :
 Jak, what seyst thou therto ? is this wele yseyd ?
 Thy wit is clere, quod Jak ; thy wit mut nodis
 stond.
 He made the gatis fast ; ther is no more to doon.
 The Pardonere stode aside, his chekis ron and bled,
 And was ryght evil at ese al nyght in his hede :
 He must of force lige lyke a colyn fwerd, [berd ;
 Yit it mevid him wondir fore for making of his
 He payd at full ther'fore though a womans art
 For wyne and eke for cawdill, and had ther'of no
 part :
 He ther'for preyd Seyn Juliane, as ye mowe on-
 derstonde,
 That the devill her shulde spede on watir and on
 londe,
 So to disseive a travellyng man of his herbergage,
 And coud not els save curs his angir to aswage ;
 And was distract of his wit, and in grete despayr
 For aftir his hete he caught a cold through the
 nyght'is eyr,

That he was ner afound it, and coud, none othir
 help :
 But as he sought his loggyng he happid oppon a
 whelp
 That ley undir a steyir, a grete Walshe dog,
 That bare about his neck a grete huge clog ;
 Because that he was spetouse, and wold sone bite,
 The clog was hongit about his nek, for men shuld
 nat wite
 Nothyng dogg'is maister yf he did eny harm,
 So for to excuse them both it was a wyly charm.
 The Pardonere wold have loggit hym ther, and
 lay somewhat nigh,
 The warrok was awakid and caught hym by the
 thigh,
 And bote hym wondir spetously, defending wele
 his couch,
 That the Pardonere myght nat ne hym nether touch.
 But held hym a square by that othir side,
 As holsom was at that tyme for tereing of his hyde :
 He coud noon othir help, but leyd adown his hede
 In the dogg'is littir, and wisshid aftir brede
 Many a time and oft, the dog for to plesse,
 To have yle ymore nere for his own ese :
 But wish what he wold, his fortune seyde Ney ;
 So trewly for the Pardonere it was a dismal dey.
 The dog ley evir grownyng, redy for to snache.
 Wher'for the Pardonere durst nat with hym mache,
 But ley as still as eny stone, remembring his foly,
 That he wold trust a Tapster of a common hostry ;
 For commonly for the most part they ben wyly
 echon.
 But now to alle the company a morrow whan
 they shuld gon
 Was noon of all the feleship half so sone ydight
 As was the gentil Pardonere ; for al tyme of the nyght
 He was aredy in his aray, and had nothing to doon
 Sasse shake alite his eris, and trus and be goone.
 Yet or he cam in company he wish away the blood,
 And bond the forys to his hede with the typet of
 his hood,
 And made lightsom chere for men shuld nat spy
 Nothyng of his turment ne of his luxury ; [pry,
 And the hosteler of the house, for nothing he coud
 He coud nat knowe the Pardonere among the com-
 pany
 A morowe when they shuld wend, for ought that
 they coud pour,
 So wysely went the Pardonere out of the dogg'is
 bour,
 And blyched from the hosteler, and turned oft
 about,
 And evir more beheld hym amyward of the rout,
 And was evir syngyng to make al thyng good ;
 But yit his notis wer somewhat low for aking of his
 So at that tyme he had no more grame, [hede ;
 But held hym to his happynes to scape shame.
 The Knyght and all the feleship forward gon they
 Passyng forth merely to the toun'ys end ; [wend,
 And by that tyme they were ther the day began to
 And the son merely upward gan he pike, [rype,
 Pleying under the egge of the firmament.
 Now, quod the Hooft of Southwork, and to the
 feleship bent,

Who sawe evir so feyr or so glad a day,
 And how sote this seson is entring into May?
 The thrustelis and the thrushis, in this glad morn-
 nyng, [gale
 The ruddok and the goldfynch; but the nyghtin-
 His amorous notis lo how he twynith small!
 Lo how the trees grenyth that nakid wer, and no-
 thing
 Bare this month afore but their sommer clothing!
 Lo how Nature makith for them everichone!
 And as many as ther be he forgettith noone!
 Lo how the seson of the yere and Averell shouris
 Doith the busshis burgyn out blossoms and flouris!
 Lo the prymerosis how fresh they ben to sene!
 And many othir flouris among the gras grene.
 Lo how they spryng, and sprede, and of divers hue!
 Beholdith, and seith both rede, white and blue!
 That lusty bin and comfortabill for mann'ys sight!
 For I sey for myself it makith my hert to light.
 Now sith Almighty Soveryn hath sent so feir a dey
 Let se now, as covenant is, in shorting of thewey,
 Who shall be the first that shall unlace his male
 In comfort of us al, and gyn some mery Tale;
 For and we shuld now begyn to draw lot
 Peraventure it might fal ther it ought not,
 On som unlusty persone that wer not wele awakid,
 Or semybousy ovyr eve, and had ysong and crakid
 Somwhat ovir much: how shuld he than do:
 For *Who shuld tell a Tale he must have good wyll therto.*

And eke som men fastyng beth glewid and ybound
 In their tongis; and som fastyng beth nothyng jo-
 cound;

And som men in the morning ther mouthis beth
 adoun;

Tyll that they be charmyd their wordis woll not
 soun.

So thys is my conclusioun and my last knot,
 It wer grete gentilnes to tell without lot.

By the rood of Bromholm, quod the Marchant tho,
 As fer as I have sailed, riden and ygo,
 Sawe I nevyr man yet tofore this ilk day

So wele coud rule a company as our Host, in fay
 His wordis ben so comfortabill, and comyth so in
 seson,

That my wit is ovircome to make eny reson
 Contrary to his counsaill at myn ymagynacioun,
 Wher'for I woll tell a Tale to your consolacioun,
 In ensampill to yowe that when that I have do
 Anothir be right redy then for to tell, ryght so
 To fulfyll our Hooft's wyll and his ordinaunce.
 There shall no sawte be found in me: gode wyll
 shal be my chaunce:

With this I be excusid of my rudinez,
 Altho' I cannot peynt my Tale, but tell it as it is,
 Lepyng ovir no sentence, as ferforth as I may,
 But tell yewe the yolke and put the white away.

THE MERCHANT'S SECOND TALE;

OR, THE HISTORY OF BERYN.

WHILOM yeris passed in the old dawis [lawis,
When rightfullich by reson governyd wer the
And pryncipally in the cete of Rome, that was so
rich,

And worthiest in his dayes, and noon to him ilich
Of worship ne of wele, ne of governaunce,
For alle londis christened ther' of had dotaunce,
And all othir natiouns, of what feith they were,
Whils the Emperour was hole, and in his paleys
I mainteynid in honour; and in Pop'is se [there
Rome was then obeied of all Cristiante.

But it farith ther'by as it doith by othir thingis;
For though nethir cete, regioun, ne kyngis,
Beth nat nowe so worthy as wer by olde tyme,
As we fynd in romaunces, in gestis, and in ryme,
For all things doith wast, and eke mann'ys lyff
It's more shorter then it was; and our wittis fyve
Mowe nat comprehende now in our dieties
As som tyme myght these old wise poetes.
But sith that terrene thinges ben nat perdurabill,
No mervaile is though Rome be somewhat variabill
Fro honour and fro wele sith his frendis passid;
As many anothir town is payrid and ylassid
Within these few yeris, as we mowe se at eye;
Lo! Sirs, here fast by Wynchelse and Ry.

But yit the name is evir oon of Rome as it was
groundit

After *Remus & Romulus*, that first that cete foundit,
That brethren weren both to, as old bokis writen;
But of ther les and governaunce I wol not now
enditen,

But of othir mater that fallith to my mynd;
Wher'for, gentill Sirs, ye that beth behind
Drawith somwhat nere thikker to a rout,
That my wordis may sounne to eche man about.

Aftir these two brethren *Romulus* and *Remus*
Julius Cæsar was Emperour, that rightful was of
Domus.

This cete he governed nobilich wele,
And conquered many a regioun, acronicull doth
us telle;

For, shortly to conclude, al tho wer adversaries
To Rome in his dayis he made them tributaries;
So had he in subjectione both frend and foon,
Of which I tell yew trewely Englund was oon.
Yit aftir *Julius Cæsar*, and sith that *Crist* was bore,
Rome was governed as wele as it was before,
And namelich in that tyme and in the same yeris
When it was governed by the *Doseperis*;
As semeth wele by reson, who so can entend,
That *O mann'ys wytt ne wyll may not comprehend*
The boucheff and the myscheff, as may many bedis;
Ther'for ther operaciouns, ther domes, and ther
dedes,

Were so egallich ydoon; for in all *Cristen* londis
Was noon that they sparid for to mend wrongis.
Then *Constantyne the Third*, aftir these *Doseperis*,
Was Emperour of Rome, and regnyd many yeris.
So, shortly to pas ovir, after *Constantyn's* dayis
Phus Augustinus, as songen is in layes,
That *Constantyn's* son, and of plener age,
Was Emperour ychose, as fill by heritage,
In whose tyme likerlich the seven Sages were
In Rome ydwelling decently; and yf yee lust to lere
How they were yclepid, or I ferther goon,
I woll tell you the names of them everichone,
And declare yeu the cause why they ther namys
The first was ycleped *Sother Legiseer*, [bere.
This is thus much for to sey, as *man bering the lawe*:
And so he did trewly; for lever he had be sclawe
Then do or sey eny thing that fowned out of reson,
So cleen was his conscienece yfet in trowith and
reson.

Marcus Stoycus the second, so pepill hym highte,
That is to mene in our constert, a *keper of the right*:
And so he did full trewe; for the record and the
plees [sees
He wrote them evir trewly, and took noon othir
But such as was ordynid to take by the yere:
Now, Lord God! in *Cristendom* I wold it were so
clere.

The third Crassus Afulus among men clepid was,
An house of rest, and ese, and counsail, in every case :
 For to onderstond that was his name full right,
 For evirmore the counsails he helpid wyth al his
 Antonius Judeus the ferth was yclepid, [myght.
 That was asmuch to meen, as wele me myght have
 As any posed of all the long yere, [clepid
 That myght have made hym fory or chongit onys
 chere,

But evirmore rejoycing, what that evir betid,
 For his hert was evir mery, right as the somer
 Summus Philopater was the fift's name, [bridd.
 That thoughe men wold flee hym, or do hym al
 the shame,

Angir, or disese, as evil as men couthe,
 Yet wold he love them nevir the wers in hert ne
 in mowith.

His will was cleen undir his foot, and nothing
 hym above,

Ther'fore he was clepid *Falbir of perfite love.*

The sixth and the sevynth of these Sevin Sages
 Was Stypio and Sithero, as thes word Astrolages
 Was sirname to them both aftir their sciencis;
 For of astronomy fikerlich the cours and all the
 fences

Bothe they knowhit wele inoughe, and wer right
 sotil of art.

But now to othir purpose, for her I woll depart
 As lightly as I can, and draw to my matere.

In that same tyme that these Sages were
 Dwellyng thus in Room, a litill without the walles,
 In the subarbis of the town, of chambris and of
 hallis,

And all other howseing that to a lord belongit,
 Was noon wythyn the cete, ne noon so wele be-
 hongit

With docers of highe pryse, ne wallid so aboute,
 As was a Senatours hous wythyn and eke withoute.

Favinus was his name, a worthe man and rich;
 And, for to sey shortlych, in Room was noon hym
 lyche.

His portis and his estris were full evenaunte
 Of tresour and of lordshyp; also the most vailant
 He was, and eke ycom of high lynage :

And at last he toke a wyff like to his peerage;
 For *Noriture and connyng, bewte and parentyne,*
Wer tho countid more worth than gold or sylvir fyne.

But now it is al othir in many mann'ys thought,
 For *Muk ys now ymarried, and vertuset at nought.*

Fawnus and his worthy wyff wer to gidir aloon
 Fyeteene wyntir fulliche, and issu had they noon,
 Wher'for ther joyis wer not half parfite,

For uttirlich to have a child was al ther delite,
 That myght enjoy ther heritage and weld their
 honour,

And eke when they were febill to their trew so-
 coure.

Their fastyng and their prayir, and all that evir
 they wrought,

As pilgrimage and almsded, ever they besought
 That God would of his goodnes som fruyte be-
 twene them send :

Fro gynyng of their spoufaill, the myddil, and
 the end,

This was their most besynes, and all othir delites,
 And eke this world'is rychis, they set at litil price.
 So at last, as God wold, it fill oppon a dey,
 As this lady fro chirchward went in the wey,
 A child gan stere in her womb, as Godd'is wyl was,
 Wher'of she gan to mervill, and made shortir pas,
 Wyth colour pale and eke wanne, and full in he-
 vynes,

For she had nevir tofore that day such manere
 sekenes.

The wymmen that with hir were gon to behold
 The lady and her chere, but nothing they told,
 But feir and soft wyth ese homward they her
 led :

For her soden sekenes ful fore they were adred,
 For she was inlich gentil, kynd and amyabill,
 And eke trewe of hert, and nothyng variabill.
 She lovid God above all thing, and dred syn and
 shame;

And Agea likerly was her rightfull name.

So aftir, in breff tyme, when it was purseyved
 That she had done a womans dede, and had a
 child consevyd,

The joy that she made ther may no tung tell;
 And al so much, or more, yf I ne ly shell,
 Favinus made in his behalf for this glad tyding,
 That I trowe I leve the emperour ne the kyng
 Made no bettir cher to wyff, ne no more myrth,
 Then Fawnus to Agea. And when the tyme of
 birth

Nyghid ner and ner, aftir cours of kynd,
 Wetith wele in certen that all the wyt and mynd
 Of Fawnus was continuell of feir delyveraunce
 Betwene Agea and his child, and made grete or-
 denaunce

Ageyn the tyme it shuld be bore, as it was for
 to down.

So as God wold whan tyme cam Agea had a
 son ;

But joy that Fawnus made was dobil tho to fore
 When that he knew in certen she had a son ybore,
 And sent anoon for nursis four, and no less,
 To reule this child. Afterward as yeris did pas,
 The child was kept so tenderly that it throff wel
 the bet,

For what the norishes axit anoon it was yfett.
 In his chambir it norished was; to town it mut
 nat go :

Fawnus lovid it so cherely hit myght nat part
 hym fro.

It was so feyr a creature as myght be on lyve
 Of lymys and of fetours, and growe wondir
 blyve.

This child that I of tell, Berinus was his name,
 Was ovir much cherished, which turned hym into
 grame,

As yee shull here aftir, when time comyth and
 spase ;

For *Aftir swete the soure comyth full oft in many a*
 For as sone as he coud go and also speke

All that he set his ey on, or aftir list to beke,
 Anoon he shuld it have, for no man hym wer-
 nyd.

But it had be wel bettir he had be wele yler-

Noriture and gentilnes, and had yhad some hey,
For it fill so aftir wyth what child he did pley
Yf the pley ne likid hym he wold breke his
hede,
Or wyth a knyff hym hurt ryght nygh hond to be
dede :

For ther nas knyght ne squyer in his fadirs hause,
That thought his owne persone moſte corajouſe,
That did or ſeyd eny thing Bérinus to diſpleſe
That he n'old ſpetouſly anoon oppon him reſe ;
Wher'of his fadir had joy and his modir alſo :
Yet it ſemith to many a man it was nat wiſely do.
When Beryn paſſed was ſeven yere, and grew in
more age,

He wrought ful many an evil chek ; for ſuch was
his corage

That there he wiſt or might do eny evill dede
He wold nevir ſeſe for ought that men him ſeid,
Whe'fore many a pore man ful oft was agrevid ;
But Fawnus and Agea ful light theron belevid :
And thoughe men wold pleyne ful ſhort it ſhuld
availe,

For Fawnus was ſo myghty, and cheff of all
counſaill

With Auguſtyn the Emperour, that all men hym
drad,

And lete pas ovir miſcheſe and harmys that they
had.

Berinus ferthermore lovid well the diſe,
And for to pley at hazard, and held ther' of grete
pryſe,

And all othir gamys that loſery was in,
And evirmore he loſt, and nevir myght wyn.
Berynus at hazard many a nyght he wakid,
And oft tyme it fill ſo that he cam hom al nakid :
And that was all his joy, for right wele he knew
That Agea his modir wold cloth hym newe.
Thus Berynus lyvid, as I have told to fore,
Tyll he was of the age of eightene yere or more.
But othir whyls amongis for pleyntis that were
grete

Fawnus made amendis, and put them in quiete :

So was the fadir cauſe the ſone was ſo wyld ;

And ſo have many mo ſuch of his own child
Be cauſe of his undoyng, al we mowe ſe al day ;

For Thing ytake is hard to put away,

As hors that evir trottid, trewlich I yew telle,

It were hard to make bym aftir to ambill welle :

Ryght ſo by Beryn ; when he had his luſt and wyll
when he was lite

It ſhuld be hevy afterward to reve his old delite,
Save the whele of Fortune, that no man may
withſtonde,

For every man on lyve ther'on he is gond ;

O ſpoke ſhe turnyd bakward, righte at high noone,
All ageyn Berſnus, as ye ſhull here ſone.

Agea his modir fell in grete ſikenes,

And ſent aftir huſbond wyth wordis hire to liſ,

And for ſhe wold tell hym hir hole hert'is wyll

Er ſhe out of the world partid, as it was right and
ſkill.

When Fawnus was ycome, and ſaw ſo rodyleſe
Hys wyff that was ſo dere, that for love he cheſe,

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No mervell though his hert wer in grete morn-
ing,

For he purſeyvyd fullich ſhe drewe to hir endyng :
Yit made he othir chere then in his hert was

To put away diſcomfort, diſſimilyng wyth his
faſe

The hevynes of his hert : wyth chere he did it
cloſe,

For ſuch a manner craft ther is wyth them can
gloſe ;

Save that tournyſh all to cautele : but Fawnus
did nat ſo,

For wetith wele in certeyn his hert was full of wo

For his wyff Agea ; and yit for craft he couth

The teris fro his eyen ran down by his mowith :

When he ſaw the pangis of deth comyng ſo faſt

Oppon his wyff Agea almoſt his hert to braſt.

Agea lyſt up hir eyen, and beheld the chere

Of hir huſbond Fawnus, that was ſo trew a fere,

And ſeyd, Sir, why do ye thus ? this is an clyng
fare

In comfort of us both, yf yee might ſpare

And put away thys hevynes whyle that yee and I

Myght ſpeke of othir thyngis, for Deth me
nyghith nygh,

For to body ne to ſoule this vailyth nat a karſe.

Now tellyth on, quod Fawnus, and I wol lete it

For the tyme of talkyng as wele as I may [pas

But out of my remembraunce onto my endyng
day

Yeur deth woll nevir, I woot it wele, but evir be
in my mynd.

Then, good Sir, quod Agea, beth to my foule
kynd

When my body is out of ſight, for therto have I
nede,

For truer make then yee be in word ne in dede

Had nevir woman, ne more kyndnes

Hath ſhewed unto his make, I know right wele
iwis :

Now wold ye ſo her after in hert be as trewe,

To lyve wythout make, and on yeur ſone rewe,

That litill hath ylernid ſithens he was bore :

Let hym have no ſtepmadir, for children have
tofore

Comelich they lovith nat : wherfore wyth hert I
prey

Have chere onto yeur ſone aftir my endyng day ;

For ſo God me help and I laſt yew behynd

Shuld nevir man on lyve bryng it in my mynd

To be no more yweddit, but lyve ſoule aloon.

Now yee know all my wyll, good Sir, think
ther'on.

Certis, quod Fawnus, whils I have wyttis fyve

I think nevir aftir yew to have another wyff.

The preſt was com therwythall for to do hir
rightis ;

Fawnus toke his leve, and all the othir knyghtis,

Hir kyndrid and frendis kiſſed hir echone :

It is no nede to axe wher ther was dole or noon.

Agea caſt her ey up, and lokid all aboute,

And wold have kiſſid Beryn, but then was he
wytkoute,

Q

Pleying to the hazard, as he was wont to doon,
For as fone as he had ete he wold ren out anoon;
And when she saw he was not ther that she thought
most on

Hire sekene and hire mournyng berst her hert
anoon.

A damfell tofore that was ron into the toun
For to feche Beryn, that pleyed for his gowne,
And had almost lost it, right as the damfell cam,
And swore and starid as he was wood, as longit
to the game.

The damfell seyde to Beryn, Sir, ye must com
home,

For but ye hygh blyve that yee wer ycome
Yeur mothir wold be dede; she is yit on lyve:
Yf ye wol speke wyth her yee must hygh blyve.
Who bad so, lewd Kitt? Your fadir, Sir, quod
she.

Go home, lewd visenag, that evil mut thow the!
Quod Beryne to the damfell, and gan her fray and
feer,

And bad the devill of hell hir should to tere.
Hast thow ought els to do but let me of my
game?

Now by God in hevin, by Peter, and by Jame,
Quoth Beryn in grete angir, and swore be book
and bell,

Reherfying many namys mo than me lyst to tell,
N'er thow my fadirs messenger wer thou shuldist
nevir ete brede:

I had levir my modir and also thou wer dede
Then I shuld lese the game that I am nowgh in;
And smote the damfell undir the ere, the weet
gon upward spyn:

The death of Agea he fet at litill pryse;
So in that wrath frolick Beryn threw the dyse,
And lost wyth that same cast al was leyde adown,
And stert up in a wood rage, and ballid on his
crown,

And so he did the remnaunt, as many as wold
abyde;

But for drede of Fawnus his felawis gan to hyde,
And nevir had wyll, ne list, wyth Beryn for to
fyght,

But evir redy to pley and wyn what they
myght.

The deth of Agea sprang about the towne,
And every man that herd the bell for her sowne
Bemony'd her fall fore; fass Beryn toke none
hede,

But fought anothir feleship, and quylich to them
yede,

To such manner company as shuld nevir thryve,
For such he lovid bettir then his modir's lyve;
And evirmore it shuld be nyght or he wold home
drawe,

For of his fadir in certeyn he had no manner awe;
For evir in his yowith he had al his wyll,
And was ypassed chastising but men wold hym
kyll.

Fawnus for Agea, as it was well sitting,
Made grete ordenaunce for hir burying,
Of prelatys and of preestis, and of all othir thyng,
As thoughe she had be a wyff of a worthy king

It myght nat have be mendit; such was his gen-
tilnes,

For at hir enterying was many a worthy messe.
For four weeks full, or he did her intere,
She ley in lede wythyn his house; but Beryn cam
not there,

Namelich into the place where his modir ley,
Ne onys wold he a *Pater noster* for hir soule sey:
His thought was all in unthryft, lechery, and
dyse,

And drawyng all to foly, for *Yowith is recbles*,
But ther it is refreyned and bath som manere eye:

And therfore methinkith that I may wele sey
A man ypassid yowith, and is wythout lore,
May be wele ylikened to a tre wythout more,
That may nat bowe ne bere fruyte, but root and
ever wast:

Ryght so by yowith farith that no man list to
chast.

This mowe we know verely by experience,
That *Yerd makith vertu and benevolence*

In childhode for to growe, as provith ymagynacioun:
A plant whils it is grene, or it have domina-
cioun,

A man may wyth his syngers ply it wher hym
lyst,

And make therof a shakill, a with, or a twist;
But let the plant stond, and yeris overgowe,
Men shull not wyth both his hondis unnethis make
it bowe:

No more myght Fawnus make his sone Beryn,
When he grew in age, to his lore enclyne;
For every day when Beryn rose unwash he wold
dyne,

And draw hym to his feleship as even as a lyne,
And then com home and ete, and soop, and slepe
at nyght:

This was al his besynes but yf that he did fight;
Wherfor his fadir's hert Fawnus gan for to blede,
That of his modir that ley at home he toke no
more hede:

And so did all the pepill that dwellid in the town
Of Beryn's wildnes gon speke and eke roun.

Fawnus oppon a dey, when Beryn cam at eve,
Was set oppon a purpose to make his sone leve
All his shrewd taichis wyth goodnes if he myght,
And taught hym feir and soft, but Beryn toke it
light,

And countid at litill pryse al his fadir's tale.
Fawnus saw it wold nat; with colour wan and pale
He partid from his sone, and wyth a forowfull
hert.

I ne can write halfyndeale how fore he bid smert
The disobeying of his sone and his wyf's deth,
That, as the book tellith, he wished that his breth
Had ybeen above the ferkill celestyne,
So fervent was his sorowe, his angir, and his pyne.
So, shortly to conclude, Agea was interid,
And Fawnus livid wythes three yere were ywerid,
Wherof ther was grete speche for his high honour;
Tyll at last word cam onto the Emperour
That Fawnus was without wyfe, and feld was jo-
counde,

But mournyng for Agea that he was to ybound,

And lyvid as an hermyte, soule and destitute,
Wythout consolacioun, penyff oft and mute :
Wherfor Augustinus, of Rome the Emperour,
Was inwardlich fory, and in grete dolour.
Wyth that the seven Sagis and Senatouris all
Were assemblid, to discryve what shuld ther'of
fall ;

The wych feyd shortly, For a molestatioun
Ther was noon othir remedy but a consolacioun ;
For *Whoso ever in eny thing displeid or agrevid*
Must by a like thing egall be remeid.

And when the Emperour knew all their determi-
nacioun,

Quicklich in his mynd he had imaginacioun
That Fawnus for Agea was in high distres,
And must ycurid be wyth passyng gentilnes
Of som lusty lady, that of pulchritude
Were excellent al othir : so, shortly to con-
clude,

The Emperour had a love tofore he had a wyf
That he lovid as hertlich as his own lyf,
As was as feir a creature as sone myght beshyne ;
So excellent of bewte that she myght be shryne
To all othir wymmen that wer tho lyvand :
But for the Emperour had a wyf ye shul wele on-
derstond

He cam nat in hir company to have his delite ;
For Cristendome and conscience was tho more
perfit

Then it is now adayis, yf I durst tell :
But I wol leve at this tyme. Than Fawnus al
so well

Was astir sent in hest, of seknes to be curyd ;
So what for drede and ellis they wer both en-
furyd

In presence of the Emperour, so Fawnus myght
nat flee ;

It was the Emperours wyll, it myght noon
othir be.

So wythin a tyme Agea was forgete,
For Fawnus thought litill on that he hir behight :
For as the seven Sagis had afore declarid
It cam all to purpos ; For Fawnus litil carid
For eny thing at all save his wyff to plese,
That Rame was yclepid : for rest nethir ese
Fawnus nevir had but of her presence :
So was his hert on her yfet that he coud no
defence,

Save evirmore be wyth hir, and stare on hir
visage,

That the most part of Room held it for dotage,
And had much marvell of his variaunce :

But *What is that Fortune cannot put in chance ?*
For ther n'as man on lyve on woman more be-
dotid

Then Fawnus was in Rame, ne half so much
ysotid.

Wyth that Rame had knowlech that Fawnus was
ysmyt

Wyth the dart of Love : ye mowe ryght wele
it wyt

That all that evir she coud cast or ythynck
Was all ageyn Berynus, for many a sotill wench

She thought and wrought day by day, as meny
wemen doon,

Tyll they have of their desire the full conclu-
sioun :

For the more that Fawnus of Rame did made
The more dangerous was Rame and of chere
fade,

And kept wele hir purpose undir covirture :

She was the las to blame ; it grew of nature.

But though that Rame wrought so, God forbede
that alle

Wer of that condicioun. Yet touch no man the
gall,

It is my plein counsell, but doith as othir doith :
Take yeur part as it comith of roughe and eke of
smoothe.

Yit noritur, wit and gentilnes, reson and perfite
mynde,

Doth all these worthy women to worch agenys
kynde,

That thoughe they be agrevid they suffir and
endure,

And passith ovir for the best, and folowith nothing
nature.

But now to Rame's purpose, and what was hir
desire,

Shortly to conclude, to make debate and ire
Betwene the fadir and the sone, as it was likely
tho ;

What for his condicioun, and what for love also
That Fawnus owte to his wyff, the rathir he must
hir leve,

And grant for to mend, yf ought hir did greve.

Berinus evir wrought right as he did before,

And Rame made hym chere of love, ther myght
no woman more,

And gaff hym gold and clothing evir as he did
lese,

Of the best that he coud ought wher in town
chese,

And speke full feir wyth hym, to make al thyng
dede ;

Yit wold she have yete his hert wythout falt or
brede :

She hid so hir felony, and spak so in covert,

That Beryn myght nat spy it but lite of Ram's
hert.

So, shortly to pas ovir, it fill oppon a nyghte,

When Fawnus and his fresh wyf wer to bed
ydight,

He toke hir in his armys and made hir hertly
chere,

Ther myght no man betir make to his fere,

And feyd, Myn ertly joy, myn hertis full plesaunce,
My wele, my woo, my paradise, my lyv's suste-
naunce !

Why ne be ye mery, why be ye so dull,

Sith ye know I am yeur own right as yeur hert
woll ?

Now tell on love, myn own hert ! yf ye eylith
ought,

For and it be in my power anon it shall be
wrought.

Rame wyth that gan fighe, and wyth a wepeing
chere
Undid the bagg of trechery, and seide in this
manere :
No mervell though myn hert be fore and full of
dele,
For when I to yew weddit was wrong went my
whele.
But who may be ageyns hap and aventure ?
Therfor as wele as I may myne I mut endure.
Wyth many sharp wordis she fet his hert on feir
To purchase with hir practik that she did desire :
But hoolich all hir wordis I cannot wele reherse,
Ne write ne endite how she did perce
Through Fawny's hert and his scull also ;
For more petouse compleynt of sorowe and of woo,
Made nevyr woman, ne more petously,
Then Rame made to Fawnys : she smote full
bitterly
Into the veyn, and through his hert blood ;
She bloderit so and wept, and was so high on
mode,
That unneth she myght speke but othir while
among
Wordis of discomfort, and hir hondis wrong ;
For alas and woo the tyme that she weddit was !
Was evir more the frefreit when she myght have
spase.
I am yweddit ; ye, God woot best in what maner
and how !
For yf it wer so fall I had a child by you,
Lord ! how shuld he lyve, how shuld he com
away ?
Sith Beryn is yeur first sone, and heir astir yeur
day ?
But yf that he had grace to scoole for to goo,
To have som maner conning that he myght
trust to,
For as it now stondeth it were the best rede,
For, so God me help, I had levir he wer dede
Than wer of such condicioun or of such lore
As Beryn yeur sone is ; it wer bett he wer unbore,
For he doith nat ellis save at hazard pley,
And comyth home al nakid ech othir dey ;
For within this month that I have wyth you be
Fiftene fithis, for verry grete pite
I have yclothid hym al new when he was to tore,
For evirmore he seyde the old were ylore.
Now and he wer my sone I had levir he were yfod,
For and he pley so long half our lyvelode
Wold scarcely suffise hymself oon,
And n'ere yee wold be grevid, I swere he Seynt
John
He shuld astir this dey be clothid no more for me,
But he wold kepe them bettir and draw fro
nycete.
Now gentill wyff, grāncy of yeur wise tale,
I thynk wel the more that I sey no sale ;
For towchyng my grevaunce, that Beryn goith
al nakid,
Trewlich that grevaunce is somewhat asclakid :
Let hym aloon, I prey yew, and I woll con yew
thank,
For in such losery he hath lost many a frank.

The devil hym spede that rech yf he be to fore,
And he use it hereastir as he hath doon to fore.
Beryn arose a morowe, and cried wondir fast,
And axid astir clothis, but it was all in waft ;
Ther was no man tendant for hym in all the
houfe ;
The whele was ychaungit into anothir cours.
Fawnus herd his sone wele how he began to cry,
And rose up anon and to hym did high,
And had forgete nothyng that Rame had yseyde,
For he boillid so his hert he was nat well apayde.
He went into the chambir ther his sone ley,
And set hym down in a chair, and thus he gan to
sey :
My gentil sone Beryn, now feir I wol ye teche ;
Rew oppon thy self, and be thyne own leche.
Manhode is ycom now, myne own dere sone,
It is tyme thow be aweynynd of thyn old wone ;
And thow art 20 wynters, and naught hast of
doctryne ;
Yit woldist thow draw to perfite the worship wold
be thyne,
To noritur and goodship, and al honest thing,
Ther myght com to myn hert no more glad ty-
ding.
Leve now al thy foly and thy rebawdry,
As tablis and mervellis, and the hazardry,
And draw the to the company of honest men and
good,
Els leve thow me as wele as Criste died on the
rode ;
And for al menkynd his ghost pas lete,
Thow shalt for me herastir stond on thyn own fete,
For I woll no longir suffir this aray
To clothe the al new eche othir dey.
Yf thow wolt draw the to wit, and rebawdry
withdraw,
Of such good as God have sent yn part have shalt
thow :
And if thow wolt nat, my sone, do as I the tell,
Of me shalt thow naught have, trust me right well.
Wenyst thow wyth thy dise-pleying hold myn ho-
noure
Astir my deth dey ? Then Beryn gan to loure,
And seide, Is this a sermon or a prechēment ?
Ye were nat wont herto ; how is this ywent ?
Sendith for some clothing that I wer ago ;
My felawis lokith astir me, I woot well they do so :
I woll nat leve my feleshipe ne my rekelagis,
Ne my dise-pleying, for all yeur heretages :
Doith yeur best wyth them by yeur lyf day,
For when they fall to me I wol do as I may.
Benedicite ! fadir, who hath enformyd you,
And set you into ire, to make me chere rowe ?
But I know wele inough whens this counsaill cam ;
Trewlich of yeur own wyfe, that evil dame :
Com oppon hir body that fals putaigne,
For trewlich, fadir, yee dote on hir, and so all men
seyne.
*Alas that evir a man shuld, that is of high counsaile,
Set all his wisdom on his wyf's taile !*
Yee lovith hir so much she hath benome yeur
wyt,
And I may curs the tyme that evir ye wer yknyt,

For now I am in certen I have a stepmodir :
 They been shrewis, som ther been, but few, othir.
 Vel Fikil Flaptail, such oon as she ys,
 For all my pleying at dise yit do yee more amys :
 Yee have ylost your name, your worship, and
 your feith,
 So dote ye on hir, and levith all she sayith.
 Fawnus wyth the same word gaff the chayir a but,
 And lepe out of the chambir, as who seyde Cut,
 And swore in verrey woodnes be God omnipotent

That Beryn of his wordis shuld fore repent.
 Beryn set nought ther'of, with a proude hert
 Answerd his fadir, and axid a new shert.
 He gropid al about to have found oon,
 As he was wont to fore, but ther was noon.
 Then toke he such wilokis as he fond ther,
 And beheld hymself what man he wer ;
 For when he was arayde then gan he firste be
 wrothe,

For his womb lokid out and his rigg both.
 He stert aftir his fadir, and he began to cry,
 For sesh myn array, for the villany.
 Ys as wele yeurs as it is myne.
 Fawnus let him clatir and cry wel and fyne,
 And passid forth still and spak nat a word.
 Then Beryn gan to think it was nat al bord
 That his fadir seyde when he wyth hym was,
 And gan to think all about, and therwyth seid
 Alas !

Now know I wele forsoth that my modir is dede ;
 For tho gan he to glow first a fory mann'ys hede.
 Now kepe thy cut, Beryn, for thou shalt have a
 Somwhat of the world to lern betir wit ; [sit
 For and thou wist fikerly what ys for to com
 Thou woldist wissh aftir thy deth full oft and
 ylonge ;

*For Ther n'ys betying half so sore wyth staff netbir
 As man to be bete with his own yerd.* [sward

The pyry is yblowe, hop, Beryn, hop,
 That ripe wol herastir and on thyn hede drop :
 Thou tokist noon hede whils it shoon hoot,
 Ther for wynter the nyghith asay by thy cote.
 Beryn for shame to town durst he nat go,
 He toke his wey to churchward ; his frend was
 made his foo,

For angir, sorowe, and shame, and hevynes, that
 he had,

Unneth he might speke, but stode half as mad.
 O alas ! quod Beryn, what wyt had I
 That coud nat tofore this dey know fikerly
 That my modir dede was ? but now I know to fore,
 And drede more that eche day hereastir more and
 more

I shall know and fele that my modir is dede.
 Alas ! I smote the messangere, and toke of hir noon
 hede :

Alas ! I am right pore ; alas ! that I am nakid :
 Alas ! I slept to fast, tyl sorowe now hath me
 wakid :

Alas ! I hunger sore ; alas ! for dole and peyn,
 For eche man me seith hath me in disdeyn.
 This was all his mirth to the churchward
 That of his modir Agea he toke so litill reward.

When Beryn was within the chirch then gan he
 wers fray :

As sone as he saw the tomb where his modir lay
 His colour gan to chaunge into a dedely hew :
 Alas, gentill modir ! so kynd you wer and trew,
 It is no mervell for thy deth though I fore smert.
 But therwythal the sorowe so fervent smote his hert
 That sodenly he fil down stan dede in swowe :
 That he had part of sorowe methynkith that
 myght I avowe.

Beryn lay so long or he myght awake,
 For al hys fyve wittis had clene hym forsake,
 Wel myght he by hymself, when reson ycom were,
 Undirstond that Fortune had a sharp spere,
 And eke grete power among high and lowe,
 Som to avaunce and som to ovirthrowe.
 So at last whan Beryn a litill wakid were
 He trampelid fast with his fete, and al to tere his
 And his visage both, right as a wode-man, [ere
 With many a bitir tere that from his eyen ran,
 And sighid many a fore sigh, and had much hevyn-
 nes,

And evirmore he cursid his grete unkyndnes
 To foreyit his modir whils she was alyve,
 And lenyd to hir tombe opon his tore sclyve,
 And wishid a thousand sithis he had ybe hir by,
 And beheld hir tombe with a petouse eye.
 Now, glorious God ! quod Beryn, that al thing
 madist of nought,
 Heven and erth, man and beste, sith I am mys-
 wrought

Of yewe I axe mercy, socour, and help, and grace,
 For my mysdede and foly, unthryffe and trespass :
 Set my sorowe and peyn somewhat in mesure
 Fro dispeir and myscheff as I may endure.
 Lord of all lordis ! though Fortune be my foo
 Yit is thy myght above to turn hym to and fro.
 First my modirs lyfe Fortune hath me berevid,
 And sith my fadirs love, and nakid also me levid.
 What may he do more ? Yis, take away my lyfe ;
 But for that wer myn ese, and end of al stryfe,
 Ther'for he doith me lyve for my wers I sey,
 That I shuld evirmore lyve and nevir for to dey.
 Now leve I Beryn wyth hys modir tyl I com aye,
 And wol return me to Rame, that of hir sotilte
 Bethoughte hir al aboute, when Beryn was agoon
 That it shuld be wittid hir, wher'for she anoon
 In this wise seyde to Fawnus : Sir, what have ye do,
 Althoughe I speke a mery word, to suffir your sone
 Nakid into the town ? it was nat my counsaill. [go
 What wol be seyde ther'of ? sikir without faile,
 For I am his stepmodir, that I am cause of alle
 The violence, the wrath, the angir, and the gall,
 That is betwene yew both, it wol be wit me ;
 Wher'for I prey you hertly doith hym com hom
 aye.

Nay, by trowith, quod Fawnus, for me comyth he
 Sithe he of my wordis so litil prise set [nat yit ;
 As litil shall I charge his estate also :
 Sorowe have that rechith though he nakid go,
 For every man knowith that he is nat wise ;
 Wher'for may be supposid his pleying at dise
 Is cause of his aray, and nothing yee, my wyff,
 Yes, iwis, quod Rame, the tale woll he ryff

Of me and of noon othir, I know right wel afyne;
 Wher'for I prey you, gentil Sir, and for love myn,
 That he wer yfet hom, and that in grete hast,
 And let asay offit agein with feirnes hym to chaste;
 And send Beryn clothis and a new shert; [hert.
 And made al wele in eche side, and kept clofe her
 Now sith it is your wyll, quod Fawnus tho anoon,
 That Beryn shall home com, for your sake aloon
 I woll be the messager to put your hert in ese;
 And els, so God me help, wer it nat yew to plesse
 The gras shuld grow on pament or I hym home
 bryng.

Yet nethirles forth he went, wyth too or thre
 riding,

From o strete to anothir, enqueryng to and fro
 Astir Beryn in every plase wher he was wont to
 Seching eviry halk howris two or thre, [go,
 With hazardours, and othir such, ther as he was
 wont to be,

And fond hym not ther; but to chirche went
 echone,

And at dorr they stode a while and herd Beryn
 made his mone:

'They herd all his compleynt, that petouse was to
 here,

Fawnus into the chirch pryvelich gan pise,
 But al so sone as he beheld wher Agea lay
 His teris ran down be his chekis, and thus he gan
 to sey:

A, Agea! myn old love, and my new also!
 Alas, that evir our hertis shuld depart atoo!
 For in your graciouse dayis of hert'is trobilnes
 I had nevir knowlech, but of all gladnes;
 Remembryng in his hert, and evir gan renewe
 The goodnes betwene them both, and hir hert
 trewe,

And drew hym ner to Beryn with an hevy mode.
 But as sone as Beryn knew and ondirstode
 That it was his fadir, he wold no longir abide,
 But anoon he voidit by the todir side,
 And Fawnus hym encountrid, and seyde, We have
 the fought

'Through the town, my gentil sone, and ther'for
 void the nought.

'Though I seyde a word or two, as me thought for
 the best

For thyne crudicioune, to drawe the onto lyfe ho-
 nest,

'Thou shuldist nat so fervently have take it to thyn
 hert:

But sith I know my wordis doith the so sore smert
 Shall no more hereaftir; and eche dey our diete
 Shall be mery and solase, and this shall be forgete;
 For wele I woot for thy modir that thou art to tore,
 Also thou hast grete sorowe, but onys nedith, and
 no more:

And ther'for, sone, on my blessing to put sorowe
 away;

Drawe the nowe heraftir to honist myrth and pley.
 Lo ther is clothing for yewe, and your hors ydight
 With harneys all freshe new; and if yee list be
 knyght

I shall yit or eve that bergeyn undirtake, [make;
 That the Emperour for my love a knyght shall you

And what that evir ye nede anoon it shall be
 bought,

For whils that I have eny thing ye shall lak naught.
 Graunt mercy! quod Beryn with an hevy chere,
 Of your worshipfull profir that ye have proferid
 me here:

But ordir of knyghthode to take is nat my liking;
 And sith your will is for to do somwhat my plesing,
 Ye have a wyfe ye love wele, and so tenderlich,
 That and she have children I know right likerlich
 All that she can devyse both be nyght and dey
 Shall be to make her childryn heirs of that she
 may,

And eke sowe sedis of infelicite,
 Wher'of wold growe devysioune betwene yewe
 and me:

For yf ye spend on me your good, and thus riallich
 Levith wele, in certen your wyfe woll likerlich
 Eche dey for angir her tuskis whet,
 And to smyte with her tunge, your hert in wrath
 to set,

Toward me from dey to dey, but ye wold aply
 Somwhat to hir purpose and aftir hir yew guy;
 She wold wex so ovirtwart and of so lither tach,
 And evir lour undir her hood a redy for to snache;
 She wold be shorfyng of your lyfe, and that desire
 I naught:

Wher'for to plesse all about, my purpose and my
 thought

Is for to be a Marchaunte, and leve myn heritage,
 And relese it for evir, for shyppys fyve of stage
 Full of marchaundise the best of all this londe:
 And yf ye woll so, fadyr, quyk let make the bonde.
 Fawnus was right well apayd that ilk word out-
 stert,

But yit he seyde to Beryn, I mervell in myn hert
 Wher haddist thou this counsaile to leve thyne
 honour,

And lyve in grete aventure and in grete labour;
 And rid so forth talkyng a soft esy pafe
 Homward to his plase ther that Rame was.

And as sone as Fawnus was ylight adown,
 And highid fast to his wyfe, and with hir gan
 to rown,

And told hir all the purpose, and made Fawnus
 chere,

She did hym nat half so much the tyme she was
 his fere.

She hullid hym, and mollid hym, and toke hym
 about the nekk,

And went low for the kite, and made many a bekk;
 And seyde, Sir, by your spech now right well I here
 That yf ye list ye mowe do thing that I most de-
 sire;

And that is this, your heritage there you best likid
 That ye myght gyve: and evir among the brussh
 away she pikid

From hir clothis here and there, and sighid ther-
 withall.

Fawnus of his gentilnes by hir myddil smale
 Hertlich hir bracyd, and seyde, I woll nat leve,
 I suyr yew my trowith that onys or it be eve
 That I shall do my devoir without feintise
 For to plesse your hert fullich in all wyse.

Graunt mercy! myn own soverene, quod Rame
tho mekely,

And made protestatioun that she shuld sikerly
All the dayis of hir lyfe be to hym as hende
As evir woman was to man, as ferforth as hir
mynd

And wit hir wold serve, and made grete othe.
Fawnus bood no longir, but forth therwith he
goith.

A! precious God in heven, Kyng of majeste!
So plentivouse this world is of iniquite!

*Why is to yfuffrid that trowith is brought adown
Wyth trechery and falsbede in feld and eke in town?*

But now to Fawnus and his entent. When he his
sone met

He toke hym soft by the hond; his tung he gan
to whet,

Sotilly to engyne him. First he gan to preche,
Leve thy foly, my dere sone, and do as I the teche:
Sith thou hast wit and reson, and art of mann'ys
age,

What nedith the be Marchaunt and shall have
heritage?

For and thy good wer ylost the sorowe wold be
myne,

To tell the soth, right nigh peregall to thyne;
And yf that I were dede whils thou wer oute
Lond and rent, and all my good, have thou no
doute,

It wold be plukkid from the; thy part wold be
And also ferthermore, I make oon beheest, [lest:
That I trowe my moblis wol nat suffise
To charge fyve shippis ful of marchandise
But yf I leyd in mortgage my lond and eke my
rent,

And that I leve be nat thy wyll ne thyn entent:
Yit nethirles yf thy hert be so inly set
For to be a Marchaunt, for nothing woll I let
That I n'yl do thy plesaunce as ferforth as I mey
To go ryght nygh myn own estate, but levir I
had nay.

Their wordis ne their dedis, ne matters them be-
twene,

I wol nat tary now ther'on my perchemen to
spene:

But fynallich, to the end of their accordement,
Fawnus had so goon about, yturned and ywent,
That he had brought his sone tofore the Empe-
To relese his heritage and al his honour, [rour,
That he shuld have aftir his dey, for shippis fyve,
and full

Yled of marchaundise of lynnyn and of wool,
And of othir thingis that wer yusid tho.

Engrosid was the covenaut betwene them to
Yn presence of the Emperour, in opyn and norown,
Tofore the gretist Cenators and eldest of the town.
So when the relese selid was with a syde bonde
They wer yleyd both in a meen honde
Iato the tyme that Beryn fullich selid were
In the fyve shippis that I yew told ere.

But who was glad but Fawnus? and to his wyff
went

And seyde, Now, my hert is swete! all thyn hole
entent

Ys uttirlich perfourmyd; us lakkith now no more
But marchaundise and shippis, as I told tofore.
That shall not fail, quod Rame, and began to
daunce,

And aftirward they speken of the purveaunce.

Alas! this fals world, so ful of trechery?

In whom shuld the sone have trust and feith sikirly

If his fadir saylid hym? whether myght he go

For to fynd a sikir frend that he myght trust to!

So when these fyve shippis wer rayid and dight

Fawnus and his sone to the Emperour ful right

They went, and many a grete man for the same
case,

To see both in possessioun, as ther covenante
Beryn first was selid in the shippis fyve, [was.

And Fawnus had the relese, and bare it to his
wyff;

And eche held them payde, and Rame best of all,
For she had conquerid thing that causid most hir
gall.

Now leve I Fawnys and his wyff, and of the go-
vernaunce

Of Beryn I wol speke, and also of his chaunce.

When lodismen and maryneris in al thing redy
was

This Beryn into Alifaunder, yf God wold send
hym grace

That wynde hym wold serve, he wold: so on a day
The wynd was good, and they seyld on ther wey

Too dayis fullich, and a nyght therwythal,

And had wedir at wyll, tyll at last gan fall

Such a myst among them that no man myght se
othir,

That wele was hym that had ther the blessing of
his modir.

For thre dayis incessantly the derknes among
them was,

That no shipp myght se othir; wherfor full oft
Alas!

They seyde, and to the high God they made their
preyere,

That he wold of his grace them govern and stere
So that their lyvis myght savid be,

For they were cleen in dispeyr, because they
myght nat se

The loder, wherby these shipmen ther cours toke
ech one.

So at last, the ferth day, making thus hir mone,

The dey gan clere; and then such wynd arose

That blew their shippis elsewhere then was their
first purpose.

The tempest was so huge and so strong also,

That wele was hym that coude bynde or ondo

Any rope within the shipp that longit to the craft;

Every man shewed his connyng to fore the shipp
and bafft.

The wynd a wook the see to braft, it blew so
grefly fore,

That Beryn and all his company of synnyng jas and
more

Eche man round about shroff hymself to othir,

And put in Godd'is gowernaunce lys, shipp, and
strothir;

For ther was shippis meyne, for owght they coud
 hale,
 That myght abate of the shipp the thiknes of a
 scale :
 The wedir was so fervent of wynd and eke of
 thundir
 That every shipp from othir was blowe of sight
 afondir,
 And durid so al day and nyght, tyll on the morowe
 I trow it was no questioun wher they had joy or
 sorowe.
 So aftirward, as God wold, the wynd was som-
 what soft,
 Beryne clepid a maryner, and bad hym sty on loft,
 And weyte aftir our four shippis aftir us doith
 dryve,
 For it is but grace of God yf they be alyve.
 A maryner anoon wyth that, right as Beryn bad,
 Styed into the top castell, and brought hym ty-
 dings glad :
 Sir, he seith, beth mery; yeur shippis comithechone
 Saff and sound sailing, as ye shul se anoon;
 And eke, Sir, ferthermore, lond also I sigh,
 Let draw our cors estward, thys tyde woll bryng
 us ny.
 Blessed be God! quod Beryn, then wer our shippis
 com,
 We have no nede to dout werr ne molestatioun,
 For ther n'ys wythin our shippis no thyng of spo-
 liatioun,
 But al trew marchaundise; wherfor for lodisman
 Stere onys into the costis as well as thou can;
 When our shippis be ycom, that we mowe pas in
 fere,
 Lace on a bonnet or tweyn, that we mowe faile
 nere.
 And when they wer the costis nygh was noon of
 them alle
 That wist what lond it was: then Beryn gan to
 calle
 Out of every ship anoon a maryner or tweyne
 For to take counseil, and thus he gan to seyne :
 The frountis of this ilk town been wondir feir
 wythall,
 Methinketh it is the best rede, what that evir be-
 fall,
 That I my self aloon walk into the towne,
 And here and se both her and ther, upward and
 downe,
 And enquire fullich of their governaunce.
 What sey ye Sirs? woll ye sent to this ordenaunce?
 All they accordit well therto and held it for the
 best, [rest,
 For thus yf it be profitabill we mowe abide and
 And yf it be othirwise the rathir shall we go,
 For aftir that the spede we woll work and do.
 But nowe mowe ye her right a wondir thing :
 In all the world wyde so fals of their lyvyng
 Was a pepill undir sone, ne none so disseyvabill,
 As was the pepill of this town, ne more unstabill,
 And had a cursed usage of sotill ymaginacioun,
 That yf so wer the shippis of any straunge nacioun
 Werecom into the port, anoon they wold them hide
 Within their own howsis, and no man go ne ryde

In no strete of alle the town; ascaunce that they
 wer lewde,
 And coud no skill of marchandise, a skill it was a
 shrewde,
 As ye shull here aftir of their wrong and falskede;
 But yit it fill, asworthy was, oppon their own hede.
 Beryn arayd hym freshly, as to a Marchand
 longith,
 And set hym on a palfrey wel he sey and hongit,
 And a page rennyng by his hors fete :
 He rode endlong the town, but no man coud he
 meet;
 The dorrys wer yclosid in both too fidis,
 Wherof he had mervell: yet ferthermore he ridis,
 And waytid on his right hond a mancipil's plase
 All fresh and new, and thidir gan he pase :
 The gatis wer wyde up, and thidir gan he go,
 For throughout the long town he found so no mo.
 Therin dwellid a burgeyse the most scliper man
 Of all the town throughout, and what so he wan
 With trechery and gile, as doith som freris,
 Right so must he part with his comperis.
 Beryn light down on his hors, and inward gan
 he dres,
 And fond the good man of the house pleying at
 ches
 With hys neyghbour, as trewe as he, that dwellid
 hym fast by.
 But as sone as this burgeyse on Beryn cast his eye
 Sodenly he stert up, and put the ches hym fro,
 And toke Beryn by the hond, and seyde these wor-
 dis tho;
Benedicite; what manere wynd hath ybrought you
 here?
 Now wold to God I had wherof, or coud make
 yew chere!
 But ye shull lowe my good wyll, and take such as
 ther is,
 And of yeur gentil paciens suffir that is amys.
 For well he wist by his aray and by his counte-
 naunce
 That of the shippis that wer ycom he had som go-
 vernaunce,
 Wherfor he made hym chere femyng amaybill,
 Icolerid all with cautelis, and wondir disseyvabill :
 He bracyd hym by the myddil, and preyd hym sit
 adoun,
 And lowly with much worshipp dressid his coshon.
 Lord God! seyde this burgeyse, I thank this ilk dey
 That I shuld see yew hole and found here in my
 contray;
 And yf ye list to tell the cause of yewr comyng,
 And yf ye have nede to any manere thing,
 And it be in my power, and thoughe I shuld it
 sech,
 It shuld go right wonder streyte, I sey yew siker-
 But yee it had in haste, therwith yew plese, [lich,
 For now I see yew in my house my hert is in grete ese.
 The todir burgeyse rose hym up for to make rouse,
 And axid of his felaw, that lord was of the house,
 Whens is this worshipfull man? with wordis hend
 and low,
 For it semith by the manere that ye hym shuld
 knowe,

And have sey hym tofore this tyme. I have sene,
quod the todir,

Ye ywis an 100 sithis, and right as to my brodir
I wol do hym plesaunce in al that evir I can,
For trewlich in his contray he is a worshipful man:
Forsoth, Sir, and for your love, a thousand in this
town

Wold do hym worship, and be right feyne and
bown

To plesse hym, and avail to have thonk of you:
I woot wele, God them yeld, so have they oft er
nowe.

And arose up therwithall, and with his felaw spak
Of such manere mater that faylid nevyr of lakk.

So when their conseill was ydo this burgeyse preyd
his fere

To sit a down be Beryn, and do hym sport and
And in the while I wol se to his hors, [chere,

For every gentil hert, afore his own cors
Desirith that his riding best servid and ydight
Rather than hymself; wherfor wyth all my myght
I woll have an eye therto; and sich parte wynn
Wich tonne or pipe is best and most fyne.

Beryn was all abashid of his soden chere,
But nethirles the burgeyse fat hym somwhat nere,
And preyd hym of his gentilnes his name for to tell,
His contrey and his lynnage: and he answer'd snell,
Berinus I am ynamid, and in Rome ybore,

And have fyve shippis of myn own, las and more,
Full of marchaundise, ligging tofore the town;
But much marvaille have I the good man is so boun
To serve me and plesse, and how it might be.

Sir, seyde the burgeyse, no mervelle it is to me,
For many a tyme and oft, I cannot sey how lome,
He hath be in your marchis; and as I trow in Room
Also he was ybore, yf I ne ly shall.

Yf it be so, quod Beryn, no mervelle it is at all
Thoughe he may have ysey, and eke his gentill
chere

Previth it all opynly; but be hym that bought me
dere

I have ther'of no knowlech, as I am now avysid.
With that cam in the good man with countenaunce
disgidid,

And had enquiryd of the child that with Beryn cam
Fro gynnyng to the endyng, and told his mastris
name,

And of Agea his modir, and all thing as it was,
Wher-through he was ful perfite to answer to e-
very cas;

So entryng into the hall the burgeys spak anoon,
A! my gentill Beryn, alas! that under stonne
Myn own hert Agea, thy modir leff and dere!
Now God affoyl hir soule, for nevyr bettir chere
Had I of frend woman, ne nevyr half so good.

Benedicite! a Marchaunt comyng ovir flood!
Who brought yew in this purpos, and beth your
fadir's heir?

Now by my trew conscience ryght nygh in dispeyr
I wax for your sake, for now frendlele

Ye mowe wele sey that ye been; but yit for ne-
thirles

Yee mut endure fortune and hevynes put away;
Ther is noon othir wisdom. Also your shippis gey,

That been ycom in favete, ought to amend your
mode,

The wich when we have dyned, I swere for by the
rood,

We wol se them trewly within and eke without,
And have wyne wyth us and drynk al about.

They set and wissh, and fed them, and had wher-
of plente;

The burgeyse was a stuffid man, ther lakkid noon
deynte.

So when they had ydined the cloth was up ytake,
A chese ther was ybrought forth, but tho gan so-
rowe to wake.

The ches was all of ivory, the meyne fressh and
new,

I pulsshid and ypikid of white, asure, and blew.
Beryn beheld the cheker, it semed passyng feir;
Sir, quod the burgeyse, ye shul fynd her a payr
That woll mate yew trewly in las than half a myle,
And was yseyd of sotilte Beryn to begile.

Now in soth, quod Beryn, it myght wel hap nay,
And ne'er I must my shippis se els I wold assay.

What nedith that, quod the burgeyse? trewlich I
wol nat glose,

They been nat yit ysetelid ne fixid in the wose;
For I have sent thries sith ye hither cam

To wait oppon their governaunce; wher'for let set
o game,

And I shall be the first that shall yew atast.
The meyne wer yset up, and gon to pley fast.

Beryn wan the first, the second, and the third,
And at fourth game' in the ches amyde

The burgeyse was ymatid; but that lust him wele;
And all was doon to bryng hym yn, as ye shul
her snel.

Sir, then, seyde Beryn, ye woot well how it is,
Me list no more to pley, for yee know this,
Wher is noon comparisoun, of what thing so it be,
Lust and liking fallith ther: as it semeth me

Ne myrth is nat commendabill that ay is by o fide,
But it rebound to the tothir; wherforetyme is to ryde;

And as many thonkis as I can or may
Of my sport and chere; and also of your pley.

Nay iwys, gentill Beryn, I woot ye wol nat go,
For noritur wol it nat for to part so,

And eke my condicioun; but I ley something
Is no more to pley then who so shoke a ryng

Ther no man is wythyn the ryngyng to answer;
To shete a fethirles bolt almost as good me were:

But and ye wold this next game som manir wager
legg,
And let the trowith on both sidis be morgage and
yplegg,

That whofo be ymatid graunt and assent
To do the todirs bidding, and whofo do repent

Drynk all the watir that salt is of the see.
Beryn belevid that he coud pley betir than he,

And sodinly assentid, with hond in hond assurid.
Men that stode besides, ycappid and yhurid.

Wist wele that Beryn shuld have the wers mes,
For the burgeyse was the best pleyer at ches

Of all the wyde marchis, or many a myle about;
But that ne wyft Beryn of, ne cast ther'of no

doute:

He set the meyne eftt ageyn, and toke betir hede
Then he did tofore; and so he had nede.

The burgeyse toke avifement long on every
draught,

So wyth an hour or two Beryn he had ycaught
Somwhat oppon the hipp, that Beryn had the wers.
And albeit his mynd and wyll was for to curs,
Yit must he dure his fortune when he was so fer
ygo;

For *Who is that that Fortune may alway undo!*

And namelich stout even in eche side

Of *pro* and *contra*: but God help down woll he
glide.

But now a word of philosophy that fallith to my
mynd;

Who take bede of the begynnyng what falsball of the end

He leyth abus tofore the gap ther Fortune wold inryde:

But comynlich yowith forgetith that throughout
the world wyde.

Right so be Beryn I may wele sey that confaillis
in rakid,

Likly to lese his marchaundise, and go hymself al
nakid.

Beryn studied in the ches, although it nought
availid;

The burgeyse in the mene while with other men
confaillid

To sech the sergauntis in the town for thing he
had ado.

So when they come were, they walkid to and fro
Up and down in the hall, as skaunce they knew
nought;

And yit of all the purpose, wit, and mynd, and
thought,

Of the untrew burgeyse, by his messengeris

'They wer ful enformyd: wherfor with eye, and
eris, and heft,

'They lay await full doggidly Beryn to arest,

Forther'for they wer astir sent, and was their
charge.

Lord! how shuld o fely lomb among wolvis weld,
And scape unyharmyd? it hath been seyn feld.

Kepe thy cut now, Beryn, for thow art in the case.
The hall was full of pepill, the serjauntis shewid
their mase;

Beryn kast up his hede, and was ful sore amayid,
For then he was in certen the burgeyse had hym
betrayde.

Draw on, seyde the burgeyse; Beryn, ye have the
wers;

And every man to othir the covenaut gan reherse.

The burgeys, whils that Beryn was in hevy thought,
The next draught astir he toke a rook for nought.

Beryn swat for angir, and was in hevy plight,
And drede full sore in hert; for wele he wist al quyt

He shuld nat escape, and was in high distrefs;

And pryvelich in his hert that ever he saw the ches

He cursid the day and tyme: but what awaylid

For wele he wist then that he shuld be mate: [that?

He gan to chaunge his colour both pale and wan.

The burgeyse seith; Comyth nere, ye shul se this man

How he shul be matid with what man me list.

He droughe and seyde, Chek mate. The serjauntis
wer full prest,

And sefid Beryn by the scleve, and seyde, Sirs, what
think ye for to do, [fo?

Quod Beryn to the serjauntis, that ye me hondith
Or what have I offendit? or what have I seide?

Trewlich, quod the serjauntis, it vaylith nat to
breyde;

Wyth us ye must a while wher ye wol or no
Tofore the steward of this town; aryse, and trus
and go;

And ther it shal be openyd how wisely thow hast
wrought:

This is the end of our tale, make it nevir so tought.
Sirs, farith feir, ye have no nede to hale. [tale.

Pas forth, quod the serjauntis, we wol nat her thy
Yis, Sirs, of your curtesy I prey yew of o word:

Although my gentill hooft hath pleyed with me in
borde,

And ywon a wager, ye have naught to doon:

That is between hym and me; ye have nothyng
to doon.

The hooft made an hidouse cry, in gesolreut the
haut,

And set his hand in kenebowe, he lakkid nevir a
faute.

Weynst thow, seide he to Beryn, for to scorne me?
What evir thow speke, or stroute, certes it woll
nat be.

Of me shalt thou have no wrong: pas forth a betir
pase;

In presence of our steward I woll tell my case.

Why, hooft, say yee this in ernest or in game?

Ye know my contray, and my modir, my lynnage,
and my name;

And thus ye have yseyd me X sith on this dey.

Ye, what though I seyde so? I know wele it is nay:

Ther lyth no more ther'to. But anothir tyme

Leve me so much the les when thow comest by me;

For all that evir I seyde was to bryng the in care,

And now I have my purpose I woll nothyng the
spare.

Thus jangling to ech othir, endenting every pase,
They entrid both into the hall ther the steward
was:

Evandir was his name, that sotill was, and so fell,
He must be well avised tofore hym shuld tell.

Anothir burgeyse wyth hym was, provost of the
That Hanybald was yclepid, but of sotilte [cete,

He passid many anothir, as ye shul here sone.

Berynus hooft gan to tell al thyng as it was doon

Fro gynnyng to the endyng, the wordis wyth the
dede,

And how they made their covenaut, and wager
how they leyde.

Now Beryn, quod the steward, thou hast yherd
this tale,

How and in what manere thou art ybrought in
bale;

Thow must do his byddyng, thow maist yn no
wyse flee,

Or drynk all the watir that salt is in the see:

Of these too thingis thow must chese the toon;

Now be well avysid, and sey they will anon.

To do yee both law I may no betir sey, [mey:

For thow shalt have no wrong, as ferforth as I

Chefe the self right as the list, and wit thou nothing me

Though thou chefe the wers and let the betir be.
Beryn stode astonyd, and no mervail was, [case;
And preyd the steward of a dey to answere to the
For I might lightlich in som word be ycaught,
And eke it is right herd to chefe of to that beth
right naught:

But and it wer your likyng to graunt me day tyl
to morowe

I wold answer through Godd's help. Then must
thow fynd a borowe,

Seyd the steward to Beryn, and yit it is of grace.
Now herith me, quod Hanybald, I preya litle spase:
He hath five shippis ondir the town, lyggyng on
the strong,

The wich been sufficient yfesid in our hond,
By me that am your provost to execute the law.
He must assent. Quod Evander, Let us onys here
his saw.

I graunt wele, quod Beryn, fith it may be noon
othir.

Then Hanybald arose hym up to sese both ship
and strothir, [wey,

And toke Beryn wyth hym: so talkyng on the
Beryn, quod Hanybald, I fuyr the be my fey
That thou art much ybound to me this ilk dey,
So is thy ple amendit by me; and eke of such a wey
I am avysid in thy cause, yf thou wolt do by rede,
That lite or nought by my counsaill ought the to
drede.

Yee know wele to morowe the dey of ple is set
That ye mut nedis answere, or els wythout lett
I must yeld them your shippis; I may in no wyse
blyn;

So have I undertake; but the merchaundise wythin
Is nat in my charge, ye knowe as wele as I,
To make ther'of no lyvery: wher'for now wysely
Worch, and do astir rede: let all your merchaun-
Be voidit of your shippis, and at hiest prise [dise
I wol have it every dele in covenaut; yf ye list
To se myne houe here onys tofore, I hold it for
the best,

Wher ye shull se of divers londis, houses to or thre
Full of marchaundise, that through this grete cete
Is no such in preve, I may right well avowe.

So when he have all feyn, and I have your also,
Let som bargin be ymade betwene us both too.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Beryn, your profir is feir
and good;

Feyn wold I do ther'astir yf I ondirstood
I myght wythout blame of breking of arest.

Yis, quod Hanybald, at my perell me trust.
So to Hanybald's houe togidir both they rode,
And fond, as Hanybald had yseyd, an houe houe,
long and brode,

Full of marchaundise as rich as it may be, [cete.
Passyng all the marchantis that dwellid in that
Thus when all was shewid they drenk and toke
their leve,

So se Beryn's shippis in hast they gon to meve.
And when that Hanybald was avysid what charge
the shippis bere [nere

He gan to speke, in his wyse ascaunce, he rought

Whethir he bargenynd or no, and seyde thus: Be-
ryn, frend,

Your marchaundise is feir and good, now let us
make an end

If yee list; I can no more; ye knowith how it is.
Com, of short let tuk them yn, methinkith I sey
nat mys,

And then your meyne and ye, and I, to my houe
shall we go,

And of the marchaundise I saw I wol not part
Chefe of the best of that ye find there [therfro;
Throughout the long houe, ther shal no man yeu
dere,

And therwith shall your shippis be filled all fyve:
I can sey no betir: yf ye list to dryve [men;
This bargin, to the end counsellith with your
I may nat long tary, I must nedis hen.

Beryn clepid his meyne counsell for to take;
But his first mocionne was of the woo and wrake,
And all the tribulacionne, for pleying at ches,
That he had, every dele his shame and his dures
Fro poynt to poynt, and how it stode, he told how
it was,

And then he axid counsaill what best was in the
case,

To chaunge with the burgeyse or els for to leve?
Eche man seyde his avise; but al that they did meve
It wer to long a tale for to tell it here:

But fynally, at end, they cordit al in fere
That the chaunge shuld stond, for as the case was
fall

They held it clerely for the best, and went forth
wythall

The next wey that they couth to Hanybald's plase.
But now shull ye here the most sotill fallace

That ever man wrought till othir, and highest
trechery,

Wich Hanybald had wrought hymself to this com-
pany.

Go in, quod Hanybald, and chefe, as thy cove-
naunt is.

In goon these Romeyns ech oon, and fond a mys;
For there was nothing that eny man might se
Saff the wall and tyle stonys, and tymbir made of
tre;

For Hanybald had do void it of all thing that was
there;

Whils he was at the shippis his men away it bere.
When Beryn saw the houe ler that ful was ther' to-
fore

Of riche marchaundise, alas! thought he, I am lore,
I am in this world; and wittith well his hert
Was nat al in likeing; and outward gan he stert
Like half a wode-man, and bete both his lippis,
And gan to hast fast towards his own shippis,
To kepe his good within wyth al that evir he
myght,

That it were nat dischargit, as hym thought verrey
right.

But al for naught was his hast, for 300 men,
As fast as they myght, they bare the good then,
Through ordonaunce of Hanybald, that pryvelich
tofore

Had purposid and ycast shuld be out ybore.

Beryn made a swyff pafe; ther myght no man hym let;

But Hanybald was ware inough, and with Beryn met:

All for nought: Beryn, thou knowest well and fyne
The shippis ben areistid, and the good is myne.

What woldest thou do ther? thou hast ther nowght to do;

I wol hold thy covenaut and thou myn also.

For yit saw I nevyr man that was of thy manere;
Sometyme thou wilt avaunte, and some tyme arere:

Now thou wilt, and now thou n'olt. Wher shul men the fynd?

Now sey oon, and sith anothir. So variant of mynd
Saw I nevyr tofore this dey man so variabill.

Sith I the fynd in such plyte, our bargaen for to stabill,

We woll tofore the steward, ther we both shull have right.

Nay, forsoth, quod Beryn. Yis treulich the tite,
Quod Hanybald, wher thou wolt or no; and so I the charge

As provost: know that yf me list my warant is so large,

And thou make any diffence, to bynym thy lyffe.

Take thyn hors; it gaynyth nat for to make stryffe.

So wyth sorowfull hert Beryn toke his hors,

And softly seyde to his men, Of me, quod he, no fors,

But wend to yeur shippis; I wol com when I may;

Ye seth well everichone I may no bet away.

Now here by this same Tale both fre and bond

Mow fele in their wittis; and eke ondirstonde

That *Litill vailith wysdom or els governaunce*

Ther Fortune evir wersieth, and eke Hap and Cbaunce,

Or what availleth bounte, bewte, or riches,

Frendship, or sotilte, or els bardines,

Gold, good, or catell, wyt, or by lynage,

Lord, or lordis service, or els high peerage?

What may all this avayle ther Fortune is a foo?

I wis right litill, or nevyr a dele: full oft it fallith so.

So, shortly to pas ovir, they fill to such an end

That Beryn shuld have day ageyn a morowe, and

so to wend

He set hym in ful purpose to his shippis ward:

But yit or he cam ther he fond the passage hard:

For how he was begiled throughout all the towne

Ther and ther a coupill gan to speke and to rounce;

And every man his purpose was to have parte

With falsnes, and with sotiltees; they coud noon

othir art,

Beryn rode forth in his wey, his page ran hym by,

Full fore adred in hert, and cast about his eye

Up and down, even long the strete, and for angir

swet;

And er he had riden a stone's cast, a blynd man

with him met,

And spak no word, but sefid hym fast by the lap,

And cried out and harrowe, and nere hym gan to

stap.

All for nought, quod this blynd; what! wenyft

thow for to skape?

Beryn had thought to prik forth, and thought it

had be jape,

The blynd man cast away his staff, and set on both his hondis;

Nay, thou shalt nat void, quod he, for all thy rich londis,

Tyll I of the have reson, lawe, and eke righte,
For trewlich I may wit it the that I have lost my

fight.

So for ought that Beryn coud othir speke or prey

He myght in no wyse pas; ful fore he gan to may,

And namelich for the pepill throng hym so about,

And eche man gan hym hond, and seyde, Without

doute

Ye must nedes stond, and rest, and bide the lawe,

Be ye nevyr so grete a man. So wold I wonder sawe,

Quod Beryn, yf yee had cause, but I know noon.

No, thou shalt know or thou go thou hast nat

al ydoon,

The blynd man seyde to Beryn. Tell on them,

quod he.

Here is no place to plete, the blynd man seyde age,

Also we have no juge here of autorite; [me.

But Evandir the steward shall deme both the and

When I my tale have told, and thou hast made

answere,

By that tyme men shull know how thou canst the

clere.

Now, soveren God! I thank the of this ilk dey;

Then I may preve the, be my lyve, of word and

eke of say

Fals, and eke untrew of covenaut thou hast

ymakid.

But litill is thy charge now though that I go nakid

That sometyme wer partinere, and rekenydst nevyr

yit;

But thou shalt bere or we depart ther' of a litill

For aftir comyn seyng, Evir atte ende [witt,

The trowith woll be preved how so men evir trend.

Thus they talkid to eche othir tyl they com into

the plase,

And wer yentrid in the hall ther the steward was.

The blynd man first gan to spake: Sir Steward,

for Godd's sake,

Herith me a litill while, for here I have ytake

He that hath do me wrong most of man of mold;

Be my help, as law woll, for hym that Judas sold.

Ye know wele that oft tyme I have to yew

ypleynid

How I was betrayed, and how I was ypenid,

And how a man some tyme and I our yen did

chaunge:

This is the same persone, though that he make it

straunge:

I toke them hym but for a tyme, and wenyd

trewly

Myne to have that yhad ageyn; and so both he and I

Were ensured uttirlich, and was our both will;

But for myne the bettir were wrongfullich and

ille

He hath them kept hidirto, wyth much sorowe and

pyne

To me, as ye wele knowith; because I have nat

myne

I may nat se with his; wherfor me is ful woo:

And evirmore yefeyd that ye myght nothing do

Without presence of the man that wrought me
this unquert :

Now sith he is tofore you now let hym nat astert ;
For many tyme and oft yee behete me

And he myght be take he shuld do me gre.

Sith ye of hym be sefid, howevir so ye tave,

Let hym nevir pas tyl I myn yen have.

Beryn, quod Evandir, herist thow nat they selve

How sotilly he pletith, and ware by eche halve ?

Beryn stode all muët, and no word he spake ;

And that was tho his grace ; ful sone he had be
take

And he had mysseyd onys, or els yseyd nay ;

For then he had been negatyff, and undo for ay :

For they were grete Sevilious, and usid probat law,

Where evirmore affirmatyf shuld preve his own
law :

Wherfore they were so querelouse of all myght
com in mynd,

Though it wer nevir in dede ydo ; such matere
they wold fynd

To benym a man his good through som manir gile ;

For the blynd man wist right wele he shuld have
lost his whyle

To make his pleynt on Beryn, and fuyd oppon his
good,

For shippis and eke marchaundise in a balaunce
stode ;

Therfor he made his chalenge his yen for to have,
Or els he shuld for them fyne yf he wold them
have,

And ligg for them in hostage tyil the synaunce cam :

This was all the sotilte of the blynd man.

Beryn stode all muët, and no word he spak.

Beryn, quod Evander, lest thow be ytake

In defaute of answere thou myghtist be condemp-
nyd,

Be right wele avysid, sith thou art examenyd.

Sir, seyde Beryn, it wold litill availe

To answere thus aloon without good counsaill ;

And also ferthermore, full litill I shuld be levid,

Whatevir I answered, thus stonyd and reprevid ;

And eke my wit doith faille ; and no wondir is ;

Wherfor I wold prey yew, of yewr gentilnes,

To graunt me dey tyll to morowe I might be
avyside

To answere forth, wyth othir that on me been
surmysid.

Deperdeux ! quod the steward, I graunt wel it be so.

Beryn toke his leve, and hopid to pas and go :

But as sone as Beryn was on his hors ryding

He met a woman and a child wyth sad chere
comyng,

That toke hym by the reyn, and held hym wondir
fast,

And seid, Sir, voidith nat yit, vailith nat to haste ;

Ye mow in no wyse scape ; ye must nedis abyde ;

For though ye list to know me nat, yit lien by
yewr side

I have ful many a tyme, I can nat tell yew lome.

Come tofore the steward, ther shall ye here yew
done

Of thing that I shall put on yew, and no word for

To leve me thus aloon it is yewr villany. [to ly :

Alas the day and tyme that evir I was yewr make
Much have I endured this too yere for yewr sake !
But now it shall be know who is in the wronge.

Beryn was all abashid, the pepill so thik thronge ;

About him in eche side : for ought that he couth
peyn

He must to the steward of fyne fors ageyn.

Now shall ye here how sotilich this woman gan
hir tale

In presence of the steward. With colour wan and
pale

Petously she gan to tell ; and seid, Sir, to yew

Full oft I have compleynyed in what manere and

My childlis fadir lest me, by myself aloon, [how

Without help or comforte, as grete as I myght
goon,

Wyth my son here and his, that shame it is to tell

The penury that I have yhad, that asors sell

I must nedis myne aray, wher me list or lothe,

Or els I must have beggit for to fynd us bothe ;

For there was nevir woman I leve, as I ges,

For lak of hede of lyvelode that lyvid in more
distres

Then I my self for oft tyme for lake of mete and
drink ;

And yit I trow no creature was seyner for to swinke

My lyff to sustene ; but as I mut nede

Above all othir thingis to his child take hede,

That wondir is and mervaile that I am alyve ;

For the fokyng of his right as it were a knyve

It ran into my hert ; so low I was of mode

That wel I woot in certen with percell of my
blode

His child I have ynorishid ; and that is by me seen ;

For my rede colour is turnid into grene :

And he that cause is of all here he stondith by me ;

To pay for the fosteryng methinkith it is tyme.

And sith he is my husbond, and hath on me no
rowith,

Let hym make amendis in saving of his trowith.

And yf he to any word onys can say nay

Lo ! here my gage, al redy to preve all that I sey.

The steward toke the gage, and spakin soft wyse ;

Of this perouse compleynt a mannys hert may
grise,

For I know in percell hir tale is nat all lese,

For many a time and oft this woman that here is

Hath ybe tofore me, and pleynid of hir gresse,

But without a party hir cause myght nat presse.

Now thou art here present that she plenyth on,

Make thy defence now, Beryn, as wele as thow

Beryn stode all muët, and no word he spak. [con.

Beryn, quod the steward, doist thow slepe or

Sey onys oon or othir : is it soth or nay. [wake ?

As she hath declarid ? tell on saunce delay.

Lord God ! quod Beryn, what shuld it me availe

Among so many wise, without right good coun-
saill,

To tell eny tale ? full litil as I ges :

Wherfor I wold prey you of your gentilnes

Graunt me day tyl to morowe to answer forth
with othir.

I graunt wele, quod the steward, but for fadir and
modir,

Thow getist no lenger tyme pleynty I the tell.
 Beryn toke his leve; his hert gan to swell
 For pure verrey anguysch; and no mervaill was;
 And who is that that n'old and he wer in such
 case?
 For al his trist and hope in eny worldich thing
 Was cleen from hym passid, save sorowe and my-
 flykyng;
 For body, good, and catell, and lyff, he set at
 nought,
 Sowas his hert ywoundit for angir and for thought.
 Beryn passyd softly, and to his hors gan go;
 And when he was without the gatis, he lokid to
 and fro,
 And coud noon othir countenance; but to his
 page he seyde,
 Preciouse God in heaven! how falsly am I betrayd!
 I trow no man alyve stont it wers plight,
 And all is for my synne, and for my yong delite;
 And pryncipally above all thyng for grete un-
 kyndnes
 That I did to my modir; for littil hede iwis
 I toke of hir, this know I wele, while she was alyve,
 Therfor al this turment is sent to me so ryve:
 For ther was never womon kynder to hir child
 Than she was; and ther ageyns never thing so
 Ne so evil thewid as I was my self, [wyld
 Therfor sorowe and happs environ me by eche
 helve,
 That I n'ote whider ryde nethir up ne down,
 Ther ben so many devillis dwellyng in this town,
 And so ful of gile and trechery also,
 That well I woot in certeyn they wolle me ondo.
 Now wold to God in hevyn what is my best rede!
 He toke his hors to his page, and thus to hym he
 sayde,
 Lede my hors to shipward, and take it to some
 And I wolle go on foot as pryvely as I can, [man,
 And assay yf I may in eny manere wise
 Escape unarrested more in such manner wise.
 The child toke his maistir's hors, and last hym there
 alon,
 Walking forth on foot, making oft his moon;
 And in his most musing, I can nat sey how lome,
 He wosshid nakid as he was bore he had be in
 Room,
 And no mervaill was it as the case stode,
 For he drad more to lese his eyen than he did his
 shippis or his good.
 Now ye that listith to dwell and here of aventure,
 How petously Dame Fortune, Beryn to inure,
 Turnyth hir whele about in the wers side;
 With hap of sorowe and anguysch she gynyth for
 to ride.
 Beryn passid toward the strand ther his shippis were,
 But yee now ondirstond his hert was full of fere;
 Yet nethirles he sat hym down softly on a stall,
 Semy'ryfe for sorowe, and lenyd to the wall
 For turment that he had, so wery he was and fen t
 And to God above thus he made his pleynt:
 Glorious God in heaven! that al thing maidst of
 nought,
 Why sufferist thou these cursid men to stroy me
 for nought,

And knowest well myn innocent, that I have no
 Of al that they pursu me or on me is pilt? [gilt
 And in the meen whils that Beryn thus gan pleynt
 A cachepoll stode besidis, his name was Machaign,
 And herd all the wordis, and knew also tofore
 How Beryn was turmented both with las and
 more:
 It was ysprong through the town; so was he full
 ensenid
 How he hym would engyne as he had propensid,
 And had araid hym sotillich as man of contem-
 placioun,
 In a mantell wyth the list, with fals dissimulacioun.
 And a staff in his honde, as thoughe he sebill were,
 And drow hym toward Beryn, and seide in this ma-
 nere:
 The high God of heaven, that al thing made of
 nought,
 Bles yew, gentil Sir, for many an hevy thought
 Me thinketh that ye have, and no wondir is:
 But, good Sir, dismay yew nat, but levith yewr
 hevines,
 And yf ye list to tell me somewhat of yeur distres
 I hope to God Almighty in party it redres [oon,
 Through my pore counsaill, and so I have many
 For I have pete on yew be God and by Seint Jon:
 And eke pryvy hevines doith eche man apeir
 Sodenly or he be ware, and fall in dispeir;
 And who be in that plague that man is incurabill.
 For consequent comyth aftir sekenes abominabill;
 And therfor, Sir, diskeverith yewe, and be no-
 thing adrad.
 Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Beryn, ye seme trew and
 sad;
 But o thing lyith in myn hert, I n'ote to whom to
 trust,
 For tho that dynded me to dey ordeyned me to
 arest,
 A Sir! be yew that man? of yew I have yherd.
 Gentill Sir, doutith nat, ne be nothing aferd
 Of me, for I shall counsell yew as well as I can,
 For trewlich in the cete dwellith many a fals man,
 And usyn litil els but falshode, wrong, and wyle,
 And how they might straungers with trechery
 begile:
 But ye shul do right wisely somewhat be my
 counsaill.
 Speke with the steward; that may you most
 avail;
 For ther is a comyn byword, yf ye it herd havith,
Wele setith be his peny that the pound savith.
 The steward is a covetouse man, that long hath
 disirid
 A knyff I have in keeping, wherwith his hert I
 wirid;
 Shall be yew to help, in covenante that yee
 Shall give me five mark yeur tren frend to be.
 The knyff is feir, I tell yew; yet never tofore this
 day
 Myght the steward have it for aught he coud prey,
 The wich ye shuld gyve hym, the betir for to
 speide,
 And behothe hym 20*l.* to help yew in yowr
 nede;

And yf he grauntith, trustith wele ye stond in
good plight;

For betir is then lese all the las the more quyt.

And I woll go wyth yew straight to his plase,

And knele down and speke first to amend yewr
case,

And say yee be my cosin; the betir ye shul spede;

And when that I have all ytold the knyff to hym
yee bede.

Beryn thankid hym hertlich, and on hym gan trust,

With hond in hond enfurid, and all for the best;

Beryn thought noon othir, al that it othir was.

Machaign hym comfortid, talkyng of their case,

And passid forth styly toward the steward blyve

Beryn and Machaign; but Beryn bare the knyff,

And trust much in his felawe to have som help:

But or they departed werethey had no cause to yelp
Of no manir comfort, as ye shull here anon;

For as sone as Machaigne tofore the steward com
He fill plat to the erth: a grevous plynt and an
huge

He made; and seyde, Sir Steward, now be a trew
juge

Ageyns this fals treytour that stondith me besyde;
Let take of hym good hede, els he woll nat abide.

Now mercy gode Steward, for yee have herd me
yore

For my fadir Melan pleyn to you ful fore,

That with seven dromedarys, as I have told yew
lome,

With marchandise chargit went toward Rome,

And it is seven yere ago and a litill more

Of hym or of his goodis that I herd les or more;

And yet I have enquired as by ely as I couthe.

And met nevir man yit that me coud tell with
mowth

Any tyding of hym onto this fame day;

But now I know too much, alas! I may wel sey.

When Beryn herd these wordis he kist down his
hede;

Allas! he thought in hert, alas! what is my rede?

And would fayn have voidit and outward gan to
stapp,

But Machaigne arofe and sefid by the lapp:

Nay, thou shalt not void, he seid; my tale is nat
ydo;

For be trowith of my body yf thou scapidist so

I shuld nevir have mery whils I wer on lyve,

And set hond fast on Beryn's othir seleve,

And seid, Good Sir Steward, my tale to the end

I prey ye wold here, for wend how men wend

There may no man hele murdir, but it will out at
last:

The fame knyff my fadir bere when he of contre
Let ferch woe this felon, ther ye shul hym find;
I know the knyff wele inough, it is nat out of my
mynd:

The cotelere dwellith in this toun that made the
fame knyff,

And for to preve the trowith he shall be here as
blyve.

Beryn swat for angir, his hert was full of fere;

He toke the knyff to the steward or he ferchid
were.

The steward onto Beryn, My frend, lo! quod he,
And thou think the well about this is foule plee:

I can know noon othir but thou must or thou go

Yeld the body of Melan and his good also.

Now be well avysid ageyne to morowe day,

Then shalt thou have thy jugement; ther is no
more to fay.

When Beryn fro the steward thus departid was,

And was without the gate, he lokid oppon the plase,

And cursid it wondir bitterly in a fervent ire,

And wisshid many tymes it had been a fire;

For I trowe that man of lyve was never wors be-
trayid

Then I am; and therewithall my hert is cleen dis-
mayid,

For here I have no frendship, but am all counselles,

And they ben falssher then Judas, and eke mer-
cycles.

A, Lord God in hevyn! that my hert is woo;

And yit furyly I mervel nat though that it be so,

For yit in all my lyve sithe I ought undirstond

Had I nevir wyl for to lern good:

Foly I hauntid it ever, ther myght no man me let,
And now he hath ypaid me, he is cleen out of my

dett;

For whils I had tyme, wisdom I myght have
lernyd,

But I drow me to folly, and wold nat be governed,

But had al myne own wyll, and of no man aferd,

For I was nevir chastid; but now myne own yerd

Betith me to fore; the strokis been too hard;

For these devillis of this town takith but littil
reward

To sclee my body to have my good. The day is
set to morowe;

Now wold to God I were in grave, for it wer end
of sorowe.

I was iwis to much a sole; for hate I had to Rame

I wold forsake myn heritage, ther'for sorowe and
shame

Is oppon me fall, and right wele deservid,

For I toke none maner hede when my modir
stervid,

And disobeyid my fadir, and set hym at naught
also;

What wondir is it than though that I have woo?

Fortune and eke Wisdom have werrid with me
evir,

And I with them in all my lyf, for Fortune was
me levir.

Then eny wit or governaunce, for them too I did
hate;

And though I wold be at oon now it is too late.

O myghtfull God in heven! wher was evir man

That wrought hymself more folly than I my self
did than?

A cursid be the tyme that I out of Rome went!

That was my fadir's right heir of lyvelode and of
rent,

And al the rial lordship that he hath in the town.

Had I had wit and grace, and hold me low and
boun,

It wer my kynd now among my baronage

To hawk and to hunt, and eke to pley and rage

With feir freshe ladies, and daunce when me list;
 But now it is to late to speke of Had I wist.
 But I fare like the man that for to swele his flyes
 He stert into the bern, and aftir stre he hies,
 And goith about the wallis with a brennyng wafe,
 Tyll it was at last that the leem and blase
 Entrid into the chynys where the wheate was,
 And kissid so the evese that brent was all the plase;
 But first in the begynnyng, tyll feer smote in the
 rastris,
 He toke no manere kepe, and thought of nothing
 aftir
 What perell there myght fall: ne more did I
 ywis,
 That wold forsake myn honour for the unkynd-
 nes
 Of Rame, that was my stepmodir; for yf I shall
 nat ly
 They beth soure; wherfore the more wisely
 I shuld have wrought, had I had wit, and suffrid
 for a tyme,
 And aftir com to purpos wel inowghe of myne;
 But evil avengit he is deol that for a litil mode
 And angir to his neybour sellith away his good,
 And goith hymself a beggyng: aftir in breff
 tyme
 He mut be countid a lewd man in all manere
 ryme.
 So have I wrought and wers, for I dout of my
 lyve,
 How that it shal stond, for plukking of my scleve
 The knyff that was me take, as ye have herd to-
 fore;
 And yit it grevith mine hert also much more
 Of myn own pepill, that no disese aservid.
 I wote wele aftir pleding ryght nought wold be
 reservyd
 To sustene their lyvis: I trow ryght nought or lite,
 And peraventur lightly stond in wors plight.
 Of me it is no fors though I be thus arayed,
 But it is dole and pete that they shull be betrayid
 That hath nought aservid but for my gilt aloon.
 And when that Beryn in this wise had ymade his
 mone
 A crepill he saw comyng with grete spede and
 haste
 Oppon a stilt ondir his kne bound wondir fast,
 And a crouch undir his armys, with hondis al for-
 skramyd;
 Alas! quod this Beryn, shall I be more examenyd?
 And gan to turn aside onto the see stronde,
 And the crippill aftir, and wan oppon hym londe.
 Tho began Beryn to drede inwardlich fore,
 And thought thus in his hert, shall I be comberid
 more?
 And it wer Godd'is wyll my sorowe for to cese
 Methinkith I have inowghe. The cripill began
 to preche,
 And had yraught nere hond Beryn by the scleve:
 Beryn turnyd as an hare, and gan to ren blyve;
 But the cripill knew betir the pathis smale and
 grete
 Then Beryn, so to fore hym he was, and gan hym
 mete.

When Beryn saw it vaylid naught to renne ne to
 lepe,
 What for dole and anguyssh no word myght he
 speke,
 But stode still amafid, and starid fast about:
 The crepill began to speke; Sir, to drede or to
 dout
 Of me wold ye right light, and ye knew myne
 hert,
 So where ye like well or ill fro me shall ye nat
 part
 Tyl I have tretid with yew, and ye with me also,
 Of all yeur soden happis, yeur myscheff, and yeur
 wo;
 For by the tyme that I have knowlech of yeur
 case,
 Yeur rennyng, and yeur trotting into an esy pas,
 I shall turn or that we twyn, so ye aftir my stole
 Woll do, and as I rede yew; for yee wer a sole
 When ye cam first alonde, ye had met with me,
 For I wold have ensensid yew all the iniquite
 Of thes fals marchauntes that dwellen in this
 town,
 And outid all your chaffare without gruch or
 groun;
 For had ye dwellid within yeur shippis, and nat
 go them among,
 Then had ye been undaungerid, and quyt of all
 their wrong
 On yew that been surmysid through fals sugges-
 tioune.
 Beryn gan to figh; unneth he might soune
 Saf o word or tweyn, and Mercy was the first,
 Preying with all his hert that he myght have his
 rest,
 And be no more enpledit, but pas fro hym quyte.
 Good Sir, quod Beryn, doith me no more dis-
 pite,
 And suffir me to pas, and have on me routhe,
 And I suyrr yew feithfully, have here my trowith,
 To morowe when I have pledit, and eny thing
 be last
 Of ship or marchaundise, afore the ship or bast,
 I woll shew yew all ifere, and opyn every cheff,
 And put it in yewr grace to do what ye lest.
 And in the meen while that Beryn gan to clapp
 The crypill nyghid hym nere and nere, and hent
 hym by the lap;
 And as sone as Beryn knew that he was in honde
 He unlacyd his mantell for drede of some com-
 mand,
 And pryvelich ovir his shuldris let hym down
 glide,
 And had levir lese his mantell then abide.
 The crepill all perceyvid, and hent hym by the
 scleve
 Of his nethir surcote. Alas! now mut I strive,
 Thought Beryn by himself, now I am yhent,
 There helpith naught save strengith; therewith
 the scleve to rent
 Beryn gan; to scape he sparid for no cost.
 Alas! thought this cripill, this man wold be lost,
 And be ondo for evir, but he counsell have;
 Iwis thoughe he be lewde my contremen to save:

Yit will I my besines do and peyn that I may,
Sith he is of Room, for that is my contray.
This cripill was an hundrit yere full of age,
With a long thik berd, and a trew visage
He had; and manly and july was he,
And Geffrey was his name yknow in that contre.
Alas! thought this Geffrey, this man hath grete
drede

Of me, that by my power wold help hym in his
nede :

I wis though he be nyce, untaught and unwise,
I woll nat for his foly leve myne enpryse;
And lept aftir Beryn, and that in right good
spede.

Beryn was so fore agast he toke no maner hede
To look onys bakward tyll he to the watir cam,
Then lokid he behynd and saw Sir Clekam
Commaund wondir fast with staff and with his stilt.
Allas! thought Beryn, I now am yspilt,

For I may no ferthir without I wold me droune,
I n'ote wich were the betir, or go ageyn to toun.
Geffrey was so nigh com that Beryn myght nat fle :
Good Sir, quod this Geffrey, why do yee void me ?
For by heven quene, that bare Crist in hir barme,
But right as to my self I woll yew no more harme.
Sittith down here by me oppon this see stronde,
And yf ye drede any thing clepe yewr men to
londe,

And let them be here with us all our speche tyme,
For I woll nat feyn oon word, as makers doon to
ryme,

But counsell yew as prudently as God woll send
me grace :

Take comfort to yew, and herk a litill spase.
And when that Beryn had yherd his tale to the
end,

And how goodly as Geffrey spak, as he were his
frende,

None obstant his drede, yet part of sapience
Stremyd into his hert for his eloquence,
And seyd; God me counsaill for his high mercy!
For I have herd this same dey men as sotilly
Speke, and of yeur semblant, and in such manere,
And byhete me frendship outward by their chere,
But inward it was contrary their intellectuone,
Wherfor the blame is les, though I suspicioune
Have of yewr wordis, lest othir be yewr entent,
For I n'ote whom to trust by God omnipotent;
Yit nethirles yf your will is to com into the ship
with me

I woll somwhat do by yeur rede how so it evir
be.

Then, quod Geffrey, if it be so that I in yewr
powere

Entir into your shippis, and yew help in yewr my-
stere,

That ye ageyn yewr adversaryes shall have the be-
tir syde,

And gyve yow such counsell to bate down their
pride,

And that yee wyne in every pleynt, al so much
or more

As they purpose to have of yew; yf they be down
ybore,

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And ye have amendis for their inquite,
And I yew bring to this end, what shall my guer-
don be?

In verrey soth, quod Beryn, yf I yew may trust
I woll quyte yew trewly, I make yew beheft.
In feith then, quod Geffrey, I woll with yew
wende.

What is yewr name, seid Beryn, though my
frende?

Geffrey, he seid; but in these marchis I was nat
bore,

But I have dwellid in this cete yeeris heretofore
Ful many, and turmented wers then wer yee,
And endurid for my trowith much adversite,
For I wold in no wise suffir their falsshedes,
For in all the world so corrupt of their dedis
Been noon men alyve, I myght ryght well avow.
For they set all their wittis in wrong all that they
mowe;

Wherfor full many a tyme the grettist of them
and I

Have stonden in altercacioune for their trechery;
For I had in valew in trew marchaundise
A M. l. all have they take in such maner wise :
So ferforth to save my blode no longer myght I
dryve dure;

For drede of wors thus thought I myself to disfi-
gure,

And have among them 12 yere go right in this
plight,

And evir have had in memory how I myght them
quyte;

And so I hope now, as sotill as they be,
With my wit engine them and help yew and
me.

My lymes been both hole and sound, me nedith
stilt ne crouch.

He cast asyde them both, and lepe oppon an huche
And adown ageynes, and walkid to and fro,
Up and down, within the ship, and shewid his
hondis tho,

Stretching forth his fingris in sight and all about
Without knot or knor, or eny sign of goute,
And dyght them efft ageyns right disfetirly,
Som to ride ech othir, and som aweward wry.

Geffrey was right myghty, and wele his age did
bere,

For natur was more substantiall when tho dayis
wer

Then now in our tyme; for all thing doith waste
Saff vile and cursid lyving, that growith all to faste.
What shuld I tell more? But Geffrey sat hym
down,

And Beryn hym besydis; the Romeyns gan to
rown,

And mervelled much in Geffrey of his disgisenes,
And Beryn had anothir thought, and spak of his
distres.

Now Geffrey, seid this Beryn, and I durst trust in
yewe

That and ye knewe eny man that is alyve anowe
That had of discrecioune so much influence
To make my party good to morowe in my de-
fence,

R

And delivir me of sorowe, as ye behote have,
I wold become his legeman, as God my soule save.
That wer to much, quod Gefferey; that wold I
yew relese;

But I desire of othir thing to have yewr promes,
That and I bryng yewr enmyes into such a
traunce

To make for yewr wrong is to you right high fe-
naunce,

And so declare for you that with you pas such dome,
That yee oppon your feith bryng me at Rome,
Yf God wol send yew wedir and grace to repase.

Quod Beryn, But I grant yew I wer lewder then
an asse,

But or I fullich trust yew holdith me excusid;

I wold go counsell with my men lest they it re-
fusid.

Beryn drew asyde, and spak with his meyne,
And expressid every word in what plight and
degre

That he stode from poynt to poynt, and of his
fals arestis:

His meyne were astonyd, and starid forth as bestis.

Spekith som word, quod Beryn, sith I am betrayd;
Yee have yherd what Geffrey to me hath sayd.

These Romeyns stode alle still; o word ne coud
they meve;

And eke it passid their wittis. Then Beryn gan
releve,

And to Geffrey est ageyn, and mercy hym be-
fought.

Help me, Sir, quod Beryn, for his love that us
bought

Dying on the rood, and wept full tendirly;

For but ye help, quod Beryn, ther is no remedy,

For comfort nethir counsaill of my men have I
noon:

Help me, as God yew help, and els I am undoon.

When Geffrey saw this Beryn so distract and wept,
Pite into eche veyn of his hert crept.

Allas! quod Geffrey, I might nat do a more syn-
ful dede,

I leve by my trowith, then fayl yew in this nede;

Faill me God in heven yf that I yew fail!

That I shall do my besines, my peyn, and my tra-
vaile,

To help yew be my power; I may no ferther goo.

Yis, yee behete me more, seid Beryn, tho,

That yee wold help me at all that I shuld stond
Beryn gan to wepe and make wers chere. [cler.

Stillith yew, quod Geffrey, for how so evir ye

More than my power ye ought nat desire, [tire

For thorough the grace of God ye shul be helpwele;

I have ther'of no dout; but trewlich I you tele

That ye wold hold me covenante and I wold yew
also,

To bryng me at Rome when it is all ydo.

In signe of trowith of both sidis of our acordment

Eche of us kys othir of our comyn assent;

And all was do. And astirward Beryn commaun-
dit wyne;

They dronk, and then Geffrey seid; Sir Beryne,

Yee mut declare yeur maters to myne intelligence,

That I may the bet perseyve all inconvenience,

Dout, pro, contra, and ambiguite,
Thorough your declaratioun, and enformyd be;
And with the help of our Soveren Lord celestiale
They shall be behynd, and we shull have the ball,
For now the time approchith for their cursidnes
To be somewhat rewardit; and cause of yewr
distres

Hath my hert ysetlid and fixid them a nye,
As trowith wold and reson, for their trechery:
For many a man tofore this day they have do out
of daw,

Distroid and turmentid thorough their fals law;
For they think litill ellis, and all their wyttis fyve,
Save to have a mann'ys good and to benym his
lyve;

And hath a cursid custom, all ageyns reson,
That what man they empeche they have noon
enchefon

Thoughe it be as false a thing as God hymself is
trewe:

And it touche a straunger that is com of newe
Atte first mocionne that he begynneth to meve
Ther stondith up an hundrit hym to repreve.

The lawes of the cete stont in probacy;

They usen noon enquestis the wrongis for to try:

And yf thow haddist eny wrong, and woldist
pleyn the,

And were as trewe a cause as eny myght be,

Thow shuldist nat find o man to bere the witnes,

Though every man in the town knew it more or
les;

So burith they togidir, and holdith with ethe
othir,

That as to counterplede them, though ye wer my
brothir,

I wold gyve yew no counsaill, ne their empeche-
ment,

In no word to deny, for that wer combirment;

For then wer they in the affirmatyf, and wold
preve anoon,

And to yew that wer negatyff the law wold graunt
anoon:

So for to plede ageyn them it wold litill avail,

And yit to every mann'ys wit it ought be grete
mervaille,

For their lawes been so streyt, and peynous ordi-
naunce

Is stallid for their falsshede; for this is their sy-
naunce,

To lese their lyff for lesing, and I hope it may
knowe,

That lord is riall of the town, and holdith them
so lowe,

Wherfor they have a custom a shrewid for the
nonys,

Yf eny of them sey a thing they cry all at onys,

And ferm it for a soth, and it bere any charge;

Thus of the danger of I hope they kepe them ever
at large;

And therfor wisdom weer, whofo might eschewe,

Nevir to dele with them; for wer it wrong or
trewe

It shuld litill avail ageyns their falsshedes,

For they been acursid, and so been their dedes;

Wherefore we must, with all our wit sensibill,
Such answers us purvey that they been insolibill,
To morowe at our aparaunce, and shall be respon-
saill,

For of wele and ellis it is thy day fynall.

Now Soveren Lord celestiale! with many sorow-
ful sighs,

Seyd Beryn to Geffrey, ymmemorat of lyes,
Graunt me grace to morowe, so that God be
plefid

Make so myne answere, and I somewhat y-esid
By the that art my counsaill, for othir help is noon.
Reherce me then, quod Geffrey, the causis of thy
foon

Fro poynt to poynt, al in fere, on the is surmysid,
Wherthorough I myght to morowe the betir be
avifid.

Now in soth, quod Beryn, thoughe I shuld dy
I cannat tell the tenyth part of their trechery,
What for sorowe and angir that they to me have
wrought;

So stond I clene desperat but ye con help ought.
Deperdeux! seid Geffrey, and I the woll not fail,
Sith I have enfurid the to be of thy counsaill;
And so much the more that thou art nat wise,
And canst nat me enform of no maner avise;
Here ther'fore a while, and tend wel to my lore.
The lord that dwellith in this town, whose name
I told tofore,

Isope, efft reherfid, is so inly wise
That no man alyve can his pas devise,
And is so grow in yeris that lx year ago
He sawe nat for age; and yit it stondith so
That thorough his wit, and wisdom, and his go-
vernaunce,

Who makith a fray ef, or stryvith aught, or mel
to much or prauce,
Within the same cete, that he n'ys take anoon,
And hath his pennaunce forthwith, for pardon
usith he noon:

For ther n'ys pore ne riche, ne what state he be,
That he ny's undirfote for his iniquite;
And it be previd on hym ther shall no gold hym
quyte,

Right as the forfete axith moch or lite,
For geyns his commaundment is noon so hardy
quek,

So hard setith he his fote in every mann's nek;
For undir sky and sterris this day is noon alyve
That coud amend hym in o poynt, al thing to di-
stryve.

The seven Sages of Rome, though al ageyn hym
were,

The shuld be insufficient to make his answere,
For he can all langagis, Greek, Hebrew, and
Latyne,

Caldey, Frensch, and Lombard, ye know well fyne,
And al maner that men in bokis write;

In poyse and philosophie also he can endite:

Cevile and canoune, and al maner lawis,
Seneca and Sydrak, and Salamon'ys sawys,

And the seven sciences, and eke lawe of armys,

Experimentis and pomprey, and all maner char-
mys,

As ye shul here aftir er that I depart,
Of his imagiacionis and of his sotill art;
For he is of age 300 yere and more,
Wherfor of all sciences he hath the more lore.

In Denmark he was gotten and ybore also,
And in Grece ynorished tyl he coud spek and go;
Ther was he put to scole, and lernyd wondir fast,
For such was his grace that all othir he past:
But first in his begynnyng litil good he had,
But lernyd evir passyngly, and was wise and sad:
Of stature and of feture ther was noon hym like
Thorough the lond of Grece though men wold
hym seke.

A kyng ther was in tho yeris that had noon heir
male

Saff a doughter, that he lovid as his own saa;
Isope was his servaunt, and did hym such ple-
saunce

That he made hym his heir, and did hym so
avaunce

To wed his doughter, and aftir hym to bere
crowne,

Thorough prowes and his port so low he was and
boun;

So as Fortune wold, that was Isope's frend,
This worthy king that same yere made his carnel
end.

That twenty-seven yere is passid that Isope thus
hath reigned,

And yit was ther never for wrong on hym com-
pleyned

For no jugement that he gaff; yit som ageyn hym
wylid

A grete part of his pepil, and wold have hym
exilid;

But his grete wisdom, and his manfulnes,
His governaunce, with his bounte and his right-
fulnes,

Hath evir yit preserved hym unto this ilk day,
And woll whyle that he lyvith for aught that men
can say:

For who hath eny quarrel or cause for to wonde
Within this same cete, quicklich woll he fond,
And it be sotill matir, to Isope for to fare,
For gynnyng to the end his quarrell to declare;
And eve afore, as custom is, peple shall be on the
morowe;

But whoso ly he scapith nat wythout shame or so-
rowe.

Beryn, thou must go thidir, wher thyn empeche-
ment

Shall be ymevid, and therfor pas nat thens
Tyll thou have herd them alle, and report them
wele

To me, that am thy counsell, and repeir snele.
But so rial mancione as Isope dwellith in

Ther is noon in the world, ne so queynt of gyn,
Wherefore be well avifid how I enform the

Of the wondir wayis and of the pryvyte
That been wythyn his paleyse, that thou must pas
by:

And when thow approachist, and art the castell
nygh,

Blench fro the brode gate, and enter thow nat
 there,
 For ther been men to keep it; yit have thow no
 fere;
 Pas down on the right hond by the castell walle
 Tyll thow fynd a window, and what so the by-
 fall
 Entir ther yf thow may, and be nothyng agast,
 But walk forth in that entre: then shalt thow see
 in haste
 A portcolyse the tofore; pas in boldly
 Tyll thow com to an hall the feyrift undir sky:
 The wallis been of marbill, yjoynid and yclosid,
 And the pilours of crystall, grete and wele pro-
 posid:
 The keveryng of bove is of felondyn,
 And the pament beneth of gold and asure fyne.
 But whoso passith thorough this hall hath nede to
 ren blyve,
 Or els he myght be disware of his own lyve,
 For ther wythin liith a stoon that is so hote of
 kynd
 That what thing com for by anoon it woll atend,
 As bryght as eny kandell leem, and consume
 anoon;
 And so wold the hall also n'er coldnes of a stoon
 That is yclepid Dionyse, that set is hym ageyn;
 So and thow lepe lightly thou shalt have no peyn,
 For ethir ston in kynd proportioned they be,
 Of hete and eke of coldnes of oon equalite.
 Thow must pas thorough the hall, but tary nat I
 rede,
 For thou shalt fynd a dur up right afore thyn
 hede:
 When thow'art entrid ther, and the dore apast,
 Whatso thow se ligg or stond be thow nat agast;
 And yf thow drede eny thing do no more saff
 blowe,
 But yit I rede the beware that it be somewhat
 lowe:
 Ther been to libardis loos and untyed,
 If that thy blowing of that othir in eny thing be
 spied
 Anoon he rakith on the to sese the by thy pate,
 For ther n'ys thing in erth that he so much doth
 hate,
 As breth of mann'ys mowith; wherfore refreyn
 thee,
 And blow but fair and soft, and when that nede be.
 When thow art passid this hall anoon then shalt
 thow com
 Into the sayrest garden that is in Christendom,
 The wich thorough his clergy is made of such
 devise
 That a man shall ween he is in Paradise,
 At his first comyng in, for melody and song,
 And othir glorious thinges and delectabill among,
 The wich Tholomeus, that somtyme Paynym was,
 That of astronomy knew ev'ry poynt and case,
 Did it so devise, thorough his high conyng,
 That ther n'ys best in erth ne bird that doith sing
 That he n'ys there in figur in gold and sylvir fyne,
 And mow, as they wer quyke, knawe the sotill
 engyne.

In mydward of this gardyn stant a feir tre
 Of al maner levis that undir sky be,
 Yforgit and yfourmit eche in his degre
 Of sylvir and of gold fyne that lusty been to see.
 This gardeyn is evir grene, and full of May
 flowris,
 Of rede, white, and blew, and othir fresh co-
 louris,
 The wich been so redolent, and sentyn so about,
 That he must be right lewde therin shuld route.
 These monstrefull thingis I devise to the
 Because thow shuldist nat of them abasshid be.
 When that thow comyst there, so thow be strong
 in thought,
 And do be my counsell, drede the right nought,
 For ther beth eight tregetours that this gardyn
 kepith,
 Four of them doith waak whils the four slepith,
 The wich been so perfite of nygramance,
 And of the art of apparene and of tragetrie,
 That they make semen as to a mann'ys fight
 Abominabill wormys, that fore ought be afright
 The hertiest man on erth, but he warnyd were
 Of the grisly sightis that he shuld see there.
 Among all othir there is a lyon white
 That and he be a straungir he rampith for to bite,
 And hath tofore this tyme 500 men and mo
 Devourid and yete, that thereforth have ygo:
 Yit shalt thow pas suyrlly so thow do as I tell.
 The tre I told tofore, that round as eny bell
 Berith bow and braunche, traylyng to the ground,
 And thow touch oon of them thow art saff and
 found;
 The tre hath such vertu there shall nothing the
 dere:
 Loke that be the first when thow comyst there.
 Then shalt thow se an entre by the ferther side;
 Thoughe it be streyte tofore, inner large and wyde
 It growith more and more, and as a dentour
 wryith;
 Yit woll that wey the bryng there that I hope
 liith,
 Into the feyrift chambir that evir man saw with
 eye.
 When thow art there wythyn govern the wisely,
 For there shalt thow here al thyn empechement
 Opynly declarid in Isop's present.
 Report them wele and kepe them in thy mynd,
 And astir thy relacioun we shall so turn and
 wend,
 Thorough help of God above, such help for to
 make
 That they shall be acombrit, and we right well to
 scape.
 Now in soth, quod Beryn, a mann'ys hert may
 grise
 Of such wondir weyis, for al my marchandise
 I had levir lese them oppon me take
 Such a wey to pas. Then, Sir, for your sake
 I woll my self, quod Gessrey: fith I am ensuryd
 To help the with my power thow shalt me amy-
 rid
 As ferforth as I may; that I woll do my peyn
 To bryng yow plesant tyding, and retourn ageyn

Yit or the cok crow; and ther'for let me se
 Whils I am out how mery ye can be.
 Geffrey toke his leve; but who was fory tho
 But Beryn and his company? for when he was go
 Thei had no maner joy, but dout and hevynes,
 For of his repeyryng thei had no sikernes;
 So every man to othir made his compleynt,
 And wishid that of felony they had been atteynt,
 And so them thought betir to end hevynes
 Then every day to lak brede atte first mes;
 For when our good is go what shall fal of us?
 Evir to be their thrallis, and peraventure wers,
 To lese our lyf astir yf we displese them ought.
 Astir Geffrey went this was all their thought
 Throughout the nyght tyl cokkis gan to sing;
 But then encrefid anguisse; their hondis gan to
 wryng,
 And cursid wynd and watir that them brought
 ther,
 And wishid many tymes that he had been in
 bere,
 And were apassid and entrid into dispeyr,
 In as much as Geffrey did nat repeer:
 Eche man seyde to othir it myght nat be ynayid
 But Geffrey had uttirlich falsly them betrayid
 Thorougout all the long nyght.

.....
 Tho went they to counsell a litill tofore the day,
 And were all acordit for to sayl away;
 And so them thought betir, and leve their good
 ther,
 Then abyde theroppon, and have more fere.
 They made their takelyng redy, and wend the
 sail acros,
 For to save their lyvis, and set nat of their los;
 So fore they wer adred to be in servitude,
 And hopid God above wold send them som refute
 By som othir costis ther wynd them wold bryng:
 And therewithall cam Geffrey on his stilt lepeing,
 And cried wondir fast by the watir syde.
 When Beryn herd Geffrey he bid his men abyde,
 And to launch out a bote and bryng Geffrey in,
 For he may more avayl me now then al my kyn,
 And he be trew and trusty, as myn hope is;
 But yit ther'of had Beryn no full sikernes.
 These Romeyns set in Geffrey with an hevy
 chere,
 For they had levir faill forth then put them in
 weer
 Both lyve and goodis: and evill suspicioune
 They had of this Geffrey; wherfore they gon
 rounne,
 Talkyng to eche othir, This man woll us betray.
 Geffrey wist well inowghe he was nat to their
 pay,
 And for verry angir he threw into the see
 Both stilt and eke his crouch, that made wer of
 tre,
 And gan them to comfort, and seid in this ma-
 nere:
Benedicite! Beryn, why make ye such chere?

For and yee wex hevy what shall yewr men do
 But take ensampill of yew? and have no cause to;
 For yit or it be eve yewr adversaryes all
 I shall make them spurn and have a fore fall,
 And yee go quyte, and all yewr good, and have
 of theirs too,
 And they to be right feign for to scape so
 Wythout more daungir, and yewr wyl be;
 For of the lawys her such is the equitye
 That *Who pursuethir and his pleynt be wrong*
He shall make amendis be he newir so strong;
 Right as shuld the t'odir yf he condempned were
 Right so shall the pleyntiff right as I yew lere:
 And that shall preve by them, have ye no doute,
 Yet or it be eve right low to yew to loute,
 And submit them to yew, and put them in yewr
 grace
 By that tyme I have ymade all my wanlase;
 And in hope to spede wel let shape us for to dyne,
 Geffrey axid watir, and sith brede and wyne,
 And seit, It is holsom to breke our fast betyme,
 For the steward woll to the court at hour of pryme.
 The sonne gan to shyne and shope a feir dey;
 But for aught that Geffrey coud do or sey
 These Romeyns spekyn fast all the dyner while,
 That Geffrey with his sotill wordis wold them
 begile.
 So when they had ydyned they ryfen up echoone,
 And drew them to counsell what was best to doon;
 Som seyde the best rede that we do may,
 To throw Geffrey ovir the bord, and seyll forth
 our way:
 But for drede of Beryn som wold nat so,
 Yit the more party assentid wele therto.
 Geffrey and Beryn, and worthy Romeyns tweyn,
 Stood a part within the ship, so Geffrey gan to
 seyn,
 Beryn, beth avisid; your men beth in distaunce:
 Sith ye been her soveren put them in governance;
 For methinkith they boldith contrary opynyounne,
 And *Grace saylith comynlich wber is divisioune.*
 In the meen whyle that they gan thus to slyve
 Hanybald was up, and ycom as blyve
 To the brigg of the town ther the shippis rood,
 And herd much noyse; but litil while he bood,
 For when he saw the saylis stond all acros,
 Alas! quod this Hanybald, here growith a smert
 los
 To me that am provost, and have in charge and
 heft
 All these fyve shippis undir myn areft:
 And ran into the town, and made an hidouse cry,
 And chargit all the cetezins to armys for to hy
 From o strete tyl anothir, and rerid up al the town,
 And made the trompis blowe up and the bellis
 soun,
 And sey that the Romeyns wer in poynt to pas,
 Tyl ther wer a thousand, rathir mo then les,
 Men y-armyd cleen, walkyng to the stronde
 When Beryn them aspied: Now, Geffrey, in thy
 honde
 Stont lyf and goodis; doth with us what the list
 For all our hope is on the, comfort, help, and trust;
 R. iij

For we must bide aventure, such as God wol
 shape,
 For now I am in certen we mow in no wise scape.
 Have no doubt, quod Geffrey, beth mery; let me
 aloon;
 Getith a peir sisours, sherith my berd anoon,
 And astirwerd lete top my hede hastylich and
 blyve.
 Som went to with sesours, som wyth a knyffe,
 So what for sorowe and hast, and for lewd tole,
 Ther was no man alyve bet like to a sole
 Then Geffrey was by that tyme they had al ydo.
 Hanybald clepid out Beryn, to Mote Hall for to go,
 And stode upon the brigg with an huge route.
 Geffrey was the first to Hanybald gan to loute.
 And lokid out a fore ship: God bles yew! Sir,
 quod he.
 Wher art thou now, Beryn? com forth, behold
 Her is an huge pepill yrayd and ydight; [and se,
 All these been my children that been in armys
 Yistirdey I gat them: is nat mervail, [bryght;
 That they been hidir ycom to be of our counsaill,
 And to stond up by us, and help us in our ple?
 A! myne own childryn, bleffid mut ye be!
 Quod Geffrey, with an high voise, and had a nyce
 visage,
 And gan to daunce for joy in the fore stage.
 Hanybald lok'd on Geffrey as he wer amafid,
 And beheld his countenaunce, and how he was
 yrasid,
 But evirmore he thought that he was a sole
 Naturell of kynde, and had noon othir tool,
 As semed by his wordis and his visage both,
 And thought it had been foly to wex with hym
 wroth,
 And gan to bord ageyn, and axid hym in game,
 Sith thou art our fadir who is then our dame?
 And how and in what plase were we begete?
 Yistirday, quod Geffrey, pleyng in the strete
 At a gentil game that clepid is the Quek,
 A long peny halter was cast about my nek,
 And yknet fast with a riding knot,
 And cast over a perch, and hale along my throte.
 Was that a game, quod Hanybald, for to hang thy
 selve?
 So they seyde about me, a thousand eche by hymself.
 How scapiddist thou, quod Hanybald, that thou
 wer nat dede?
 Therto can I answer without any rede:
 I bare thre dife in myn own purs,
 For I go nevir without, fare I betir or wers;
 I kist them forth all thre, and too fill am'ys,
 But here now what fill astir, right a mervelouse
 case;
 Ther cam a mowse lep forth, and ete the third boon,
 That puffid out her skyn as grete as she myght goon;
 And in this maner wise of the mowse and me
 All ye be ycom my children fair and fre;
 And yit or it be eve fall woll such a chaunce
 To stond in my power yew all to avaunce,
 For and we plede well to day we shall be riche
 inowghe.
 Hanybald of his wordis hertlich loughe,

And so did all that herd hym, as they myght wele,
 And had grete joy wyth hym for to tell,
 For they knew hym noon othir but a sole of kynd
 And all this was his discrecioune, and that provid
 the end,
 Thus whils Geffrey japid to make their hertis
 light
 Beryn and his company were rayid and ydight,
 And londid them in botis, ferefull how to spede,
 For all their thoughtis in balance stode betwene
 hope and drede:
 But yet they did their peyn to make lightsome
 chere,
 As Geffrey them had enfourmed, of port and all
 manere
 Of their governaunce all the long day [wey
 Tyll their plee wer endit; so went they forth their
 To the court with Hanybald. Then Beryn gan to
 sey,
 What nedith this, Sir Hanybald, to make such aray
 Sith we been pese-marchantis, and use no spolia-
 cioune?
 For soth, Sir, quod Hanybald, to me was made
 relacioune
 Yee wer in poynt to void; and yef ye had do so
 Yee had lost yewr lyvis, without wordis mo.
 Beryn held hym styll. Geffrey spak anoon;
 No les wed them lyvis? Whi so, good Sir Jon?
 That wer somewhat to much as it semeth me;
 But ye be ovirwise that dwell in this cete;
 For ye have begonne a thing makith you right bold
 And yit or it be eve as folis shull yee be hold:
 And eke ye devyne for shipmanny's craft,
 And wotith litill what longith to afore the ship
 and bafft,
 And namelich in the dawning when shipmen first
 arise,
 My good frend, quod Hanybald, in a scornynge
 wise,
 Yee must onys enfourm me thorough yowr dis-
 crecioune,
 But first yee must answer to a questioune;
 Why make men crof-sail in myddis of the mast?
For to talow the ship and fecb more blast.
 Why goon the yemen to bote ankirs to hale?
For to make them redy to walk to the ale.
 Why hale they up stonys by the crane lyne?
To make the tempest sese and the sonne skyne.
 Why close they the port with the see bord?
For the mastir shuld awake at first word.
 Thou art a redy reve, quod Hanybald, in fay.
 Yee, Sir, trewly, for sothe is that ye yew sey;
 Geffrey evir clappid as doith a watir myll,
 And made Hanybald to laugh al his hert fyll.
 Beryn, quod this Geffrey, retourn thy men ageyn;
 What shull they do with the at court? no man on
 them pleyn.
 Plede thy case thy selve right as thou hast
 ywrought;
 To bide with the shippis my purpose is and thought.
 Nay, forsoth, quod Hanybald, thou shalt abyde
 on lond,
 Wee have no folis but the; and toke hym by the
 hond,

For thou art wise in law to plede all the case.
That can I betir, quod Geffrey, then eny man in
this plase.

What seyft thou therto, Beryn? shall I tell thy
tale?

Hanybald likid his wordis wele, and forward gan
hym hale.

Beryn made him angry, and fighid wondir fore,
For Geffrey hym had enfourmid of every poynt to
fore,

Hew he hym shuld govern all the long day.

Geffrey chafid hym ageyn; Sey me ye or nay;

Mayst'owe nat here speke some maner word?

Leve thy blab, lewd sole, me likith nat thy bord:

I have anothir thought, quod Beryn, wherof thou
carist lite.

Clepeist thou me a Fole, quod Geffrey? al that
I may the wite:

But first when we out of Rome faillid both in fere

'Tho I was thy felawe and thy partinere,

For tho the marchandise was more then half myne,

And sith that thou com hidir thou takist all for
thyne.

But yit or it be eve I wol make oon behest,

But thou have my help thy part shall be lest.

Thyn help, quod Beryn; lewde sole, thou art
more then masid;

Dres the to the shippis ward with thy crown
yrafid,

For I myght never spare the bet: trus and beagoo.

I woll go with the, quod Geffrey, wher thou wolt
or no,

And lern to plede law to wyn both howse and lond.

So thou shalt, quod Hanybald, and led hym by
the hond,

And leyd his hond oppon his nek: but and he
had yknow

Whom he had led, in sikernes he had well levir in
snowe

Have walkid xl myle, and rathir then fail more;

For he wishid that Geffrey had ybe unbore

Full oft tyme in that day or the ple wer do,

And so did all that wrought Beryn sham and woo.

Now yee that list abide and here of sotilte

Mowe know how that Beryn sped in his ple,

And in what aray to the court he went,

And how Hanybald led Geffrey, disware of his
entent;

But yet he axid of Geffrey, What is thy name
I pray?

Gylhochet, quod Geffrey, men clepid me yistirday.

And wher tweer thou ybore? I n'ote I make a vow,

Seyd Geffrey to this Hanybald, I axe that of yew,

For I can tell no more but here I stond nowe.

Hanybald of his wordis hertlich lowghe,

And held hym for a passyng sole to serve eny lord.

Thus they romyd janglyng into the court ward,

But or they com ther the steward was yset,

And the grettist of the town a company ymet,

And gon to stryve fast who shuld have the good

'That com was with Beryn ovir the salt flood.

Som seyde oon and som seyde anothir;

Som wold have the shippis, the parell, and the
rothir;

Som his eyen, som his lyf wold have, and no les,
Or els he shuld for them fyne or he did pas;
And in the mene whils they wer in this afray
Beryn and these Romeyns wer com, in good aray
As myght be made of woll, and of colour graynyd;
They toke a syde bench that for them was or-
deynyed.

When all was husht and still Beryn arose anoon,
And stode in the myddis of the hall tofore them
everichone,

And seyde, Sir Steward, in me shall be no let;

I am ycom to answer as my day is set:

Do me ryght and reson; I axe yew no more.

So shall I, quod the steward, for ther'to I am
fware.

He shall have right, quod Geffrey, wher thou
wolt or no,

For and thou mys onys thy jugement ondo.

I woll to the Emperour of Rome my cosyn,

For of o cup he and I full oft have dronk the wyne,

And yit we shull herastir as oft as we mete,

For he is longe the gladder when I send hym to grete.

This Geffrey stode upon a fourm, for he wold be sey

Above all othir the shouldriss and the cry,

And starid al about with his lewd berd,

And was yhold a very sole of ech man hym herd.

The steward, and the officers, and the burgeyfis
all,

Laughid at hym hertlich; the criour gan to call

'The burgeyse that had pleyd with Beryn at ches,

And he arose quiklich, and gan hym for to dres

Afore the steward at barr, as the maner is;

He gan to tell his tale wyth grete redines:

Here me, Sir Steward, this day is me set

To have right and reson; I axe yew no bet,

Of Beryn that here stondith, that with me yistirday

Made a certen covenant, and at ches we did pley,

'That who so were ymatid of us both too

Shuld do the todir's bidding, and yf he wold nat so

He must drink all the watir that salt wer in the se:

Thus I to hym furid and he also to me.

To preve my tale trew I am nat all aloon:

Up rose ten burgeyfis quyklich anoon,

And affermyd eviry word of his tale soth,

And made them all redy for to do their othe.

Evander the steward, Bery, now, quod he,

Thow most answer nede; it woll noon othir be:

Take thy counsell to the: spede on; I have doon.

Beryn held hym styll: Geffrey, spak anoon;

Now be my trowith, quod Geffrey, I mervell much
of yew

To bid us go to counsell, and knowith me wise
inowghe,

And evir ful avifid, in twynkelyng of an eye,

To make a short answer but yf my mowith be dry,

Shuld we go to counsell for o word or tweyn?

Be my trowith we n'yll; let se mo that pleyn;

And but he be yanswer'd, and that right anoon,

I geve yew leve to rise and walk out every choon,

And aspyd redily yf ye fynd me there,

In the meen whils I woll abyde here;

Nay, I tell trewly, I am wiser than ye ween,

For ther n'is noon of you woot redely what I
meen.

Every man gan laughe all his hert fill
Of Geffrey and his wordis; but Beryn held hym
And was cleenaftonyd; but yit ner the lattir [still,
He held it nat al folly that Geffrey did clattir,
But wisely hym governyd, as Geffrey hym taught.
For percell of his wisdom he had tofore smaught.
Sir Steward, quod Beryn, I undirftound wele
The tale of this burgeyse; now let anothir tell,
That I may take counsell and answer all at onys,
I graunt, quod the steward; then axing for the
nonys,

Sith thow wold be rewlid by the fol's rede,
For he is right a wise man to help the in thy nede.
Up aros the accusours queyntlich anoon;
Hanybald was the first of them everichoon,
And gan to tell his tale with a proud chere.
Yistirda, Soverens, when I was here
Beryn and thes burgeyse gon to plede fast
For pleying at ches; so ferforth at last,
Thorough vertu of myn office, that I had in charge
Beryn's fyve shippis, for to go at large,
And to be in answer her this same day;
So walkyng to the strondward we bargeynynd by
the wey

That I shuld have the marchandise that Beryn
with hym brought,
Wherof I am sefid, as ful sold and bought,
In covenante that I shuld his shippis fill ageyn
Of my marchandise, such as he tofore had seyn
in myn own plase, howlis to or thre,
Full of marchandise as they myght be;
And I am evir redy, whensoever he woll,
Let hym go or sende, and charge his shippis full
Of such marchandise as he findith there,
For in such wordis we acordit were.
Up rose x burgeyfis, not tho that rose tofore,
But othir, and made them redy to have swore
That every word of Hanybald, from the begyn-
nyng to the end,

Was soth and eke trewe, and with their mende
Full prest they wer to preve; and seyde they wer
present

At covenaut making, by God omnipotent.
It shal nat nede, quod Geffrey, whils that I here
stond,

For I woll preve it my self with my right honde,
For I have been in four batellis heretofore,
And this shal be the fift, and therfor I am swore.
Beholdith, and seith, and turnyd hym about;
The steward and the burgeyse gamyd all about;
The Romeyns held them still, and lawghid but
a lite.

Wyth that cam the blynd man his tale to endite,
That God hym grant wynnyng right as he hath
aservid.

Beryn and his company stode all astryvyd
Betwene hope and drede, right in high distres,
For of wele or of woo they had no sikernes.
Beryn, quod this blynd, thoughe I may nat see
Stond nere yit the barr, my comyng is for the,
That wrongfullich thow withholdist my both to
eyen,

The wich I toke the for a tyme, and quyklich to
me hijen,

And take them me ageyn, as our covenaut was.
Beryn, I take no reward of othir mennys case,
But oonlich of myn oon; that stont me most an
hond.

Now blessid be God in heven that brought the to
this lond!

For sith our last parting many betir teris
Have I lete for thy love, that som tyme partineris
Of wynnyng and of lesing were yeris fele,
And evir I fond the trewe, tyl at the last thow
didst stele

Awey wyth my too eyen that I toke to the
To se the tregetours pley and their sotilte,
As yistirday here in this same plase
Tofore yew, Sir Steward, reherfid as it was.
Full trew is that byword, *A man to serve sabill*
Leditb oft Beyard from his own stabill.

Beryn, by the I meen, though thow make it
straunge,

For thow knowist trewly that I made no chaunge
Of my good eyen for thyn that badder were.

Therwith stode up burgeyse four witnes to here.
Beryn held hym styll, and Geffrey spak anoon;
Now of thy lewd compleynt, and thy masid
moon,

By my trowith, quod Geffrey, I have grete mer-
vail,

For though thow haddist eyen-sight it shuld litill
availe;

Thow shuldist nevir fare the bet, but the wors,
in fay,

For al thing may be still now for the in house and
way,

And yf thow haddist thyn eyen thou woldist no
counsell hele;

I know wele by thy sifnamy thy kynd wer to stele;
And eke it is thy profite and thyn ese also

To be blynd as thow art; for now wherso thow
go

Thow hast thy lyvlode whils thow art alyve,
And yf thow myghtist se thow shuldist nevir
thryve.

Al the house throughout save Beryn and his seris
Lawghid of Geffrey, that watir on their levis
Ran down from their eyen for his masid wit.

Wythat cam the woman, hir tung was nat sclyt,
Wyth 15 burgeyfis, and women also fele,
Her quarel for to preve, and Beryn to apele,
With a feir knave child yloke wythin their armys,
And gan to tel her tale of wrongis and of harmys,
And eke of unkyndnes, untrowith, and falskede,
That Beryn had ywrought to hir, that quyntlich
from hir yede

Anoon oppon her wedding, when he his wyl had
doon,

And brought hir wyth chyld, and lete hir sit
aloon

Wythout help and comfort from that day, and
nowith

He proferid me nat to kys onys with his mowith,
As yistirday, Sir Steward, afore yew eche word

Was reherfid here, my pleynt is of record,
And this dey is me set for to have reson.

Let hym make amendis, or els tell enchefon

Why hym ought nat fynd, as man ought, his wyf.
 These fiftene burgeyfis quylich al so blyve,
 And as sele wymen as stode by hir ther,
 Seyd that they were present when they weddit
 were,
 And that every word that the woman seyde
 Was trew, and eke Beryn had hir so betray'd.
Benedicite! quod Geffrey, Beryn, hast thou a
 wyf?
 Now have God my trowith the dayis of my lyf
 I shal trust the the les thou teldist me nat to fore
 As wele of thy wedding and of thy sone yhere.
 Go to, and kys them both, thy wyf and eke thyn
 heir:
 Be thou nat aghamyd, for they both be feyr.
 This wedding was right privy, but I shall make it
 couthe:
 Behold thy sone, it semith crope out of thy
 mowith,
 And eke of thy condicioun both soft and some.
 Now am I glad thyn heir shall with us to Rome,
 And I shall teche hym, as I can, whils that he is
 young,
 Every day by the strete to gadir houndis dung
 Tyll it be abill of prentyse to craft of *Tawerner*
taury
 And aftir I shall teche hym for to catche a fly,
 And to mend mytens when they been to tore,
 And aftir to cloute shoun whan he is elder more;
 Yit for his parentyne to pipe as doith a mowse
 I woll hym teche, and for to pike a snayl out of
 his howse,
 And to berk as doith an hound, and sey Baw,
 baw,
 And turn round about as a cat doith wyth a
 straw,
 And to blete as doith a shepe, and ney as doith an
 hors,
 And to low as doith a cow; and as myn own
 corps
 I woll cherissh hym every day for his modirs
 sake:
 And gan to stappe ner the child, to have ytake,
 As semed by his countenance, although he
 thought nat so:
 But modir was evir ware, and blenchid to and
 fro,
 And leyd hir hond betwene, and lokid somewhat
 wroth,
 And Geffrey in pur wrath befhrewid them all
 both;
 For by my trowith, quod Geffrey, wel masid is thy
 pan,
 For I woll teche thy sone the craftis that I can,
 That he in tyme to come myght win his liv-
 lode,
 To wex therfor angry thou art verrey wood.
 Of husband, wyff, and sone, by the Trynyte
 I note wich is the wisest of them all thre.
 No, sothly, quod the steward; it liith all in thy
 noll
 Both wit and wysdom, and previth by thy poll:
 For all be that Geffrey wordit sotilly,
 The steward and the burgeyfis held it for foly.

All that evir he seyde, and toke it for good game,
 And had full litill knowlech he was Geffrey the
 lame.
 Beryn and his company stode still as stone
 Betwene hope and drede, disware how it shuld
 goon,
 Saff Beryn trist in party that Geffrey wold hym
 help,
 But yit into that hour he had no cause to yelp;
 Wherfor they made much sorowe, that dole was
 and pete.
 Geffrey herd hym sigh sore: What devil is yew?
 quod he:
 What nede yew be sory whils I stond here?
 Have I nat enfourmid yew how and in what ma-
 nere
 That I yew wold help, and bryng them in the
 snare?
 Yf ye coud plede as well as I, full litill wold ye
 care.
 Pluk up thy hert, quod Geffrey, Beryn, I speke to
 the.
 Leve thy blab lewd, quod Beryn to hym age;
 It doith no thing availl that sorowe com on thy
 hede;
 It is nat worth a fly al that thou hast seyde.
 Have we nat els now for to think oppon
 Saff here to jangill? Machyn rose anon,
 And went to the barr, and gan to tell his tale;
 He was as fals as Judas, that set Criste at sale.
 Sir Steward, quod this Machyn, and the burgey-
 fis al,
 Knowith wele how Melan with purpill and with
 pall,
 And othir marchandise, seven yere ago
 Went toward Rome, and how that I also
 Have enquired sith, as reson woll and kynde,
 Sith he was my fadir, to know of his ende;
 For yit sith his departing tyl it was yiftirday
 Met I never creature that me coud wish or say
 Reedynges of my fadir, dede othir alyve;
 But, bleffid be God in heven! in this thev'is
 sclyve
 The knyff I gaff my fadir was yiftirday yfound:
 Sith I hym apele let hym be fast ybound.
 The knyff I know wel inowe; also the man stont
 here,
 And dwellith in this town, and is a cotelere,
 That made the same knyff wyth his too hondis,
 That wele I woot there is noon like to sech al
 Cristen londis;
 For three preciose stonys been wythin the haft
 Perfectlich ycouhit, and sotillich by craft
 Endendit in the haft, and that right coriously,
 A saphir, and a salidone, and a rich ruby.
 The cotelere cam lepeing forth with a bold chere
 And seyde to the steward that Machyn told now
 here
 Every word is trew, so beth the stonys set;
 I made the knyff my self, who myght know it
 bet?
 And toke the knyff to Machyn, and he me pay'd
 wele;
 So is this felon giltly; there is no more to tell.

Up arose burgeyfis by two by three by four,
And sey'd they wer present the same tyme and
hour

When Machyn wept sore, and brought his fadir's
gownd,

And gaf hym the same knyff oppon the see strond.
Beth ther eny mo pleyntifs of record?

Quod Geffrey to the steward: and he ageyn-
ward;

How semeth the, Gylhochet, beth ther nat
inowghè?

Make thyn answer, Beryn, case that thou mowe,
For oon or othir thou must sey, although it nat
availle,

And but thou lese or thou go methinkith grete
mervail.

Beryn goith to counsell and his company,
And Geffrey bode behinde to her more and se,
And to shew the burgeyse somewhat of his hert;
And seyde, But I make the pleyntifs for to smert,
And alle that them meyntenith, for aught that is
yseyd,

I woll grant yew to kut the eris fro my hede.

My maister is at counsell, but counsell hath he
noon

For but I hym help he is cleen undoon;

But I woll help hym al that I can, and meyntene
hym also

By my power and connyng, so I am bound ther'to;
For I durst wage battell wyth yew, though yee be
strong,

That my maister is in the trowith and ye be in
the wrong;

For and we have lawe I ne hold yew but distroied
In yewr own falthede, so be yee now aspied;
Wherfor yit or eve I shal abate yewr pride,
That som of yew shal be right feyn to slynk away
and hide.

The burgeyses gon to lawgh, and scornyd hym
ther'to.

Gylhochet, quod Evander, and thou cowdist so

Bryng it thus about, it were a redy wey.

He is a good fool, quod Hanybald, in fay,

To put hymself aloon in strengith and eke in wit
Ageyns all the burgeyfis that on this bench sit.

What clatir is this, quod Machyn, al day with a
sole?

Tyme is now to worch with som othir tole,
For I am certeyn of their answer that they wol fail,
And lyf for lyf of my fadir what may that avail?

Wherfor beth avisid, for I am in no doute

The goodis been sufficient to part al aboute,

So may every party pleyntif have his part.

That is reson, quod the blind; a trew man thou
art;

And eke it were untrowith and eke grete syn

But eche of us that pleynith myght somewhat wyn,
Hanybald bote his lippis, and herd them both
wele;

Towching the marchandise o tale I shall yew tell,
And eke make a vow, and hold my behest,

That of the marchandise yewr part shall be lest;

For I have made a bargeyn that may nat be undo;

I woll hold his covenant and he shal myn also.

Up roos quicklich the burgeyse Syrophanes;
Hanybald, quod he, the law goith by no lanys,
But hold ferth the streyt wey, even as doith a lyne;
For yistirday when Beryn with me did dyne
I was the first person that put him in arest;
And for he wold go large thou haddest in charge
and hest

To sese both ship and goodis til I were answerid;
Then must I first be servid, this knowith al men
ylerid.

The woman stode besidis, and cried wondir fast,
Ful soth is that by word, *To pot who comyth last*

He worst is servid: and so it farith by me:

Yit nethirles, Sir Steward, I trust to yewr lentè,
That knowith best my cause and my trew entent;
I axe yew no more but rightful jugement:

Let me have part with othir sith he my husbond is:
Good Sir, beth avisid; I axe yew nat amys.

Thus they gon to stryve, and wer of high mode

For to depart emong them othir mennys good,

Wher they tofore had nevir properte,

Ne nevir shuld theraftir by doom of equitye;

But they had othir cause then they had tho.

Beryn was at counsell, his hert was full woo,

And his meyny fory, distrakt, and al amayide,

For tho they levid noon othir but Geffrey had be-
trayide;

Because he was so long they coud no maner rede,
But everich by hymself wisshid he had be dede.

O myghtful God! they seyde, I trow tofore this day
Was nevir gretter treson, fere, ne affray,

Ywrought onto mankind then now is to us here,

And namelich by this Geffrey with his sotil chere;

So feithful he made it he wold us help echone.

And now we be ymyryd he letith us sit aloon.

Of Geffrey, quod Beryn, be as it be may;

We mut answer nede, ther is noon othir way;

And therfor let me know your wit and your
counsaile.

They wept, and wrong their hondis, and gan to
waille [lyve

The tyme that they were bore, and shortly of the
They wisshid that they wer. With that came Gef-
frey blive,

Passing them towards, and began to smyle.

Beryn axid Geffrey wher he had be al the while?

Have mercy oppon us, and help us as thou hight.

I woll help yow right wele through grace of
Godd's might;

And I can tell yow tiding of their governaunce.

They stondin altercatioun and stryf in poynt to
prauce

To depart your goodis, and levith verily

That it wer impossibil yew to remedy;

But their high pride and their presumpcioun

Shal be yit or eve their confusioun;

And to make amendis ech man for his pleynt,

Let se therfor your good avise how they might
be ateynt.

The Romeyns stode still, as who had shor their
hede.

In feith, quod Beryn, we can no maner rede,

But in God and yew we submit us all,

Body, lyf, and goodis, to stond or to fall,

And nevir for to travers o word that thou seyft;
 Help us, good Geffrey, as wele as thou mayst.
 Deperdeux! quod Geffrey, and I woll do my peyn
 To helpyow as my connyng woll strech and ateyn,
 The Romeyns went to barr, and Geffrey altofore
 With a nice countenance, bare fote, and to tore,
 Pleying with a yerd he bare in his honde,
 And was evir wistlyng at every pase comaunde.
 The steward and the burgeyfis had game inowghe
 Of Geffrey's nice comyng, and hertlich lowghe;
 And eche man seyde, Gylhochet, com nere;
 Tkow art right welcome, for thou makist uschere.
 The same welcom, quod Geffrey, that yee woll us
 Fall oppon yewr hedis, I pray to God, and wers.
 They held hym for a verrey sole, but he held them
 wel more;
 And so he made them in breff tyme, all though
 they wer nat shore.
 Styntith now, quod Geffrey, and let make pese;
 Of myrthis and of japis tyme is now to cese,
 And speke of othir mater that we have to doon,
 For and we hew amys eny maner stone
 We know wele in certeyn what pardon we shul
 have;
 The more is our nede us to defend and save.
 My master hath be at counsell, and ful avifid is
 That I shal have the wordis, speke I wele or mys;
 Wherfor, Sir Steward, and ye burgeyfis all,
 Sittith upright, and writtith nat, for aventuris that
 may fall;
 For and ye deme untrewely, or do us eny wrong,
 Ye shull be refourmyd, be ye nevir so strong,
 Of every poynt and injury, and that in grete haste,
 For he is nat unknowe to us that may yow chaste:
 Hold forth the right wey, and by no fide lanys.
 And as towching the first pleyntif Syrephanes,
 That pleyd with my master yistirday at ches,
 And made a certeyn covenante, who that had
 the wers
 In the last game, al thoughe I wer nat there,
 Shuld do the todir's bidding, whatsoever it wer,
 Or drynk all the watir that salt wer in the see;
 Thus I trowe, Sir Steward, ye woll record the ple,
 And yf I have ymissid in lettir or in word
 The lawe, wol I be rewlid astir yewr record;
 For we be ful avifid in this wise to answere.
 Evander the steward, and al men that wer there,
 Had mervil much of Geffrey, that spak so redely,
 Whose wordis tofore semyd al foly,
 And wer astonyed cleen, and gan for to drede,
 And ev'ry man tyl othir lenyd with his hede,
 And seyde he reported the tale right formally;
 He was no sole in certen, but wise, ware, and scly,
 For he hath but yjapid us and scornyd heretofore,
 And we have hold hym a sole, but we be wel
 more.
 Thus they stodied on Geffrey, and laughed tho
 right naught.
 When Geffrey had aspied they wer in such thought,
 And their hertis trobelid, pensyf, and anoyed,
 Hym lyst to dryve in bet the nayl, till they were
 fully cloyid.
 Soverens Sirs, he seyde, sith that it so is
 That in reporting of our ple ye fynd nothing amys,

As provith wele yowr scilence, eke ye withseyth
 O word of our tale, but clene without spot, [nat
 Then to our answer I prey yow take hede,
 For we wol sey al the trowith right as it is in dede;
 For this is soth and certen, it may nat be with-
 seyde,
 That Beryn that here stondith was thus ovirpleid
 In the last game, when wagir was opon;
 But that was his sufferaunce, as ye shull hereanoon,
 For in all this cete ther n'ys no maner man
 Can pley betir at ches then my mastir can;
 Ne bet then I, though I it sey, can nat half so much;
 Now how he lost it by his wyll the cause I woll
 teche;
 For ye wend and ween that he had hym engyned.
 But ye shul fele in every veyn that ye be undir-
 mined,
 And ybrought at ground, and eke ovirmufid.
 And agenst the first that Beryn is accusid
 Herith now ententyflich. When we wer on the see
 Such a tempest on us fill that noon myght othir se
 Of thundir, wynd, and lightenyng, and stormys
 ther among.
 Fiftene dayis during the tempest was so strong
 That eche man till othir began hym for to shryve,
 And made their avowis, yf they myght have the
 lyve,
 Som to se the sepulkir, and som to othir plase,
 To sech holy seyntis for help and for grace;
 Som to fast and do pennaunce, and som do almyf-
 dede;
 Tyl at last, as God wold, a voise to us seyde,
 In our most turment, and desperat of mynd,
 That yf we wold be savid my maister must hym
 bynd
 Be feith and eke be vow, when he cam to lond,
 To drink al the salt watir within the see strond,
 Without drinking eny sope of the fresli watir;
 And taught hym al the sotilte how and in what
 manere
 That he shuld wurch by engyne and by a sotill
 charm, [harm,
 To drink all the salt watir and have hymself no
 But stop the fresh rivers by every cost fide,
 That they enter nat in the se thorough the world
 wyde.
 The voise we herd but naught we saw; so wer our
 witts ravid,
 For this was end fynally, yf we lust be savid.
 Wherfor my master Beryn, when he cam to this
 port,
 To his avow and promys he made his first resort,
 Or that he wold bergeyn eny marchandise,
 And right doith these marchandis in the same wise
 That maken their avowis in saving of their lyv'is,
 They completyn their pilgremagis or they se their
 wyvis.
 So mowe ye ondirstond that my master Beryn
 Of fre will was ymatid, as he that was a pilgrym,
 And myght nat perfourm by many thousand part
 His avow and his hest wythout right sotil art,
 Without help and strength of many mennys
 myght. [right
 Sir Steward, and Sir Burgeyse, if we shul have

Sirophanes must do cost and aventure,
To stop al the fresh ryvers into the see that entir,
For Beryn is redy in al thing hym to quyte,
So he be in defaute must pay for the wite.
Sith ye been wise al what nede is much clatir?
Ther was no covenante them betwene to drink
fresh watir.

When Sirophanes had yherd al Geffrey's tale,
He stode al abashid, with colour wan and pale,
And lokid oppon the steward with a rewful chere,
And on othir frendship and neyhbour he had
there,

And preyd them of counsell the answere to reply.
These Romeyns, quod the steward, been wondir
And eke right ymagytyf, and of sotil art, [scly,
That I am in grete dowte howe yee shul depart
Without harm in oon side: our lawis, well thow
wost,

Is to pay damagis, and eke also the cost,
Of every party plentyf that fallith in his pleynt:
Let hym go quyt I counsell, yf it may so be
queynt.

I mervail, quod Sirophanes, of their sotilte,
But sith that it so stondith, and may noon othir be,
I do woll be counsell, and graunted Beryn quyte.
But Geffrey thought anothir, and without respite,
Sirs, he seyde, me wetith wele that ye wol do us
right,

And so ye must nedis, and so ye have us highte;
And therefore, Sir Steward, ye occupy our plase,
And ye know wele what law wol in this ca e;
My mastir is redy to perfourme his avow.
But natheless, quod the steward, I cannat wete
how

To stop all the fresh watir were possibilite.
Yis, in soth, quod Geffrey, who had of gold plente
As man coud wish and it myght well be do:
But that is nat our defaute, he hath no trefour to.
Let hym go to in haste, or find us fuerte
To make amendis to Beryn for his iniquite,
Wrong, and harm, and trespas, and undewe wex-
acioune,

Lost of sale, and marchandise, difese, and tribula-
lacioune,
That we have sustenyd thorough his iniquite.
What vaylith it to tary us? for though ye sotil pry
We shul have reson wher ye wol or no,
So woll we that ye knowe what that we woll do;
In certen full avisid to Isope for to pase,
And declare every poynt, them ore and eke the
lase,

That of year opyn errours hath pleyne correc-
tioune,
And agenys his jugement is noon protectioun:
He is yewr lord riall, and soveren jugge and lele,
That and ye work in eny poynt to hym liith our
apele.

So when the steward had yherd, and the burgeyfis
alle,
How Geffrey had ysteryd, that went so nighe the
gall,
What for shame, and drede of more harm, and re-
presse,

They made Sirophanes, weer hym looth or lesse,

To take Beryn gage, and plegg find also,
To byde the ward and jugement of that he had
mysdo.

Now fertherfore, quod Geffrey, sith that it so is
That of the first plentyf we have sikernes,
Now to the Marchant we must nedis answere,
That bergeyned with Beryn al that his shippis
bere,

In covenante that he shuld his shippis fill ageyn
Of othir marchandise that he tofore had seyn
In Hanybald's plase, howfis to or thre,
Full of marchandise as they might be;
Let us pas thidir, yf eny thing be there
At our lust and liking, as they accordit were.
I graunt wele, quod Hanybald, thow axist but
righte;

Up arose these burgeyfis, Thow axist but right.
The steward and his comperis entrid first the
howse,
And saw nothing within, straw, ne leff, ne mowse,
Save tymbir, and the tyle stonys, and the wallis
white.

I trow, quod the steward, the wynnyng woll be
but lite
That Beryn woll now get in Hanybald, is pleynte,
For I can se noon othir but they woll be ateynt,
And clepid them in echone, and went out hym-
selve.

As sone as they were entrid they saw no maner
For foris of their hert, but, as tofore is seyde,
The howse was cleen yfwept; then Geffrey feir
they preyde,

To help yf he coud. Let me aloon, quod he,
Yit shul they have the wers as sotil as they be.
Evander the steward in the mene while
Spak to the burgeyse, and began to smyle;
Though Sirophanes be yhold thes Romeyns for to
curs,

Yit I trow that Hanybald woll put hym to the
wers,
For I am suyr and certeyn within they shul nat
fynd?

What sey ye be my pleynt, Sirs, quod the blynd?
For I make a vow I woll nevir cese
Tyl Sirophanes have of Beryn a pleyn relese,
And to make hym quyte of his submissioun,
Els wol I have no pete of his contritioun,
But solow hym al so ferly as I can or may
Tyll I have his eyen both to away.

Now in feith, quod Machyn, and I wol have his
lyffe,
For though he scape yew all, with me woll he nat
stryffe,

But be right feyn in hert all his good forsake
For to scape wyth hys lyf, and to me it take.
Beryn and his feleship wer within the house,
And speken of their answer, and made but litill
rouse,

But evir preyde Geffrey to help yf he coud ought.
I woll nat fail, quod Geffrey, and was tofore be-
thought
Of too botirfiss, as white as eny snowe;
He lete them flee within the house, that astir on
the wowe

They clevid wondir fast, as their kynd woll;
 Astir they had flew to rest anothir pull
 When Geffrey saw the botirfliis cleving on the wall
 The steward and the burgeyse in he gan call;
 Lo! Sirs, he sayd, whofo evir repent,
 We have those marchandise most to our talent
 That we fynd herein. Behold, Sir Hanybal,
 The yondir botirfliis that clevith on the wall;
 Of such ye must fill our shippis all fyve.
 Pluk up thy hert Beryn, for thow most nedis
 thryve;

For when we out of Rome in Marchantfare went,
 To purchase botirfliis was our most entent;
 Yit woll I tell the cause especial and why:
 There is a leche in Room that hath ymade a cry
 To make an oyntement to cure all tho ben blynde,
 And al maner infirmytees that growith in man-
 kynde. [ye mut hy.

The day is short; the work is long: Sir Hanyball,
 When Hanybald herd this tale, he seyde pryvely
 In counsell to the steward; In soth I have the wers,
 For I am sikir by this pleynt that shall I litil purs.
 So me semeth, quod the steward, for in the world
 rounde

So many botirfliis wold nat be founde
 I trow o ship to charge; wher'for me thinkith best
 Let hym have his good ageyn, and be in pefe and
 rest.

And yit is an aventure and thow scape so
 Thy covenant to relese without more ado.

The burgeyis everichone, that were of that cete,
 Were anoyid fore when they herd of this plee;
 Geffrey with his wisdom held them hard and
 streyte,

That they were acombrit in their own distreyte.
 When Hanybald with his frendis had spoke of
 this matere [manere:

They drow them towards Beryn, and seid in this
 Only for botirfliis ye com fro your contre,
 And we you tell in sikirnes and opon our sey,
 That so many botirflyes we shul nevir gete,
 Wherefore we be avifid othirwise to trete;
 That Hanybald shal relese his covenant that is
 makid, [ranfakid.

And delyver the good ageyn that from you was
 Nay forsoth, quod Geffrey, us nedith no relese;
 Ye shull hold our covenant and we shall yours
 For we shull have reson wher ye woll or no [also,
 Whils I hope is alyve; I am nothyng aferd,
 For I can wipe all this plee cleen from your berd,
 And ye blench onys out of the high wey. [deley.
 Thei proferid hym plegg and gage without more
 Now ferthirmore, quod Geffrey, us ought to pro-
 cede, [nede;

For to the blynd mann'ys poynt we must answer
 That, for to tell trowith, he lyvith all to long
 For his own sawte and his own wrong
 On Beryn he hath surmyfid, as previth by his plee,
 And that ye shull opynlich know wele and see;
 For as I undirstode hym he seyde that fele yeris
 Beryn, that here stondith, and he were pertynaris
 Of wyunnyng and of lesyng, as men it use and
 doith,

And that they chaungit eyen, and yit this is sothe:

But the cause of chaunging yit is to yow onknow,
 Wherfore I woll declare it both to high and lowe.
 In that same tyme that this burge se blynd,
 And my master Beryn, as fast as feyth myght bynde
 Were marchaundis in comyn of al that they myght
 Saff of lyf and lym, and of dedel syn, [wyn,
 Ther fill in tho marchis of al thing such a derth
 That joy, comfort, and solas, and al maner myrth;
 Was exilid cleen, saff oonly molestatioun,

That abood continuel—desperatioun:
 So when that the pepil wer in most myscheffe
 God that is above, that al thing doth releve,
 Sent them such plente of mony, fruyte, and corn,
 Wich turnid al to joy their mournyng al to forn;
 Then gaf they them to mirth, revel, pley, and
 And thankid God above evir more among [song,
 Of their relevacioun from woo into gladnes,
 For *Astir four when swete is com it is a pleasant mes.*

So in the meen while of this prosperite
 Ther cam such a pleyer into the same contre
 That nevir thertofore was seyn such anothir,
 That wele was the cecture that born was of his
 modir

That myght se the mirthis of this jugeloure,
 For of the world wide tho dayis he bare the floure,
 For there n'as man ne woman in that regioun
 That set of hymself the store of a boton
 Yf he had not sey his myrthis and his game.

So oppon a tyme this pleyer did proclame
 That al manere of pepill his pleyis wold se
 Shuld com oppon a certen dey to the grete cete:
 Then among othir my master here, Beryn,
 And this same blynd, that pledith now with hym,
 Made a certen covenant that they wold se
 The mervellis of this pleyer and his sotilte:
 So what for hete of somer, age, and febilnes,
 And eke also the long way, this blynd for wer
 rynes

Fill flat adown to the erth; o fote ne myght he go;
 Wherfor my master Beryn in hert was full woo,
 And seyde, My frend, how now? mow ye no fer-
 ther pas?

No, he sayde, by hym that first made mas;
 And yit I had levir, as God my soule save,
 Se thes wondir pleyis then all the good I have.
 I cannat els, quod Beryn, but yf it may nat be
 But that ye and I mut retourn age
 Astir ye be refreshid of your weryness,
 For to leve yew in this plite it wer no gentilnes.
 Then seyde this blynd, I am avifid bet;
 Beryn, ye shull wend thidir without eny let,
 And have myn eyen with yew that they the pley
 mow se,

And I woll have yewrs tyll ye come age.
 Thus was their covenant made, as I to yow report,
 For ese of this blynd, and most for his comfort.
 But wotith wele the whole science of all sur-
 gery

Was unyd or the chaunge was made of both eye
 With many sotill enchantours and eke nygraman-
 cers,

That sent were for the nonys mastris and scoleris.
 So when all was complete my mastir went his wey
 With this mann'ys eyen and saw all the pley,

And hastily retourned into that plase age,
And fond this blynd seching on hondis and on
kne,

Grasping all aboute to fynd that he had lore,
Beryn his both eyen that he had tofore.
But as sone as Beryn had pleyn knowleche
That his eyen were ylost, unneth he myght
areche

O word, for pure anguysh that he toke sodenly,
And from that day till now ne myght he nevyr
spy

This man in no plase ther law was ymevid;
But now in his presence the soth is full yprevid,
That he shall make amendis or he hens pas
Right as the lawe wol deme, ethir more or las;
For my mastir's eyen were betir and more clere
Then these that he hath now to se both fer and
nere;

So wold he have his own, that proper were of
kynd,

For he is evir redy to take to the blynde
The eyen that he had of hym, as covenant was,
So he wold do the same. Now, Soverens, in this
Ye mut take hede for to deme right, [case
For it wer no reson my mastir shuld lese his sight
For his trew hert and his gentilnes.

Beryn, quod the blind, tho I wold the relese
My quarell and my cause, and fall fro my pleynt.
Thow mut nede, quod Geffrey, for thow art
ateynt,

So mut thow profir gage, and borowis fynd also,
For to make amendis, as othir have ydo.

Sir Steward, do us law, sith we desire but right:
As we been pese marchandis us longith nat to
fight,

But pleyn us to the law, yf so we be agrevid.
Anoon opon that Geffrey these wordis had yme-
vid

The blynd man fond borowis for all his maleta-
lent,

And were yentrid in the court to byde the juge-
ment;

For thoughe that he blynde were yit had he good
plente,

And more wold have wonne through his ini-
quite.

Now herith, Sirs, quod Geffrey; thre pleyntifs
been assurid;

And asanent the ferth this woman hath arerid,
That pleynith here on Beryn, and seyth she is his
wyfe,

And that she hath many a dey led a peynous lyfe,
And much sorow endurid his child to sustene,
And al is soth and trew. Now rightfullich to
deme

Whether of them both shall othir obey,
And folowe will and lustis, Sir Steward, ye mut
sey.

And therwith Geffrey lokid aside on this woman
How she chaungit colours, pale and eke wan.

All for nought, quod Geffrey, for ye mut with
us go,

And endure with your husband both wele and
woo:

And wold have take her by the hond, but she
away did breyde,

And with grete sighing these wordis she seyde;
That ageyns Beryn she wold plede no more,
But gaged with too borowis, as othir had do to-
fore.

The steward sat as still as who had shor his hede,
And specially the pleyntifs were in much drede:
Geffrey set his wordis in such maner wise
That wele they wist they myght nat scape in no
wife

Without los of goodis for damage and for cost,
For such wer their lawis wher pleyntis wer ylost.
Geffrey had full perseyte of their encombirmen,
And eke he was in certen that the jugement
shuld pas with his mastir; wherfor he anoon,
Sovern Sirs, he seyde, yit must we ferthir goon,
And answere to this Machyn, that seith the knife

is his
That found was on Beryn; therof he seith nat
amys:

And for more prese he seith in this manere
That here stondith present the same cotelere
That the knyfe made, and the precious stonys thre
Within the hant been couchid, that in Crystyanite,
Thoughe men wold of purpose make ferch and
seche,

Men shuld nat fynd in al thing a knyfe that were
it liche;

And more opyn prese than maun's own know-
leche

Men of law ne clerkis con nat tell ne teche.

Now sith we be in this manere thus ferforth ago,
Then were spedfull for to know how Beryn cam
first to

Have possessioun of the knyfe that Machyn seith
is his:

To yew unknowne I shall ensourm the trowith as
it is.

Now seven yere and passid, opon a Tuisday
In the Passioun-week, when men leven pley,
And use mote devocioun, fastyng, and preyer,
Then in othir tyme or seson of the yere,
This Beryn's fadir erlich wold arise,
And barefote go to chirch to Godd's servise,
And lay hymself aloon from his own wyfe,
In reverence of the tyme, and mending of his
lyfe:

So on the same Tuisday that I tofore nempt
This Beryn rose and rayn hym, and to the chirch
went,

And mervelid in his hert his fadir was nat there,
And homward went ageyn with drede and eke
fere.

Into his fadir's chambir sodenlich he rakid,
And fond hym ligg stan dede oppon the straw al
nakid,

And the clothis halid from the bed away.

Out, alas! quod Beryn, that evir I saw this dey!
They meyne herd the noise, how Beryn cried alas,
And cam into the chambir al that therein was;

But the dole, and the sorowe, and anguysh, that
was there

It va, lith nat at this tyme to declare it here;

But Beryn had most of all, have ye no doute :
 And anon they ferchid the body al aboute,
 And fond this same knyfe, the poynt right at his
 hert
 Of Beryn's fadir, whose teres gan outstert
 When he drowth out the knyfe of his fadir's
 wound ;
 Then standede I saw hym fall down to the ground
 In sight of the most part that beth with hym
 now here,
 And they affermyd it for soth, as Geffrey did them
 lere :
 And yit had I nevir suspicioun from that day tyll
 noweth
 Who ded that cursed dede, tyll Machyn with his
 moweth
 Afore yew hath knowlechid that the knyfe is
 his ;
 So mut he nedis answer for his deth ywis.
 When Macyhn had yherd all Geffrey's tale
 He rose of bench sodenly with colour wan and
 pale,
 And seyde unto Beryn, Sir, ageyn the
 I woll plete no more, for it wer gret pete
 To combir yew with actions that beth of nobill
 kynde.
 Graunt mercy ! Sir, quod Geffrey ; but yit ye
 shull fynde
 Borowis or ye pas, amendis for to make
 For our undewe vexacioun, and gage also us
 take
 In sign of submyssioun for your injury,
 As law woll and reson, for we woll uttirly
 Procede tyll we have jugement finall ;
 And ther'for, Sir Steward, what that evir fall
 Delay us no longer but gyve us jugement,
 For tristith ve noon othir but we be fullich bent
 To Ifope for to wend, and in his high presence
 Reherce al our plees, and have his sentence ;
 Then shull ye make fynys, and highlich be agre-
 vid.
 And as sone as the steward herd thes wordis me-
 vid,
 Reson, ryght, and law, seyde the steward tho,
 Ye mut nedis have wher I woll or no ;
 And to preve my full wyll, or we ferther goon,
 Quicklich he commaundit, and sparid nevir oon,
 24 burgeyfis in law best ylerid,
 Reherfing them the plees, and how Geffrey an-
 swerid,
 And on lyf and lym, and forfetur of good,
 And as they wold nat lese the ball within their
 hood,
 To draw a-part togidir, and by their all assent
 Spare no man on lyve to gyve trew jugement.
 And when thes 24 burgeyfis had yherd
 The charge of the steward, right fore they wer
 aserd
 To lese ther own lyvis but they demed trowith ;
 And eke of their neybouris they had grete rowith,
 For they perseyvid clerelich in the plee through-
 out
 Their frendis had the wors side, ther'of they had
 no dout,

And yf we deme trewly they woll be fore anoyid,
 Yit it is betir then we be shamyd and distroyid.
 And anon they were accordit, and seyde with
 Beryn,
 And demed every pleyntif to make a grete fyne
 With Beryn, and hym submyt hoolich to his grace
 Body, good, and catell, for wrong and their tres-
 pase ;
 So ferforth, tyll at last it was so bout ybore
 That Beryn had the doubill good that he had to-
 fore,
 And wyth joy and myrth, wyth all his company,
 He droughe hym to his shippis ward wyth song
 and melody.
 The steward and the burgeyse from the court bent
 Into their own placis, and evir as they went
 They talkid of the Romeyns, how sotill they wer
 To aray hym like a sole that for them shuld an-
 swer.
 What vylith it, quod Hanybald, to angir or to
 curs ?
 And yit I am in certen I shall fare the wers
 All the dayis of my lyfe for this day's pleding,
 And so shal al the remnaunt ; and their hondis
 wryng,
 Both Syrophanes, and the blynd, the woman, and
 Machyn,
 And he bet avifid er they eftson's pleyne,
 And al othir personys wythyn this cete
 Mell the les wyth Rome ns whils they here be ;
 For such anothir sole was nevir yit yborn,
 For he did naught ellis but evir with us scorn
 Tyll he had us caught even by the shyn
 With his sotill wittis in our own grene.
 Now woll I retourn to Beryn ageyn,
 That of his grete lukir in hert was right feyne.
 And so was all his meyne, as them ought wele,
 That they wer so delyverid from turment like to
 hell,
 And graciouly relevid out of ther grete myschef,
 And yset above in comfort and bouchef.
 Now in soth, quod Beryn, it may nat be denied
 N'ad Geffrey and his witt be we had be distroyid :
 I thanked be Almyghty God omnipotent
 That for our consolacioun Geffrey to us sent !
 And in protest opynly, here among yew alle,
 Half my good, whils that I lyve, whatever me
 befall,
 I graunt it here to Geffrey, to gyve or to sell,
 And nevir to part from me, yf it wer his wyl,
 And fare as well as I a morrow and eke on eve,
 And nevir for a man on lyve his company for to
 leve.
 Graunt mercy ! Sir, quod Geffrey, yewr profir is
 feir and grete,
 But I desire no more but as ye me behete,
 To bryng me at Room, for this is covenante.
 It shall be do, quod Beryn, and all the rem-
 naunt.
 Deperdeux ! quod Geffrey, ther'of we shull wele
 do.
 He rayid hym othirwise ; and without wordis mo
 They went to the dyner the hole company,
 With pipis and wyth trompis, and othir melody :

And in the myddis of their mete gentil women
fyve,
Maidens fresh atirid as myght be on lyve,
Com from the Duke Ifope, lord of that rigioune,
Everich wyth a present, and that of grete re-
nown:
The first bare a cup of gold, and of asure syne,
So corouse and so nobill that I can nat devyne;
The second brought a swerd yshethid, wyth
seyntur
Ifretid all with perelis orient and pure;
The third had a mantell of lusty fresh colour,
The uttir part of purpill, yfurrid with pelour;
The ferth a cloth of gold, a worthy and a riche,
That nevyr man tofore saw cloith it liche;
The fift bare a palme that stode tofore the deyse
In tokyn and sign of trowith and pese,
For that was the custom through all the con-
tray;
The message was the levyr and more plesant to
pay.
The cup was uncoverid, the swerd was out
ybrayid,
The mantell was unfold, the cloth along ylayid;
They knelid adown echone right tofore Beryn;
The first did the message, that taught was wel
and fyne:
Ifope, she seyd, Sir Beryn, that is our lord riall,
And gretith yew, and sendith yew these presentis
all,
And joy hath of yewr wisdom and of yewr go-
vernaunce,
And preyd you to com and have with hym ple-
saunce
To morowe, and se his palayse, and to sport you
there,
Yee and all your company. Beryn made noon an-
swere,
But sat styll, and beheld the women and the son-
dis;
And astirward avisely the swerd first he hondis
And commaundit therewith all the wymmen washt
and sit,
And pryvelich chargit officers that with al their
wit
To serve them of the best, and make them hertly
chere
Ressevyng al the presentis in worshipful manere.
I cannat wele exprefs the joy that they had,
But I suppose tofore that day that they were nat
so glad
That they wer so ascapid fortune and myschese,
And thankid God above that al thing doith relese;
For *Astir mysty cloudis ther comith a cler sonne,*
So astir bale comyth late, who so byde conne.
The joy and nobley that they had whils they wer
at mete,
It saylith nat at this tyme ther'of long to trete:
But Geffrey sat with Beryn, as he had servid wele;
Their hedis they leyd togidir, and begon to tell
In what maner the wymen shuld be answered.
Geffrey evir avisid Beryn ther'of he leryd,
And of othir thinges how he hym shuld govern;
Beryn savorid wele theron, and fast he gan to lern.

When al wer up the wymmen cam to take their
leve;
Beryn, as sat hym wele of blode, them toward gan
releve,
And prey'd them hertly hym to recommend
Unto the worthy lordship of Ifope, that you send
To me that am unworthy, save of his grete nobley,
And thank hym of his gyftis as ye can best, and
sey,
To morow I woll be redy his hest to fulfill,
With this I have save condit I may com hym tyll,
For me and al my feleship saff to com and go,
Trusting in his discrecioune that thoughe I ax so
He wol nat be displeid; for in my contra-
It hath evir be the custom, and is into this day,
That yf a lord riall desirith for to see
Eny maner persone that is of las degre,
Er he approche his presence he wol have in his
honde
A saff condit enselid, or els som othir bonde,
That he may com and pas without disturbaunce;
Throughout all our marchis it is the observaunce.
Thes wymmen toke their leve without wordis mo,
Repeyryng onto Ifope, and al as it was do
They reherfid redely, and faylid nevyr a word,
To Ifope with his baronage ther he sat at his borde,
Talkyng fast of Romyans, and of their high pru-
dence,
That in so many daungers made so wise defence.
But as sone as Ifope had pleylich yherd
Of Beryn's governaunce, that first sesid the swerd
Afore al othir presentis, he demed in hys minde
That Beryn was ycom of som nobill kynde.
The nyght was past; the morowe cam; Ifope had
nat forgete;
He chargit barons twelf with Beryn for to mete
To cond hym saff and his meyne; and al perfour-
myd was.
Thre dayis ther they sportid hym in myrth and
solas,
That throughe the wise instructioun of Geffrey
nyght and dey
Beryn plesid Ifope with wordis al to pay,
And had hym so in port and in governaunce
Of all honest myrthis and witty daliaunce,
That Ifope cast his chere to Beryn so groundly,
That at last ther was no man with Ifope so pryvy,
Resorting to his shippis, comyng to and fro,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche day it
fil so
That Ifope coude no wher chere when Beryn was
absent;
So Beryn must nedis eche day be astir sent:
And chese he was of counsell within the first
yere,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche dey did
hym lere.
This Ifope had a doughtir betwene hym and his
wyfe
That was as feir a creature as myght bere lyfe,
Wyfe, and eke bountevouse, and benying with
all,
That heir shuld be astir his dey of his lordshippis
alle;

So, shortly to conclude, the mariage was made
Betwene hir and Beryn, many a man to glade,
Saff the burgeyfis of the town, of falthede that
were rote :

But they wer evir hold so low ondir fote
That they might nat regne, but at last fawe
To leve their condicioune and their fals lawe.
Beryn and Geffrey made them so tame
That they amendit eche dey, and gat a betir
name.

Thus Geffrey made Beryn his enemyes to ovir-
com,

And brought hym to worship thoroughe his
wyldom.

Now God us graunt grace to fynde such a
frende

When we have nede ! and thus I make an
ende.

MISCELLANIES.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE*.

MANY menne saine that in sweveninges
Ther n'is but fables and lesinges,
But yet menne maie some swedin sene
Whiche hardily that false ne bene,
But aftirwarde ben apparent,
This maie I drawin to warraunt.

An author that hight Macrobes,
That halte not dremis false ne lese,
But undoth us the avisioun
That whilom mette King Cipoun.

And who faith and weneth it be
A jape or els a nicete
To wene that dremis aftir fal,
Let who so liste a sole me cal;
For this trowe I, and say for me,
That dremis signifiunce be
Of gude and harme to many wightes
That dremen in ther slepe a nightes
Full many thingis covirtly
That fallin aftir opiny.

* This book was begun in French verse by William de Lorris, and finished forty years after by John Clopinell, alias John Moone, born at Mewen upon the river of Loyer, not far from Paris, as appeareth by Molinet the French author, upon the morality of The Romaunt, and afterward translated, for the most part into English metre by Geoffrey Chaucer, but not finished. It is intituled The Romaunt of the Rose, or The Art of Love; wherein are shewed the helps and furtherances, as also the lets and impediments that lovers have in their suits. In this book the author hath many glances at the hypocrisy of the clergy, whereby he got himself such hatred amongst them that Gerson Chancellor of Paris writeth thus of him: say' th he, There was one called Johannes Meldinenus who wrote a book called The Romaunt of the Rose, which book if I only had, and that there were no more in the world, if I might have 500 pound for the same, I wold rather burn it than take the money. He saith more, that if he thought the author thereof did not repent him for that book before he dyed, he would vouchsafe to pray for him no more than he would for Judas that betrayed Christ. Erry.

Within my twenty yere of age,
Whan that Love takith his corage
Of yongè folke, I wentè sone
To bed, as I was wont to done,
And faste I slepte, and in sleping
Me mettè suche a swevining
That likid me wondrous wele,
But in that swevin' is ner a dele
That it n'is aftirwarde befall,
Right as this dreame wol tell us al.

Now this dreame wol I rime a right
To make your hertis gay and light;
For Love it prayith, and also
Commaundith me, that it be so.

And if there any askin me
Whether that it be he or she,
And how this bokè whiche is here
Shal hate, which that I rede you here,
It is The Romaunt of the Rose,
In which all The Arte of Love I close.

The matir faire is of to make,
God graunt in gre that she it take
For whom that it begonnin is!
And that is she that hath iwis
So mokil prise, and therto she
So worthy is beloved to be
That she wel ought of prise and right
Be clepid Rose of every wight.
That it was Mey me thoughtin tho,
It is five yere or more ago,
That it was Mey thus dremid me,
In time of love and jolite,
That al thing ginnith waxin gay,
For there is neithir buske nor hay
In Mey that it n'll shroudid bene,
And it with newè levis wrene;

These wordis eke recoveren grene
 That drie in winter ben to sene,
 And the erth wexith proud withall
 For sote dewis that on it fall,
 And the povir estate forgette
 In whiche that winter had it sette,
 And than becometh the grounde so proude
 That it wol have a newe shroude,
 And make so quaint his robe and fayre,
 That it had hewes an hundrid payre
 Of grasse and flouris Inde and Pers,
 And many hewis full divers,
 That is the robe I mene iwis
 Through whiche the ground to praisin is.

The birdis that han left ther songe
 While thei han suffrid colde ful stronge
 In wethers grille and derke to sight,
 Ben in Mey for the sunne bright
 So glad, that they shewe in singin
 That in ther heert is suche liking
 That thei mote singin and ben light;
 Than dothe the nightingale her might
 To makin noise and singen blithe,
 Than is blisful many a fith,
 The chelandre' and the poppingay,
 Than yonge folke entendin aye
 For to ben gaie and amorous,
 The time is than so favorable.

Harde is his herte that lovith nought
 In Mey, whan al this mirth is wrought;
 Whan he may on these braunchis here
 The smale birdis singin clere
 Ther blisfull swete song pitous:
 And in this seson delitous,
 Whan love affirmith alle thing,
 Me thought one night, in my sleping,
 Right in my bed ful redily
 That it was by the morowe erly,
 And up I rose and gan me clothe;
 Anon I wishe mine hondis bothe,
 A silvir nedil forth I drowe
 Out of aguiler quaint inowe,
 And gan this nidill threde anone,
 For out of toun me list to gone
 The soun of briddis for to here
 That on the buskis singin clere,
 In the swete seson that lese is,
 With a thred bastin my flevis,
 Alone I went in my playing,
 The smale foulis songe herkening,
 That painid hem ful meny' a paire
 To sing on bowis blossomed faire;
 Jolife and gaie, full of gladnesse,
 Towarde a river gan me dresse,
 Which that I herde renne faste by,
 For fairir playin non saugh I
 Than playin me by that rivere,
 For from an hill that stode there nere
 Come doune the streme full stiffe and bold,
 Clere was the watir, and as cold
 As any welle is, sothe to saie,
 And somdele lasse it was than Saine,
 But it was straitir, wele away,
 And nevir saugh I er that daie

The watir that so wele liked me,
 And wondir glad was I to se
 That lusty place and that rivere:
 With that watir that ran so clere
 My face I wishe, tho sawe I wele
 The botome ipavid everidele
 With grayell, ful of stonis shene,
 The medowis sote, sote, and grene,
 Beet right upon the watir side;
 Ful clere was than the morowe tide,
 And ful attempre out of drede;
 Tho gan I walkin throwe the mede,
 Downwarde evir in my playing
 Nigh to the river's side coasting.

And whan I had a while igone
 I sawe a gardin right anone
 Full long and brode, and everidele
 Enclosid was and wallid wele
 With hie walis enbataillid,
 Portrayed without, and well entaylid
 With many full riche portreitures,
 And both the' imagis and peintures
 Gan I beholdin besily;
 And I wol tel you redily
 Of thilke imagis the semblaunce,
 As ferre as I have remembraunce.

Amiddis sawe I Hate ystonde,
 That for her wrathe, and ire, and onde,
 Semid to be a minoresse,
 An angry wight, a chidireffe,
 And ful of gile and fell corage
 By semblaunt was that ilke image,
 And she was nothing wele arraide,
 But like a wode woman afraide;
 Yfrouncid foule was her visage,
 And grinning for dispitous rage;
 Her nose ysnortid up for tene,
 Ful hidous was she for to sene;
 Ful foule and rusty was she this;
 Her hed iwritin was iwis
 Ful grimly with a grete towaile.

An intage of anothre' entaile
 A liste halfe was her fast yby;
 Her name above her hed sawe I,
 And she was callid Felony.

Anothre' image, that Villany
 Yclepid was, sawe I and fonde
 Upon the wall on her right honde:
 This Villany was like somdele
 That othre' image, and trustith wele
 She semid a wickid cature;
 By countenance in portreiture
 She semid be ful dispitous,
 And eke ful proude and outragious.

Wel coude he paint, I undertake,
 That such an image coude imake;
 Ful foule and chorlich semid she,
 And eke villeinous for to be,
 And litil could of noriture
 To worshippe any creature.

And nexte was paintid Covetise,
 That eggith folke in many' a gite
 To take and yeve right nought again,
 And grete tresouris up to laine.

And that is she that for usure
 Tenith to many a creature
 The lasse for the more winning,
 So covitous is her brenning!
 And that is she for pennis sele
 That techith for to robbe and stele
 These thevis and these smale harlotes,
 And that is routhe, for by ther throtes
 Ful many one hongith at last;
 She makith folke compasse and cast
 To takin othir folkis thing
 Through robbery or miscoveting;
 And that is she that makith trechours,
 And she that makith false pledours,
 That with ther termis and ther domes
 Do maidins, childrin, and eke gromes,
 Ther heritage, alas! forgo;
 Ful crokid were her hondis two,
 For Covetise is evir wode
 To gripin othir folkis gode;

For Covetise for her winning
 Ful lese hath othir mennis thing.
 Another image set saugh I
 Next unto Covetise fast by,
 And she was clepid Avarice:
 Ful foule in painting was that vice,
 Ful sad and caitife was she eke,
 And also grene as any leke;
 So evil hewed was her coloure
 Her semed to have livid in langoure;
 She was like thing for hungir ded,
 That lad her life onely by bred
 Knedin with eisel strong and egre,
 And therto she was lene and megre;
 And she was clad ful povirly
 Al in an oldè torne courtpye
 As she were all with doggis torne,
 And bothe behinde and eke beforne
 Ycloutid was she beggirly.

A mantil honge her fast by
 Upon a benche both weke and smale;
 A burnette cote honge there withal,
 Yfurrid with no menivere,
 But with a furre rough of here
 Of lambe skynny's hevy and blake;
 It was full olde I undirtake,
 For Avarice to clothe her wele
 Ne hastith her nevir adele,
 For certainly it were her lothe
 To werin of that ilke clothe,
 And if it were forwerid she
 Would havin full gret nicete
 Of clothing er she bought her newe,
 Al were it bad of wol and hewe.

This Avarice helde in her hande
 A purse which that honge by a bande,
 And that she hid and bonde so stronge
 Men must abidin wondir longe
 Out of the purse er there come ought,
 For that ne comith in her thought;
 It was not certaine her entent
 That fro that purse a peny went.

And by that image nigh inough
 Was painted Envy, that nere lough,

Nor nevir wel in her hert ferde
 But if she either sawe or herde
 Some grete mischaunce or grete disese;
 Nothing ne may so much her plesse
 As mischese and misaventure;
 Or whan she seeth discomfiture
 Upon any worthy man fall,
 Than likith her right well withall:
 She is ful glad in her corage
 Yf she se any grete linage
 Be brought to naught in shamful wise;
 And if a man in honour rise
 Or by his wit or his prowesse,
 Of that she hath gret hevinesse,
 For trustith wele she goeth nie wode
 Whan any chaunce yhapith gode.
 Envy is of fuche cruelte
 That faith ne trouth ne holdith she
 To frende ne felawe badde or gode;
 Ne she hath kinne none of her blode
 That she n'is ful ther enemy;
 She n'olde, I dare saine hardily,
 That her own fathir farid wele:
 And fore abieth she every dele
 Her malice and her male talent,
 For she is in so grete turment
 And hate fuche whan that folke doth gode
 That nigh she meltith for pure wode:
 Her hert so kervith and so breketh
 That God the peple wel a wrekeeth.

Envy I wis shall nevir let
 Some blame upon the folke to set:
 I trowe that if Envy i-wis
 Yknew the beste man that is
 On this side or beyond the se,
 Yet somewhat lackin him wold she;
 And if he were so hende and wise
 That she ne might abate his prise,
 Yet would she blame his worthinesse,
 Or by her wordis make it lesse.
 I sawe Envy in that painting
 Yhad a wondirful lokung,
 For she ne lokid but awrie
 Or ovrithwarte, all baggingly;
 And she had a full foule usage,
 She mightin loke in no visage
 Of man ne woman forth right plaine,
 But shette her one eye for disdaine;
 So for envie ybrennid she
 Whan she might any man yse
 That faire or worthy were or wise,
 Or ellis stode in folkis prise.

Sorowe was paintid next Envie
 Upon that wal of masonrie;
 But wel was sene in her colour
 That she had livid in langour;
 Her semid to have the jaundice;
 Not halfe so pale was Avarice,
 Ne nothing alike of lenesse,
 For sorowe, thought, and grete distresse,
 That she had suffrid day and night,
 Made her yelowe, and nothing bright:
 Ful fade, pale, and megre, also,
 Was nevir wighte yet halfe so we

As that her semid for to be,
Nor so fulfilled with yre as she;
I trow that no wight might her plesse,
Nor do that thing that might her ese;
Nor she ne would her sorowe flake,
Nor comfort none unto her take,
So depe ywas her wo begonne,
And eke her hert in angre ronne.
A sorowful thing wel semid she;
Nor she had nothing flowe ybe
For to bescratchin all her face,
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to tere her swire,
As she that was fulfilled of ire;
And all to torne laie eke her here
About her shulders here and there,
As she that had it all to rent
For angre and for male talent.

And eke I tell you certainly
How that she wept full tendirly:
In worlde n'is wight so hard of herte,
That had yfene her sorowes smerte,
That n'olde have had of her pite,
So wo begon a thing was she.
She all to dasht her self for wo,
And smote togidir her hondes two;
To Sorowe was she full ententise,
That wofull rechileffe caitise,
Her roughte little of playing,
Or of clipping or of kissing,
For who so sorowfull is in herte
Him lustith not to plaie ne sterre,
Nor for to dauncin ne to sing,
Ne maie his herte in temper bring
To make joie on even or morowe,
For joie is contrary to sorowe.

Elde was ypainted after this,
That shortir was a fote i-wis
Than she was wont in her yonghede;
Unneth her self she might yfede:
So feble and so olde was she
That fadid was all her beaute;
Full salowe was waxen her colour;
Her hedde for hore was white as flour:
I wis grete qualme ne were it none,
Ne sinne, although her life were gone,
All woxin was her body unwelde,
And drie and dwined all for elde:
A foule forwelkid thing was she,
That whilom round and soft had be:
Her heris shokin fast withall,
As from her hedde they wouldin fall;
Her face yfrouncid and forpined,
And bothe her hondis lorne fordwined:
So old she was that she ne went
A fote but it were by potent.
The time that passith night and daie,
And restileffe travailith aie,
And stelith from us privily,
That to us semith sikirly
That it in one poinet dwellith ever,
And certis it ne restith never,
But goeth so fast and passith aie
That ther n'is man that thinkin maie

What time that now present is,
Askith at these grete clerkis this;
For men thinkin it redily
Thre timis ben ypassid by
The time that maie not sojourne,
But goth and maie never retourne,
As watir that doune runnith aie,
But nevir droppe returne maie.
There maie nothing as time endure,
Ne metall nor yerthly cature,
For alle thing is frette and shall,
The time eke that ychaungith all,
And all doeth waxe and foftrid be,
And alle thing distroyith he;
The time that eldith our auncestours
And eldith kinges and emperours,
And that us all shall ovircomen,
Er that deth us shall have nommen,
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She mightin helpe her self nothing,
But tourned eyen unto childhede:
She had nothing her self to lede,
Ne witte ne pithe within her hold,
More than a child of two yere old.
But nathellese I trowe that she
Was faire somtime and freshe to se
Whan she was in her rightfull age,
But she was past all that passage,
And was a doted thing becomen:
A furrid cappe on had she nommen;
Well had she cladde her self and warme,
For cold might els doin her harme:
These old folke havin alwaie cold,
Ther kinde is soche whan thei ben old.
An othir thing was down there write
That semid like an ipocrite,
And it was clepid Papelardie;
That ilke is she that privilie
Ne sparith ner a wicked dede
Whan men of her takin none hede,
And makith her outward precious
With pale visage and pitous,
And semith a simple cature,
But there n'is no misaventure
That she ne thinketh in her corage:
Full like to her was thilke image
That makid was like her semblaunce,
She was full simple of countenance;
And she was clothid and eke shod
As she were for the love of God,
Yholdin to religion,
Soche semid her devocion.

A spaltir helde she fast in honde,
And busily she gan to fonde
To make many a faint praiere
To God and to his saintis dere:
Ne she was gaie, freshe, ne jolise,
But semed to be full ententise
To gode werkis and to faire,
And therto she had on an haire.
Ne certis she was fatte nothing,
But semid werie for fasting:

Of colour pale and dede was she;
 From her the gates aie warnid be
 Of Paradise, that blisfull place,
 For soche folke makin lene ther grace,
 As Christ saieth in his Evangile,
 To get 'hem prife in toun a while,
 And for a little glory veigne
 Thei leisin God and eke his reigne.

And aldir last of everichone
 Was painted Poverte' all alone,
 That not a penny had in hold,
 Although that she her clothis fold,
 And though she shold an hongid be,
 For nakid as a worme was she,
 And if the wether stormy were
 For cold she shold have dyid there.

She ne' had on but a straite old sacke,
 And many' a cloute on it there stacke;
 This was her cote and her mantele;
 No more was there nevir a dele
 To clothe her with; I undirtake
 Grete lesir haddè she to quake:
 And she was put that I of talke
 Ferre fro these othre, up in an halke;
 There lurkid and there courid she,
 For povir thing, where so it be,
 Is shamefast and dispisid aie:
 A cursid maie well be that daie
 That povir man conceived is,
 For God wote all to selde i-wis
 Is any pore man well ifed,
 Or well arayid or icled,
 Or well belovid, in soche wise
 In honour that he maie arise.

Allè these thingis well avised,
 As I have you er this devised,
 With gold and asure ovir all
 Depaintid were upon the wall:
 Square was the wall, and high somdele,
 Enclosid and ibarrid wele
 In stede of hegge was that gardin,
 Came nevir no shepherd therein:
 Into that gardin well ywrought
 Who so that me coud have ybrought
 By ladders, or els by degre,
 It wouldè well have likid me;
 For soche solace, soche joie and pleie,
 I trowe that nevir man ne seie
 As was in that place delicious:
 The gardin was not daungerous
 To herborowe birdes many one;
 So riche a yere was nevir none
 Of birdis song and braunchis grene,
 Therin were birdis mo I wene
 Than ben in all the relme of Fraunce;
 Full blisfull was the accordaunce
 Of the swete petous song thei made,
 For all this worlde it ought to glade.

And I my self so mery ferde,
 Whan I ther blisfull songis herde,
 That for an hundrid ponde would I,
 If that the passage opynly
 Haddin ybe unto me fre,
 That I n'olde entrin for to se

Th' assemble (God kepe it fro care!)
 Of birdis whiche that therein ware,
 That songin through ther mery throtes
 Dauncis of love and mery notes.

Whan I thus herd the foulis sing,
 I fell fast in a waimenting
 By whiche art or by what engin
 I might com into that gardin;
 But waie I couthe ne findin none
 Into that gardin for to gone,
 Ne nought wist I if that there were
 Eithir a hole or a place where
 By whiche I mightin have entre;
 Ne there was none to techin me,
 For I was all alone i-wis,
 For wo and for anguisse of this,
 Till at the laste bethought I me
 That by no waie ne might it be,
 There n'as ladder ne waie to pace,
 Or hole, into so faire a place;
 Tho gan I go a full grete pace
 Environ, evin in compas,
 The closing of the square wall,
 Till that I founde a wicket small
 So shette that I ne might in gone,
 And othir entre was there none.

Upon this dore I gan to smite
 That was so fetis and so lite,
 For othir waie coud I not seke.
 Full long I shofe and knockid eke,
 And stode full long all herkining
 If I herd any wight coming,
 Till that the dore of thilke entre
 A maidin curteis opened me:
 Her here was as yelowè of hewe
 As any basin scourid newe;
 Her fleshe tendir as is a chike,
 With bent browis both smothe and like;
 And thereto by mesure large were
 The opening of her eyen clere;
 Her nose of gode proporcion;
 Her eyen graie as is a faucon;
 With swete breth and wel favoured;
 Her face white and well coloured;
 With little mouthe and round to se;
 A clovin chinnè eke had she;
 Her necke was of gode fashion,
 In length and gretnesse by reson,
 Withoutin bleine, or scabbe, or roine;
 Fro Hierusalem' to Burgoine
 There n'is a fairer necke i-wis
 To sefe how smothe and soft it is;
 Her throte also so white of hewe
 As snowe on braunche ysnowid newe;
 Of body full well wrought was she,
 Men nedin not in no countre
 A fairer bodie for to seke;
 And of fine orfrai had she eke
 A chapilet, so semely on
 Ne nevir werid maide upon;
 And faire above that chapilet
 A rose garlande had she yset;
 She had also a gaie mirrour;
 And with a richè golde tresour

Her hedde was tressid full queintly;
 Her slevis sowed fetously;
 And for to kepe her hondis faire
 Of glovis white she had a paire;
 And she had on a cote of grene
 Of cloth of Gaunt withoutin wene:
 Well semid by her aparaille
 She was not wont to grete travaile,
 For whan she kempt was feteously,
 And well araied and richily,
 Than had she doen all her journe,
 For mery' and well begon was she.

She had a lustie life in Maie;
 She had no thought by night ne daie
 Of nothing but it were onely
 To graieth her well and uncouthly.
 Whan that this dore had opened me
 This maidin semely for to se,
 I thonkid her as I best might,
 And askid her how that she hight,
 And what she was I asked eke;
 And she to me was nought unmeke,
 Ne of her answer daungerous,
 But faire answerde, and sayid thus:

Lo, Sir, my name is Idilnesse,
 So clepen men me more and lesse;
 Ful mightie and ful riche am I,
 And that of one thing, namely,
 For I entending to no thing
 But to my joie and my playing,
 And for to kembe and tresse me:
 Acquainted am I and prive
 With Mirthe, the lorde of this gardin,
 That fro the' londe of Alexandrian
 Made the treis hithir be fet
 That in his gardin ben iset;
 And whan the trees were woxe on hight
 This wall, that stant here in thy sight,
 Did Mirthe enclosin all about;
 And these imagis all without
 He did 'hem bothe entaile and paint
 That neither ben jolise ne quaint,
 But thei ben full of sorowe and wo,
 As thou hast sene a while ago.

And oft timis him to solace
 Sir Mirthe comith into this place,
 And eke with him come his meine,
 That liven' in lust and jolite;
 And now is Mirthe therein, to here
 The birdis how they singin clere;
 The mavis and the nightingale,
 And othir joly birdis smale;
 And thus he walkith to solace
 Him and his folke, for swettir place
 To playin in he maie not finde
 Although he sought one in till Inde;
 The althir fairest folke to se
 That in this worlde maie founde ybe
 Hath Sir Mirthe with him in his rout,
 That folowen him alwaies about.

Whan Idilnesse had tolde all this,
 And I had herkened well i-wis,

Than saied I to Dame Idilnesse,
 Now all so wisely God me blese,
 Sith Mirthe, that is so faire and fre,
 Is in this yerd with his meine,
 Fro thilke assemble if I maie
 Shall no man werne me to daie,
 That I this night ne mote it se,
 For well wene I there with him be
 A faire and jolie companie
 Fulfillid of all curtisie.

And forth withoutin wordis mo
 In at the wicket went I tho
 That Idilnesse had opened me
 Into that gardin faire to se:
 And whan that I was in i-wis
 Mine herte was full glad of this,
 For well wende I full sikirly
 Have ben in Paradise yerthly,
 So faire it was, that trustith well
 It semed a place espiituell;
 For certis as at my devise
 There is no place in Paradise
 So gode in for to dwell or be
 As in that gardin thoughtin me;
 For there was many' a birde singin,
 Thoroughout the yerde all thringing,
 In many placis nightingales,
 And alpes, and finches, and wodewales,
 That in ther swete song deliten
 In thilke places as thei habiten.

There mightin men se many flockes
 Of turtels and of laverockes,
 Chalaundris sele yfawe I there,
 That very nigh forsongin were,
 And thrustils, terins, and mavis,
 That songin for to winne 'hem prise,
 And eke to surmount in ther song
 That othir birdis 'hem emong;
 By note ymadin faire servise
 These birdis that I you devise;
 Thei song their song as faire and wele
 As angels doen espiituell;
 And trustith me whan I 'hem herde
 Full lustie and full well I ferde,
 For nevir yet soche melodie
 Was herd of man that mightin die,
 Soche swete song as was 'hem emong,
 That me thought it no bird's song,
 But it was wondir like to be
 Song of meremaidens of the se,
 That for her singin is so clere;
 Though we Meremaidens clepe 'hem here
 In Englishe, as is our usance,
 Men clepin 'hem Screins in Fraunce.

Ententise werin for to sing
 These birdis, that not unkonning
 Were of ther craft and a prentise,
 But of song subtill and eke wise;
 And certis whan I herd ther song,
 And sawe the grene place emong,
 In hert I wext so wondir gaie
 That I was nevir er that daie

So jolife nor so well bigo,
Ne mery' in herte as I was tho;
And than wist I and sawe full well
That Idilnesse me servid well,
That me put in soche jolite:
Her frende well ought I for to be
Sithe she the dore of that gardin
Had opinid and let me in.

From hennis-forthe how that I wrought
I shall you tellen as me thought.
First whereof Mirthe yservid there,
And eke what folke there with him were,
Without fable I woll discrive,
And alle that gardin eke as blive;
I woll you tellen afir this
The faire fassion all i-wis
That well ywrought was for the nones;
I mai not tell you all at ones,
But as I mai and can I shall
By order tellin you it all.

Full faire service, and eke full swete,
These birdis madin as thei sete;
Layis of love full well souning
Thei songin in ther jargonig;
Some hie and some eke lowe ysong
Upon the braunchis grene isprong;
The swetenesse of ther melodie
Made all mine herte in revelrie.

And whan that I had herd I trowe
These birdis singin on a rowe,
Than might I not withholdin me
That I ne went in for to se
Sir Mirthe, for all my desiring
Was him to sene ovir all thing;
His countenance and his manere
That sight was unto me full dere.

Tho wente I forthe on my right honde,
Doun by a little pathe I fonde
Of mintis full and fenell grene;
As faste by withoutin wene
Sir Mirthe I founde, and right anon
Unto Sir Mirthe gan I to gon,
Ther as he was him to solace;
And with him in that lustie place
So faire folke and so freshe had he
That whan I sawe I wondrid me
Fro whennis soche folke mightin come,
So faire thei werin all and some,
For thei weren like, as to my sight,
To angels that ben fethered bright.
These folke, of whiche I tell you so,
Upon a karole wentin tho:
A ladie karoled 'hem that hight
Gladnesse, the blisfull and the light;
Well could she sing and lustily,
None halfe so well and family,
And cothe make in song soche refraining
It fate her wondir well to sing:
Her voice full clere was and full swete;
She was not rude ne yet unmete,
But couthe inoughe for soche doing
As longith unto karolling,

For she was wonte in every place
To singin first folke to solace,
For singin mooste she gave her to;
No craste had she so lese to doe.

Tho mightist thou karollis sene,
And folkè daunce and merie ben,
And made many a faire touning
Upon the grenè grasse springing:
There mightist thou se these flutours,
Minstrallis and eke jogelours,
That wel to singin did ther paine:
Some songin songis of Loraine,
For in Loraine ther notis be
Full swetir than in this contre.
There was many a timbestere,
And failours, that I dare wel swere
Ycothe ther craft full parfitly;
The timbris up full subtilly
Thei castin, and hent them full oft
Upon a fingir faire and soft,
That thei ne fallid nevir mo.
Full fetis damosellis two,
Right yong, and full of semelyhede,
In kirtils and none othir wede:
And faire ytreffid every tresse
Had Mirthe ydoen for his noblesse
Amidde the carole for to daunce.
But hereof lieth no remembraunce
How that thei daunsid queintly,
That one would come all privily
Ayen that othre', and whan thei were
Togithre' almoste thei threwe ifere
Ther mouthis so, that through ther plaie
It semid as thei kist alwaie:
To dauncen well couthe thei the gise;
What should I more to you devise?
Ne bode I nevir thennis go
Whiles that I sawe 'hem dauncin so,
Upon the karoll wondir fast
I gan beholde, till at the last
A ladie gan me for to' espie,
And she was clepid Curtesie,
The worshipfull, the debonaire;
I praie to God er fall her faire!
Full curtisly she callid me,
What do you there, Beau Sire? (quod she)
Comith, and if it likith you
To dauncin, daunsith with us now.
And I withoutin tarying
Ywent into the caroling:
I was abashid ner a dele,
But it to me likid right wele
That Curtesie me clepid so,
And bade me on the daunce ygo,
For if I haddè durst certain
I would have karollid right fain,
As man that was to daunce right blithe:
Than gan I lokin oftè sithe
The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,
The countenance, and the maneres,
Of all the folke that dauncid there,
And I shall tellin what thei were.

Full faire was Mirth, full longe and high,
 A fairer man I nevir sigh:
 As round as aple was his face,
 Full roddie' and white in every place;
 Fetis he was and well beseie,
 With metely mouthe, and eyin greie;
 His nose by mesure wrought full right;
 Crispe was his here, and eke full bright;
 His shulderis of large brede,
 And smalish in the girdelstede;
 He semid like a purtreiture,
 So noble' he was of his stature,
 So faire, so jolie', and so fetise,
 With limmis wrought at pinct devise,
 Deliver, smerte, and of grete might,
 Ne sawe thou nevir man so light;
 Of berde unneth had he nothing,
 For it was in the firste spring;
 Full yong he was, and merie' of thought,
 And in famette with birdis wrought;
 And with golde bete full fetously
 His bodie was clad full richely;
 Wrought was his robe in straunge gise,
 And all to slittered for queintise
 In many a place, lowe and hie;
 And shode he was with grete maistrise
 With shone decopid, and with lace,
 By drurie and eke by solace;
 His lese a rosin chapilet
 Had made, and on his hedde it set.

And wetin ye who was his lese?
 Dame Gladdeffe there was him so lese,
 That singeth so well with glad corage,
 That from she was twelve yere of age
 She of her love graunt to him made:
 Sir Mirthe her by the fingir hade
 A dauncing, and she him also;
 Grete love there was a twix hem two;
 Bothe were thei faire and bright of hewe;
 She semid like a rose newe
 Of colours, and her fleshe so tender,
 That with a brere smale and tender
 Men might it cleve, I dare well sain;
 Her forhedde frounciles all plain;
 Bent werin her eye-browis two;
 Her eyin graie, and glad also,
 That laughdin aie in her semblaunt
 First or the mouthe by covenant;
 I n'ot what of her nose discrive,
 So faire hath no woman alive;
 Her here was yelow', and clere shining;
 I wot no lady so liking.

Of orfraies freshe was her garlande;
 I, whiche that sene have a thousande,
 Sawe ner i-wis no garlande yet
 So well ywrought of filke as it;
 And in an ovir gilt samite
 Ycladde she was by grete delite,
 Of whiche her lese a robe ywerde;
 The merier she in herte ferde.

Next her went, on her othir side,
 The god of Love, that can devide
 Love, and as him liketh it be;
 But he can cherlis dauntin, he,

And many folkis pride fallen,
 And he can well these lordis thrallen,
 And ladies put at lowe degre,
 When he maie hem to proude yfe.

This god of Love of his fascion
 Was like no knave ne no quistron:
 His beutie gretely was to prife,
 But of his robis to devise
 I drede encombrid for to be,
 For not icladde in filk was he,
 But all in flouris and flourettes,
 Ipainted all with amorettes,
 And with losingis and scochons,
 With birdis, liberdes, and lions,
 And othir bestis wrought full wele;
 His garment was every dele
 Ipurtraied and iwrought with floures,
 By divers medeling of coloures;
 Flouris, there were of many gise
 Iset by compace in a fise;
 There lackid no offure to my dome,
 Ne not so much as floure of brome,
 Ne violet, ne eke pervinke,
 Ne floure none that men can on thinke;
 And many a rose lese full long
 Was entermedlid there emong;
 And also on his hedde was set
 Of roses redde a chapilet.

But nightingales a full grete rout,
 That flien ovir his hedde about,
 The levis feldin as thei flien,
 And he was all with birdis wrien,
 With popingaie, with nightingale,
 With chalaundre and with wodewale,
 With finche, with larke, and with archangel;
 He semid as he were an angell
 That doun were come fro hevin clere.

Love had with him a bachilere
 That he made alwaies with him be,
 And Swete Loking cleped was he.
 This bachilere stode beholding
 The daunce, and in his honde holding
 Turke bowes two, well devised, had he;
 That one of hem was of a tre
 That berith fruit of favour wicke;
 Full crokid was that fouse stick,
 And knottie here and there also,
 And blacke as berie' or any flo.

That othir bowe was of a plant
 Withoutin wemme I dare warant
 Full even' and by proporcion
 Trectis and long, and of gode facion,
 And it was paintid well and thwitten,
 And ore all diaprid and written
 With ladies and with bachileres
 Full lightsome and full glad of cheres.
 These bowis two held Swete Loking,
 That ne semid like no gadling,
 And ten brode arowes held he there,
 Of whiche five in his honde were,
 But thei were shavin well and dight,
 Nockid and fetherid a right.
 And all thei were with golde begon,
 And strong ypoinctid everichon,

And sharpe for to ykervin wele,
But iron was there none ne stele,
For all was golde, men might it se,
Out take the fethers and the tre.

The swiftest of these arowes five
Out of a bowe for to drive,
And the best fethered for to flie,
And fairest eke, was cleped Beutie.

That othir arowe, that hurteth lesse,
Was clepid (as I trowe) Simplesse.

The thirde yclepid was Fraunchise,
That fethered was in noble wise
With valour and with curtisie.

The fowerth was clepid Companie,
That hevie for to shotin is,
But who so shotith right i-wis
Maie therwith doen grete harme and wo.

The fift of these, and laste also,
Faire Semblaunt men that arowe call;
'Tis the leste grevous of 'hem all,
Yet can it make a full grete wounde,
But he maie hope his foris founde
That hurte is with that arowe i-wis;
His wo the bette bestowid is
For he maie soner have gladnesse;
His languor ought to be the lesse.

Five arowes were of othir gife
That ben full foule for to devise,
For shaft and ende, sothe for to tell,
Were all so blacke as fende in hell.

The first of 'hem is callid Pride;
That othre arowe next him beside
It was yclepid Vilanie;
That arowe was with felonie
Envenimed, and with spitous blame;
The third of 'hem was clepid Shame;
The fowerth Wanhope yclepid is;
The fift the Newe Thought iwis.

These arowes that I speke of here
Werin all five on one manere,
And all were thei resemblable;
To them was well fitting and able
The foulè crokid bowe hidous
That knottie was and all roinous;
That bowe yfemid well to shete
The arowes five that ben unmete
And contrary to that othir five;
But though I tellin not as blive
Of ther powir ne of ther might,
Hereaftir shall I tellin right
The sothe and eke signifaunce,
As ferre as I have remembraunce
All shall be faied I undirtake
Er of this boke an ende I make.

Now come I to my tale againe;
But aldirfirst I woll you faine
The fashion and the countenaunces
Of alle the folke that on the daunce is,
The god of Love, jolife and light,
Ladde on his honde a ladie bright,

Of high prife and of grete degre,
This ladie callid was Beutie;
And an arowe of whiche I tolde
Full well ythewid was she holde;
Ne she was derke ne broune, but bright
And clere as is the mone light,
Again whom all the sterris semen
But small candelis as we demen;
Her fleshe was tendre as dewe of floure;
Her chere was simple as birde in bourc,
As white as lilie or rose in rise;
Her face was gentill and tretise;
Fetis she was, and smale to se;
No wintrid browis haddè she,
Ne popped here, for it nedid nought
To windir her or to paint ought;
Her tresses yelowè, and long straughten,
Unto her heles doune thei raughten;
Her nose, her mouthe, and eye, and cheke,
Well wrought, and all the remnaunte eke;
A full grete favour and a fote
Me thoughtin in mine herte rote,
As helpe me God, whan I remember
Of the fassion of every member:
In worlde is none so faire a wight,
For yong she was, and hewid bright
Sore plesaunt, and fetis with all,
And gent and in her middle small.

Beside Beute yede Richeffe,
And hight ladie of grete nobleffe,
And grete of price in every place;
But who so durst to her trespase,
Or till her folke, in werke or dede,
He were ful hardie out of drede,
For bothe she helpe and hindir maie;
And that is not of yesterdaie
That riche folke havin full grete might
To helpe and eke to greve a wight.

The best and gretist of valour
Diddin Richeffe full grete honour,
And busie werin her to serve,
For that thei would her love deserve;
Thei cleped her Ladie grete and small;
This widè worlde her dredith all,
This worlde is all in her daungere;
Her courte hath many a losingere,
And many a traitour envious,
That ben full busie and curious
For to dispreisin and to blame
That best deservin love and name;
To forne the folke 'hem to begilen
These losengeours 'hem prife and smilen.

And thus the worlde with worde anointen,
Bot aftirward thei prill and pointen
The folke right to the bare bone
Behinde ther backe whan thei ben gone,
And foule abatin folkis prife:
Full many a worthie man and wife
Han hindrid and idoen to die
These losingeours with ther flatt'erie,
And makith folke full straunge be
There as 'hem ought to ben prived
Well evill mot thei thrive,
And evill arived mote thei be,

These losingeours full of envie;
No gode man loveth ther companie.

Richeffe a robe of purple on had,
Ne trowe not that I lie or mad,
For in this world is none it liche,
Ne by a thousande dele so riche,
Ne none so faire, for it full wele
With orfreis laied was every dele,
And purtraied in the ribaninges
Of dukis stories and of kinges,
And with a bend of golde tassiled,
And knoppis fine of golde amiled:
About her necke of gentle entaile
Was shet the richè chevesaile,
In whiche there was full grete plente
Of stonis clere and faire to se.

Richeffe a girdle had upon,
The bokill of it was of ston
Of vertue grete and mokil might,
For who so bare the stone so bright
Of venim durst him nothing doubt,
While he the stone had him about;
That stone was gretely for to love,
And till a riche mann'is behove
Worth all the golde in Rome and Erise;
The mourdaunt, wrought in noble gise,
Was of a stone full precious,
That was so fine and vertuous
That whole a man it couth ymake
Of palfie and of the tothe ake,
And yet the stone had soche a grace
That he was sikre in every place
All thilkè daie not blinde to ben
That fasting might that stone sene;
The barris were of gold full fine,
Upon a tiffue of satin;
Full hevie, grete, and nothing light,
In everiche was a befaunt wight.

Upon the tressis of Richeffe
Was set a circle of noblesse
Of brende golde, that ful light yshone,
So faire trowe I was never none:
But he were konning for the nones
That could devisin all the stoness
That in that circle shewin clere;
It is a wondir thing to here,
For no man could or preise or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse:
Rubies there were, saphirs, ragounces,
And emeraudes, more than two unces,
But all before full subtilly
A fine carboncle set sawe I,
The stone so clere was and so bright,
That all so sone as it was night
Men mightin sene to go for nede
A mile or two in length and brede;
Soche light ysprang out of the stone,
That Richeffe wondir bright yshone
Bothe on her hedde and all her face,
And eke about her all the place.

Dame Richeffe on her honde gan lode
A yong man ful of semelyhede
That she best loved of any thing;
His lust was moche in housholding;

In clothing was he full fetise,
And loved well to have hors of prise;
He wende to have reprovied be
Of theft or murder if that he
Had in his stable an hackenaie,
And therefore he desirid aie
To ben aqueintid with Richeffe,
For all his purpose, as I gesse,
Was for to makin grete dispence
Withoutin warning or defence.
And Richeffe might it well sustain,
And her dispences wele maintain,
And him alwaie soche plentie sende
Of golde and silvir for to spende
Withoutin lacking or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And aftir on the daunce went
Largeffe, that set all her entent
For to ben honourable and fre;
Of Alexander's kinne was she;
Her moste joie it was i-wis
Whan that she yafe, and saied, **Have this:**
Not Avarice, the foule caitife,
Was halfe to gripe so ententise
As Largeffe is to yeve and spende,
And God alwaie inowe her sende!
So that the more she yave awaie
The more i-wis she had alwaie,
Grete loos hath Largeffe, and grete prise,
For bothe the wise folke and unwise
Were wholly to her bandon brought,
So well with yestis hath she wrought.

And if she had an enemy
I trowe that she couth craftily
Make him full sone her frende to be,
So large of yestes and wise was she;
Therefore she stode in love and grace
Of riche and pore in every place.

A full grete sole is he i-wis
That riche, and pore, and nigard is.
A lorde maie have no manir vice
That grevith more than avarice;
For nigarde ner with strenght of hande
Maie winne him grete lordshipe or lande,
For frendis all to fewe hath he
To doen his will performid be;
And who so woll have frendis here
He maie not holde his trefour dere;
For by ensample tell I this,
Right as an adamant i-wis
Can drawin to him subtilly
The iron that is laied therby,
So drawith folkis hertes i-wis
Silvir and golde that yevin is.

Largeffe had on a robe freshe
Of richè purpure sarlinishe:
Well formid was her face and clere,
And opened had she her colere,
For she right there had in present
Unto a lady made present
Of a gold broche ful wel ywrought,
And certis it mislate her nought,
For through her smooke ywrought with filke,
The fleshe was sene as white as milke.

Largeſſe, that worthy was and wiſe,
Helde by the honde a knight of priſe
Was ſibbe to Arthour of Breteigne,
And that was he that bare the enſeigne
Of worſhip and the gonfannoun;
And yet he is of ſuche renoun
That menne of him ſay faire thinges
Before barons, and erles, and kinges.

This knight was comin al newly
Fro tourneying there faſt by,
Where he had done grete chivalry
Through his vertue and his maiſtrie,
And for the love of his lemman
He caſte doune many a doughty man.

And next him dauncid Dame Franchiſe,
Arayid in ful noble giſe:
She n'as not broune ne donne of hewe,
But white as ſnowe ifallin newe;
Her noſe was wrought at point deviſe,
For it was gentill and tretife;
With eyin glad, and browis bent;
Her here doune to her helis went;
And ſhe was ſimple' as dove on tre;
Ful debonaire of hert was ſhe.

She durſtè neither ſay ne do
But that that hir belongith to;
And if a manne were in diſtreſſe,
And for her love in hevineſſe,
Her hert would have full grete pite,
She was ſo amiable and fre;
For were a manne for her beſtadde
She wouldè ben right fore a dradde
That ſhe did ovir gret outrage;
But ſhe him holpe his harme t'afwage
Her thought it all a vilanie:
And ſhe had on a ſuckiny
That not of hennè herdis was,
So faire was non in all Arras;
Lorde! it was ridded fetiſly;
There ne was not a point truly
That it n'as in his right aſſiſe:
Ful wel iclothid was Fraunchiſe,
For there n'is no clothe ſitteth bette
On damoſell than doth rokette;
A woman wel more fetiſe is
In rokette than in cote i-wis;
The white rokette riddilid faire
Betokenith that full debonaire
And ſwete was ſhe that it ybere.

By her dauncid a bachelere,
I can not tell you what he hight,
But faire he was and of gode hight,
Al had he ben, I ſaie no more,
The lord'is ſonne of Windefore.

And next that dauncid Curtiſy,
That preiſed was of lowe and hie,
For nethir proude ne ſole was ſhe;
She for to daunce callid me;
I praie God give to her gode grace!
For whan I come firſt to the place
She n'as not nice ne outrageous,
But wiſe and ware, and vertuouſ,
Of faire ſpeche, and of faire anſwere;
Was never wight miſſaide of here;

She bare no rancour to no wight;
Clere broune ſhe was, and therto bright
Of face, and body avenaunt;
I wotte no lady ſo pleaſaunt:
She werin worthy for to bene
An empereſſe or crounid quene.

And by her went a knight dauncing
That worthy was and wel ſpeking,
And ful wel coude he don honour:
The knight was faire and ſtiſſe in ſtour,
And in armure a ſemely man,
And wel beloved of his lemman.

Faire Idilneſſe than nexte ſaugh I,
That alway was me faſt by:
Of her have I withoutin faile
Tolde you the ſhape and appareile,
For, (as I ſaid) lo! that was ſhe
That did to me ſo grete bounte;
She me the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me paſſin in,
And aſtir dauncid, as I geſſe.

And ſhe fulfilled of luſtineſſe
That n'as not yet twelve yere of age,
With herte wilde and thought volage:
Nice ſhe ywas, but ſhe ne mente
None harme ne ſleight in her entente,
But onely luſte and jolite,
(For yonge folke, wel wetin ye,
Have litill thought but on ther play:)
Her lemman was beſide alway
In ſuche a giſe that he her kiſte
At allè timis that him liſte,
That al the dauncè might it ſe;
They make no force of privite,
For who ſpake of 'hem ill or wele
Thei were aſhamid nere a dele,
But men might ſene 'hem kiſſe there
As though it two yonge dovis were;
For yonge was thilke bachilere,
Of beute wot I non his perc,
And he was right of ſuche an age
As youthe his leſe, and ſuche corage.

The luſty folke that dauncid there,
And alſo' othir that with 'hem were,
That werin all of ther meine,
Ful hendè folke, both wiſe and fre,
And folkè of faire porte truly,
There werin allè cominly.

Whan I had ſene the countenaunces
Of them that laddin thus theſe daunces,
Than had I will to go and ſe
The gardin that ſo likid me,
And lokin on theſe faire laureres,
On pine trees, cedres, oliveres.
The dauncis than endid ywere,
For many' of 'hem that dauncid there
Were with ther lovis went away,
Undir the trees to have ther play.

A lorde thei livid luſtily!
A grete ſole were he ſikirly
That n'olde his thanks ſuche life to lede,
For this dare I ſaie out of drede,

That who so might so well yfare
For bettir life durst him not care,
For there n'is so gode paradise
As to' have a love at his devise,
Out of that place went I tho,
And in that gardin gan I go,
Playing along full merily.

The god of Love full hastily
Unto him Swete Loking yclept;
No lengir would he that she kept
His bowe of gold that shone so bright:
He haddin him bent anon right,
And he full sonè set an ende,
And at a braide he gan it bende,
And toke him of his arowes five
Ful sharpe and redy for to drive.

Now God that sitteth in majeste
Fro dedly woundis he kepe me
If so be that he had me shete,
For if I with his arowe mete
It had me grevid fore i-wis;
But I, that nothing wist of this,
Went up and doune ful many' a waie,
And he me folowed fast alwaie;
But no where would I restè me
Til' I had in all the gardin be.

The gardin was by mesuring
Right even' and square in compassing;
It as longe was as it was large;
Of fruite had every tre his charge
But it were any hidous tre,
Of whiche there werin two or thre.

There were (and that wote I full wele)
Of pomgranetts a full grete dele,
That is a frute ful wel to like,
Namely to folke whan thei ben sike;
And trees there werin grete soison
That berin nuttes in ther seson,
Suche as menne Nutemiggis ycall,
That fote of favour ben withall,
And of almandris grete plente,
Figgis, and many a date tre,
There werin, if that menne had nede,
Through the gardin in length and brede.

There was eke waxing many' a spice,
As clowe, gilofre, and licorice,
Gingiber, and grein de Paris,
Canell, and fetewale of pris,
And many' a spice delitable
To etin whan men rise fro table.

And many homely trees there were
That peches, coines, and apples, bere,
Medlers, plommis, peris, chesteinis,
Cherise, of whiche many one faine is,
Notis, and aleis, and bolas,
That for to sene it was solas,
With many high latrer and pine,
Was rengid clene all that gardine
With cipris, and with oliveris,
Of which that nigh no plenty here is.

Ther werin elmis grete and strong,
Maplis, ashe, oke, aspe, planis long,

Fine ewe, popler, and lindis faire,
And othir trees full many' a paire;

What should I tell you more of it?
There werin so many trees yet
That I should al encombrid be
Er I had rekenid every tre.

These trees were set, that I devise,
One from an othir in assise
Five fadome or fixe, I trowe so;
But they were hie and gret also,
And for to kepe out wel the sunne
The croppis were so thicke ironne,
And every braunche in othir knitted,
And ful of grenè levis fitte,
That sunnè might there none discende
Lest that the tendir grassis shende.
There might men does and roes ise,
And of squirrels ful grete plente
From bow to bow alwaie leping;
Connis there were also playing,
That comin out of ther clapers,
Of sondry colours and maners,
And madin many' a tourneying
Upon the freshe grassie springing.

In placis sawe I wellis there
In whichè there no froggis were,
And faire in shadowe was eche wel;
But I ne can the nombre tel
Of strems smal that by devise
Mirth had done come thorough condise,
Of whiche the watir in renning
Gan makin a noise ful liking.

About the brinkis of these wellis,
And by the strems ovir al ellis,
Sprange up the grassie, as thicke iset
And soft eke as any velvet,
On which men might his lemman lay,
As on a fethirbed to pley,
For the erth was ful softe and swete;
Thorough the moisture of the wel wete
Sprong up the fote grenè gras
As faire, as thicke, as mister was;
But moche amended it the place
That the erth was of suche a grace
That it of flouris hath plente
That both in somre'a nd wintir be.

There sprange the violet al newe,
And freshe pervinke riche of hewe,
And flouris yelow, white, and rede;
Suche plente grewe there ner in mede;
Ful gaie was al the grounde and queint,
And poudrid as men had it peint,
With many' a freshe and sondry floure,
That castin up ful gode favour.

I wol not longe hold you in fable
Of al this gardin dilectable;
I mote my tonge stinten nede,
For I ne maie withoutin drede
Naught tellin you the beutie all,
Ne halfe the bounte, there withall.

I went on right honde and on leste
About the place; it was not leste
Till I had all the gardin bene
In the espris that men might sene.

And thus while I went in my playe
The god of Love me folowed aye,
Right as an hunter can abide
The beste till he seith his tide
To shote at godenesse to the dere,
Whan that him nedith go no nere.

And so besil I restid me
Besides a wel undir a tre,
Whiche tre in Fraunce men cal a Pine,
But since the time of King Pepine
Ne grewe there tre in mann's sight
So faire, ne so wel woxe in hight;
In all that yarde so high was none;
And springing in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sothe to tell,
Under that pine tre a well,
And on the bordir al without
Was written in the stone about
Letteris smal, that saidin thus,
Here whilome starfe faire Narcissus.

Narcissus was a bachilere
That Love had caught in his daungere,
And in his nette gan him so straine,
And did him so to wepe and plaine,
That nede him must his life forgo
For a fair lady hight Echo
Him loved over any cature,
And gan for him suche paine endure,
That on a time she him tolde
That if he her ne lovin wolde
That her behovid nedis die;
There laie none othir remedie.

But nathellese for his beaute
So feirs and dangerous was he,
That he n'olde grauntin her asking
For weping ne for faire praying.

And when she herde him werne her so
She had in hert so gret wo,
And toke it in so grette dispite,
That she withoutin more respite
Was dede anon; but ere she diede
Ful piteously to God she preide
That the proude hertid Narcissus,
That was in love so dangerous,
Might on a day ben hampered so
For love, and bene so hote for wo,
That ner he might to joie attaine,
Than should he fele in every vaine
What sorow true loveris maken
That ben villainously forsaken.

This prayir was but resonable,
Therefore God helde it ferme and stable,
For Narcissus, shortly to tell,
By aventure came to that well
To rest him in the shadowing
O day when he came from hunting.

This Narcissus had suffrid paines,
For renning all day in the plaines,
And was for thirst in greate distresse
Of herte, and of his werinesse,
That had his brethe almost benomen,
Whan he was to that wel icomen,

That shadowed was with braunchis grene,
He thought of thilke watir shene
To drinke, and freshe him wele withall,
And doune on knees he gan to fall,
And forth his necke and hed outstraught;
To drinkin of that well a draught;
And in the watre' anone was sene
His nose, his mouthe, his eyin, shene,
And he therof was all abashed,
His owne shadowe had him betrashed,
For wel wende he the forme to se
Of a childe of full grette beaute:
Full well couth Love him wreke tho
Of daungir and of pride also
That Narcissus somtime him bere;
He quite him well his guerdon there;
For he musid so in the well
That shortly, the sothe to tell,
He lovid his owne shadowe so
That at the last he starfe for wo;
For whan he sawe that he his will
Might in no manir way fulfill,
And that he was so faste caught
That he him couthe comfort naught,
He lost his witte right in that place,
And deide within a litill space;
And thus his warison he toke
For the lady that he forfoke.

Ladies, I praie ensample taketh,
Ye that ayenst your love mistaketh;
If of ther deth you be to wite
Good can ful wel your wile quite.

Whan this letter, of whiche I tell,
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narcissus in his beaute,
I gan anon withdrawe me
When it fell in my remembraunce
That him betide suche a mischaunce;
But at the laste than thoughtin I
That scathellese full sickirly
I might unto the welle go,
Wherof shull I abashin so?
Unto the welle than went I me,
And doune I loutid for to se
The clere watir in the stone,
And eke the gravel, whiche that shone
Doune in th' botom as silvir fine,
For of the welle this is the line,
In world is none so clere of hewe,
The watre is ever fresh and newe,
That welmith up with wavis bright
The mountenaunce of two fingir hight,
About it is the grasse springing
For moiste so thicke and weil liking
That it ne may in wintir die
No more than may the fee be drie.

Doune at the botome set sawe I
Two cristal stonis craftily,
In thilke freshe and faire well;
But o thinge sothly dare I tell
That ye woll holde a grette mervailo
Whan it is tolde withoutin faile,

For whan the funnè clere in sight
 Cast in that welle his bemis bright,
 And that the hete descendid is,
 Than taketh the cristall stone i-wis
 Againe the sunne an hundrid hewis,
 Blewe, yelow, red, that fresh and new is,
 Yet hath the mervailous cristall
 Suche strength that the place ovir all,
 Both foule and tre, and levis grene,
 And all the yerde, in it is sene:
 And for to don you to' undirtonde
 To make ensample wol I fonde;
 Right as a mirroure opinly
 Shewith al thing that stondeth thereby,
 As well the colour as figure,
 Withoutin any covirture,
 Right so the cristall stone shining,
 Withoutin any disceving,
 The entrees of the yerde accuseth
 To him that in the watir museth,
 For evir in whiche halfe ye be
 Ye may wele halfe the gardine se,
 And if ye turne ye may right wele
 Sene the remenaunt every dele,
 For there is none so litil thing
 So hid ne clofin with shiting
 That it n'is sene, as though it were
 Ypainted in the cristall there.
 This is the mirroure perillus
 In whiche the proude Narcissus
 Sey al his fairè face so bright
 That made him sith to lie upright,
 For who so loke in that mirroure
 There may nothing ben his socour
 That he ne shal there se somthing
 That shal him lede into laughing:
 Ful many' a worthy man hath it
 Yblent, for folke of gretist wit
 Ben sone ycaught here and ywaitid;
 Withouten respite ben they baited:
 Here comith to folke of newe rage,
 Here chaungith many wight corage,
 Here lithe no rede ne witte therto,
 For Venus sonne, Dan Cupido,
 Hath sowin there of love the fede,
 That helpe ne lithe there non ne rede,
 So cerclith it the welle about;
 His ginnis hath he set without,
 Right for to catche in his panter
 These damofels and bachilers;
 Love will none othir birdis catche
 Though he set eithir nette or lache;
 And for the fede that here was sowen
 This welle is cleped, as well is knowen,
 The Welle of Love of very right,
 Of whiche there heth ful many wight
 Spokin in bokis diversely;
 But thei shul ner so verily
 Discripcion of the welle here,
 Ne eke the sothe of this matere,
 As ye shul whan I have undo
 The crafte that here belongith to.

Alway me likid for to dwell
 To sene the cristall in the well,
 That shewid me ful opinly
 A thousande thingis faste by;
 But I may saie in fory houre
 Stode I to lokin or to poure,
 For sithin I fore have ylikid
 That mirroure hath me now entriked;
 But had I first knowen in my wit
 The vertu and strengthis of it,
 I n'oldè not have musid there;
 Me had bettir ben ellis-where,
 For in the snare I fell anone
 That had bitreshid many one.
 In thilkè mirroure sawe I tho,
 Among a thousande thingis mo,
 A rosir chargid ful of rosis,
 That with an hedge aboute enclosed is;
 Tho had I fuche lust and envie,
 That for Paris ne for Pavie
 N'oldè I have left to gone and se
 There gretist hepe of rosis be.
 Whan I was with this rage yhente,
 That caught hath many' a man and shente,
 Towarde the rosir gan I go,
 And whan I was not ferre there fro
 The favour of the rosis sote
 Me smote right to the hertè rote,
 As I had all enbaumid me;
 And if I n'ad endoutid me
 To have ben hatid or assailed
 My thankis wol I not have failed
 To pull a Rose of al that route
 To berin in mine honde aboute,
 And smellin to it where I went;
 But er I dredde me to repent,
 And leste it grevid or forthought
 The lorde that thilkè gardin wrought.
 Of rosis there werin grete wone,
 So faire werin nevir in Rone;
 Of knoppis close some sawe I there,
 And some wel bettir woxin were,
 And some there ben of othir moison,
 That drowè nigh to ther seson,
 And spedde 'hem faste for to spredde;
 I lovè wel fuche rosis redde,
 For brode rosis and open' also
 Ben passid in a daie or two,
 But knoppis wollin freshe be
 Two daies at lest or ellis thre:
 The knoppis gretely likid me,
 For fairir maie there no man se;
 Who so might havin one of all
 It ought him ben ful lese withall:
 Might I garlonde of 'hem gotten
 For no richeffe I wolde it letten.
 Amonges the knoppis I chese one
 So faire, that of the remenaunt none
 Ne preise I halfe so wel as it
 Whan I avisin in my wit;
 It so wel was enluminid
 With colour red, as well finid.

As Nature couth it makin faire,
 And it hath levis wel foure paire,
 That Kind hath set through his knowing;
 Aboute the redde rosis springing
 The stalke ywas as rishe right,
 And theron stode the knoppe upright,
 That it ne bowed upon no side;
 The sote smell ysprong so wide
 That it died al the place aboute:
 Whan I had smelled the favour sote
 No will had I fro thence yet go,
 But somdele nere it went I tho
 To take it, but mine honde for drede
 Ne durst I to the Rose bede
 For thisteles sharpe of many maners,
 Netlis, thornis, and hokid briers,
 For mucche they distourblid me,
 For fore I dradde to harmid be.

The god of Love, with bowe ybent,
 That al daie set had his talent
 To pursue and to spyin me,
 Was stondin by a figge tre,
 And whan he sawe how that I
 Had chosin so ententifely
 The bothum more unto my pay
 Than any othir that I say,
 He toke an arowe sharply whette,
 And in his bowe when it was sette
 He streight up to his ere ydrough
 The stronge bowe that was so tough,
 And shotte at me so wondir smerte
 That through mine eye unto mine herte
 The takil smote, and depe it wente,
 And therewith al such colde me hente
 That undir clothis warme and fofte
 Sin that day I have chivered ofte.

Whan I was hurte thus in stounde
 I fell doune plat unto the grounde,
 Mine herte failid and faintid aie,
 And longé time in swoun I laie;
 But whan I came out of swouning,
 And hadde my witte and my feling,
 I was all mate, and wende full wele
 Of blode t' have lorne a full grete dele,
 But certes th' arowe that in me stode
 Of me ne drewe no droppe of blode;
 For why? I founde my woundes all drie.

Than toke I with mine hondis tweie
 The 'arowe, and full fast it out plight,
 And in the pulling fore I fight;
 So at the last the shaft of tre
 I drough out with the fethirs thre,
 But yet the hokid hedde i-wis,
 The whiche Beaute ycallid is,
 Gan so depe in mine herte pace
 That I it ne might not arace,
 But in mine herte still it stode,
 All bledde I not a droppe of blode:
 I was bothe anguishous and trouble
 For the perill that I sawe double;
 I ne wist what to saie or doe,
 Ne get a leche my woundis to,

For neither thorough grasse ne rote
 Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote,
 But to the bothum evir mo
 Mine herte drewe, for all my wo
 My thought was in none othir thing,
 For had it ben in my keping
 It would have brought my life again,
 For certis evenly, I dare fain,
 The sight onely and the favour
 Aleggid moche of my languor.

Than gan I for to drawe me
 Toward the bothum faire to se,
 And Love had gette him in this throwe
 An othir arowe into' his bowe,
 And for to shotin gan him dresse;
 The arowes name was Simplenesse:
 And whan that Love gan nigh me nere
 He drowe it up withoutin were,
 And shote at me with all his might,
 So that this arowe anone right
 Throughout mine eigh, as it was founde,
 Into mine herte hath made a wounde:
 Than I anone did all my craft
 For to ydrawin out the shaft,
 And therewithall I fighid est;
 But in mine hert the hedde was left,
 Whiche aie encresid my desire;
 Unto the bothum drewe I nere,
 And evirmo that me was wo
 The more desire had I to go
 Unto the rofir, where that grewe
 The freshe bothom so bright of hewe:
 Bettir me were to' have lettin be,
 But it behovid nedis me
 To doen right as mine herte badde,
 For er the body must be ladde
 Aftir the herte in wele and wo,
 Of force togithir thei must go;
 But nevir this archir would fine
 To shote at me with all his pine,
 And for to make me to him miete.

The thirde arowe he gan to shete,
 Whan best his time he might espie,
 The whiche was namid Curtisie,
 Into mine herte he did avale:
 A swoun I fell bothe dedde and pale
 Long time I laie, and stirid nought
 Till I abraied out of my thought,
 And faste than I avisid me
 To drawin out the shaft of tre;
 But aye the hedde was leste behinde
 For ought I couthe pull or winde;
 So sore it sticked whan I was hit
 That by no crafte I might it flit,
 But anguishous and full of thought
 I felt soche wo my wounde aie wrought,
 That somoned me alwaie to go
 Toward the Rose that plesed me so;
 But I ne durst in no manere,
 Because the archir was so nere.

For evirmore gladly, as I rede,
 Brent child of fire hath mochil drede:
 And certis yet for all my pain
 Though that I figh, yet arowis rein,

And ground quarelis, sharpe of stele;
 Ne for no pain that I might fele,
 Yet might I not my self with hold
 The faire rosir to behold,
 For Love me yave soche hardiment
 For to fulfill his commaundement;
 Upon my fete I rose up than
 Feble as a forwounded man,
 And forthe to gon my might I fet,
 And for the archir n'olde I let:
 Toward the rosir fast I drowe,
 But thornis sharpe mo than inow
 There were, and also thistels thicke,
 And breris brimmè for to pricke,
 That I ne might ygettin grace
 Through the rough thornis for to pace
 To sene the rosis freshe of hewe;
 I must abide though it me rewe:
 The hedge about so thicke was,
 That closed the rosis in compas.

But o thing likid me right wele,
 I was so nigh that I might fele
 Of the bothom the sote odour,
 And also se the freshe coloure,
 And that right gretely likid me
 That I so nere mightin it se;
 Soche joie anon thereof had I
 That I forgate my malady;
 To sene it I had soche delite
 Of woe and angre' I was all quite,
 And of my woundes that I had thore,
 For nothing likin me might more
 Than dwellin by the rosir aie,
 And thens nevir to passe awaie:
 But whan a while I had be thare
 The god of Love, whiche all to share
 Mine herte with his arowis kene,
 Casteth him to yeve me woundis grene;
 He shote at me full hastily
 An arowe namid Companie,
 The whichè takil is full able
 To make these ladies merciàble;
 Than I anon gan chaungin hewe
 For grevaunce of my woundè newe,
 That I again fell in fwouning,
 And fighid fore in complaining.

Sore I complained that my fore
 On me gan grevin more and more;
 I had none hope of allegiaunce,
 So nigh I drowe to disperaunce;
 I ne nought of deth ne of life,
 Whethir that Love ywould me drife;
 If me a martir wold he make
 I might his powir not forsake:
 And while for angir thus I woke
 The god of Love and arowe toke
 Full sharp it was and full pounaunt,
 And it was callid Faire Semblaunt,
 The whichè in no wise would consent
 That any lover him repent
 To serve his love with herte and all
 For any perill that maie fall:
 But though this arowe was kene grounde
 As any rafor that is founde

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To cutte and kervin at the point,
 The god of Love it had anoint
 With a full precious ointment,
 Some dele to yeve elegement
 Upon the woundis that he hade
 Thorough the eye in my herte made,
 To helpe her soris and to cure,
 And that thei maie the bette indure;
 But yet this arowe without more
 Made in mine herte a largè fore,
 That in full grete pain I abode,
 But aie the ointment went abroad;
 Throughout my woundis large and wide
 It sprede about in every side,
 Thorough whose vertue and whose might
 Mine hertè joifull was and light;
 I had ben dedde and all to shent
 But for the precious ointment.
 The shaft I drowe out of the arowe,
 Roking for wo right wondir narowe,
 But the hedde, whiche that made me smerte,
 I left behindè in mine herte
 With othir fower, I dare well saie,
 That nevir woll be toke awaie;
 But the ointment halpè me wele,
 And yet soche sorowe did I fele,
 That allè daie I chaungid hewe
 Of my woundis so freshe and newe,
 As men might se in my visage:
 The arowes were so full of rage,
 So variaunt of diversite,
 That men in evèriche might se
 Both grete anoie and eke swetnesse:
 And joie ymeint with bittirnesse:
 Now were thei esy and now wode;
 In them I felt bothe harme and gode;
 Now fore without alleggement,
 Now softning with the ointment:
 It softenid here and prickid there;
 Thus ese and angir were yfere.

The god of Love deliverly
 Came lepande to me hastily,
 And sayid to me in grete jape,
 Yelde the, for thou maie not escape,
 Maie no defence availe the here,
 Therefore I rede make no daungere:
 If thou wolt yelde the hastily
 Thou shalt the rathir have mercie;
 He is a folè in sikernesse
 That with daungir or with stoutnesse
 Rebellith there that he should plese;
 In soche folie is little ese;
 Be meke where thou must nedis bowe;
 To strive ayen is not thy prowè:
 Come at onis, and have idoc,
 For I wollè that it be so;
 Than yelde the here debonairly.
 And I answerid full humbly,
 All gladly, Sir, at your bidding
 I woll me yelde in allè thing:
 To your service I woll me take,
 For God defende that should make

Ayen your bidding resistance;
 I woll not doen so grete offence,
 For if I did it were no skill;
 Ye maie do with me what ye will,
 Or save or spill, and also flo;
 Fro you in no wise may I go;
 My life, my deth, is in your honde,
 I maie not laste out of your bonde;
 Plaine at your liste I yeldè me,
 Hoping in hert that somtime ye
 Comforte and ese shuld to me sende,
 Or els shortly, this is the ende,
 Withoutin helth I mote aie dure!
 But if ye take me to your cure:
 Comforte or helth how shuld I have,
 Sithe ye me hurte, but ye may save?
 The helth of Love mote be yfounde
 Where as thei tokin first the wounde;
 And if ye liste of me to make
 Your prisoner, I woll it take
 Of herte and will fully at gre:
 Wholy and plaine I yeldè me
 Withoutin feining or feintise.
 To be governed by you emprise:
 Of you I here so mochil prife
 I wol ben whole at your devise
 For to fulfill all your liking,
 And to repent in for nothing,
 Hoping to have yet in some tide
 Mercy of that that I abide:
 And with that covenaut yelde I me,
 Anon doune kneeling on my kne,
 Profiring for to kisse his fete,
 But for nothing he would me lete;
 And said, I love the both and preise,
 Sens that thine answere doth me ese,
 For thou answered so curtisly;
 For nowe I wote well uttirly
 That thou art gentil by thy speche,
 For though a man ferre would seche,
 He should not find in certaine
 No suche answere of no vilaine,
 For such a worde ne mighte nought
 Issue out of a vilaines thought:
 Thou shalt not lesin of thy speche,
 For thy helping willin I eche
 And eke encrefin that I maie;
 But first I woll that thou obaie
 Fully for thine own avauntage
 Anone to do me here homage,
 And sithin kisse thou shalt my mouthe,
 Whiche to no vilaine was ner couthe
 For to' aproche it ne for to touche;
 For fause of cherlis I ne vouche
 That thei shal nevir neigh it nere;
 For curteis and of faire manere,
 Wel taught and ful of gentilnesse,
 He must yben that shall me kisse,
 And also of ful highe fraunchise
 That shal atteine to that emprise.
 And first of o thing warne I the,
 That paine and gret adversite
 He mote endure, and eke travaile,
 That shal me serve withoutin faile;

But there against the to comforte,
 And with thy service to disporte,
 Thou maist ful glad and joyfull be
 So gode a maister to have as me,
 And lordè of so high renoun;
 I bere of Love the gonfenoun,
 And of Curtisie the banere,
 For I am of selfe the manere,
 Gentill and curteis, meke and fre,
 That who evir ententise be
 Me to honour, re-doute, and serve,
 And also that he him observe
 Fro trespace and fro villanie,
 And him governe in curtisie,
 With will and with entencion;
 For when he first in my prison
 Is caught, than must be uttirly
 Fro thennis-forth ful besily
 Ycast him gentill for to be,
 Yf he desire helpe of me.
 Anone withoutin more delaie,
 Withoutin daungir or affraie,
 I become his vassal anone,
 And gave him thanks many a one,
 And knelid doune with hondis joint,
 And made it in my porte full queint:
 The joye went to my hert's rote
 Whan I had kised his mouthe so sote;
 I had suche mirth and such liking
 It curid me of languishing.
 He asked of me than hostages;
 I have takin fele homages
 Of one and othir where I have bene,
 Distreinid ofte withoutin wene:
 These felons ful of falsite
 Have many sithes begilid me,
 And through falsheid ther lust achieved,
 Wherof I repent and am greved:
 And I 'hem gettee in my daungere
 Ther falsheed shul thei bie ful dere;
 But for I love the I saie the plaine
 I woll of the be more certaine,
 For the fore I will now ybinde
 That thou away ne shalt not winde
 For to denien thy covenant
 Or done that is not avenaunt:
 That thou were false it wer grete ruth,
 Sithe thou semist so ful of truth.
 Sir, if the liste to understaunde
 I merveile the' asking this demaunde:
 For why or wherfore shoulde ye
 Hostage or borowes aske of me,
 Or any othir sikirnesse,
 Sithin ye wote in sothfastnesse
 That ye me have surprisid so,
 And whole mine herte takin me fro,
 That it woll doe for me nothing
 But if it be at your bidding?
 Mine hert is yours, and mine right nought,
 As it behoveth, in dede and thought,
 Redy in all to worche your will,
 Whethir so tourne to gode or ill;
 So fore it lustith you to plesse
 No man therof maie you disese

Ye have theron set soche justice
That it is werried in many wise;
And if ye doubt in n'olde obaie
Ye maie therof do make a kaie
And hold it with you for hostage,
Now, certis, this is none outrage.
(Quod Love) and fully I accorde,
For of the body' he is full lorde
That hath the herte in his trefore;
Outrage it were to askin more.

Than of his aumener he drough
A little keie fetise inough,
Whiche was of gold polished clere,
And saied to me, With this keie here
Thine herte to me now woll I shet,
For all thy joifull loke and knet
I binde undir this little keie,
That no wight maie cary awaie.

This keie is full of grete postre,
With whiche anone he touchid me
Undir the side full softly,
That he mine herte sodainly
Without any doute hath so spered
That yet right nought it hath me dered.

Whan he had doin his will all out,
And I had put him out of dout,
Sir, I saied, I have right grete will
Your lust and plesure to fulfill,
Loke ye my service take at grete
By thilk faith ye owe to me;
I saie nought for recreaundise,
For I nought doubt of your service.

But this servaunt travaileth in vain
That for the servin doeth his pain
Unto that lorde which in no wise
Conne him no thanke for his service.

Love sayid tho, Dismaie the nought;
Sithe thou for succour hast me sought
In thanke thy service woll I take,
And high of degre woll the mak
If Wickednesse ne hindir the,
But (as I hope) it shall nought be;
To worship no wight by' aventure
Maie come but that he pain endure.

Abide and suffre thy distresse
That hurtith now; it shall be lesse:
I wote my self what maie the save,
What medicine thou wouldist have.

And if thy truth to me thou kepe
I shall unto thine helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene;
Where so that thei be old or grene;
Thou shalt be holpen, at wordis few,
For certainly thou shalt well shewe
Where that thou servist with gode will,
For to acomplishe and fulfill
My commaundementis daie and night,
Whiche I to lovirs yave of right.

Ah Sir! for Godd'is love (saied I)
Er ye passe hens ententifely
Your commaundementes to me saie,
And I shall kepe hem if I maie,
For them to kepen'is all my thought;
And if so be I wote hem nought
Than maie I erre unwittingly;
Wherefor I praie you entirly
With all mine herte me for to lere,
That I trespase in no manere.

The god of Love than chargid me
Anon, as ye shall here and se
Wordè by worde, by right emprise,
So as The Romaunt shall devise.

The maistr lefith time to lere
Whan the disciple woll not here;
It is but vain on him to swinke
That on his lerning woll not thinke:
Who so lust love let him intende,
For now The Romance ginneth to amende.

Now is gode to herin in saie,
If any be that can it saie,
And point it as the reson is
Yset, for othir gate i-wis
It shall nat well in alle thing
Be brought to gode understanding;
For a rede that pointith ill
A gode sentence maie o tin spill.
The boke is gode at the ending,
Ymade of newe and lustie thing,
For who so woll the ending here
The craft of Love he shall now lere;
If that he woll so long abide
Till I this Romaunce maie unhide,
And undoe the signifaunce
Of this dremè into Romaunce:
The sothfastnesse that now is hid
Without coverture shall be kid
Whan I undoen have this dreming,
Wherein no wordè is of lesing.

Villanie at the beginning
I woll, saied Love, ovir all thing
Thou leve, if that thou wolt ybe
Falso, and trespase ayenist me:
I curse and blame generally
All them that lovin villanie,
For villanie makith villaine,
And by his dedes a chorle is seine.

These villains arne without pite,
Frendship and love, and all bounte:
I n'ill receive to my service
Them that ben vilains of emprise.

But undirstonde in thine entent
That this is not mine entendement
To clepin no wight in no age
Onely gentill for his linage,
But who so that is vertuons,
And in his port not outrageous:
Whan soche one thou seest the before,
Though he be not gentill yborne,

Thou mayist well seine this in soth
 That he is gentill, bicause he doth
 As longith to a gentil man;
 Of them none othir deme I can,
 For certainly withouten drede
 A chorle is demid by his dede
 Or hie or lowe, as ye maie se,
 Or of what kinrid that he be;
 Ne saie nought for non evill will
 Thing which that is to holdin still:
 It is no worship to misseie,
 Thou maiest ensample take of Keie,
 That was somtime for missaying
 Yhatid bothe of old and yong:
 As ferre as Gawein the worthie
 Was praisid for his curtisie
 Kaie was hatid, for he was fell,
 Of worde dispitous and cruell;
 Wherefore be wise and aqueintable,
 Godelie of worde, and resonable,
 Bothè to lesse and eke to mare:
 And whan thou comist there men are
 Loke that thou have in custome aie
 First to salue 'hem if thou maie;
 And if it fall that of 'hem somme
 Salue the first, be thou not domme,
 But quite him curtisly anon,
 Without abiding, er thei gon.

For nothing eke thy tong applie
 To spekin wordes of ribaudrie:
 To vilaine speche in no degre
 Late not thy lippe unboundin be,
 For I nought holde him in gode faith
 Curteis that foulè wordis saith
 And allè women serve and preise,
 And to thy power there honour reise;
 And if that any missayrre
 Dispise women that thou maist here,
 Blame him, and bidde him holde him still;
 And sette thy might and al thy will
 Women and ladies for to plesse,
 And to do thing that may 'hem esse,
 That thei evir speke gode of the,
 For so thou maist best praisid be.

Loke that fro pride thou kepe the wele,
 For thou maist both perceive and fele
 That pride is both foly and sinne;
 And he that pride hath him within
 Ne may his hertè in no wise
 Mekin, ne souplin to service,
 For pride is founde in every parte,
 Contrarie unto Lov's arte;
 And he that lovith truily
 Should him containè jolily
 Withouten pride in sondry wise,
 And him disguisin in queintice;
 For queinte aray, withoutin drede,
 Is nothin proude, who takith hede,
 For Freshe aray, as men may se,
 Withouten pride may oftin be.

Maintaine thy selfe astir thy rent
 Of robe and eke of garment,
 For many a sithe faire clothing
 A man amendith in muche thinge.

And loke alway that thei be shape
 (What garment that thou shalt the make)
 Of him that can the best ydo,
 With al that parteinith therto,
 Pointis and sleeves be wel sittande
 Ful right and streight upon the hande:
 Of shone and botis newe and faire
 Loke at the lest thou have a paire,
 And that thei sitte so fetously
 That these rude men may uttirly
 Mervaille, sith that thei sitte so plaine,
 How thei come on or of againe:
 Were streightè glovis, with aumere
 Of filke: and alway with gode chere
 Thou yeve, if that thou have richesse,
 And if thou have nought spende the lesse:
 Alway be mery if thou maie,
 But wastè not thy god alwaie;
 Have hatte of flouris freshe as May,
 Chapelet of rosis of Whitsondaie.
 For soche araie costnith but lite;
 Thine hondis washe, thy tethe make white,
 And let no filthe upon the be:
 Thy nails blacke if thou maiest se
 Voide it awaie deliviry;
 And kembe thine hedde right jolily:
 Farce not thy visage in no wise,
 For that of Love is nat th' emprise,
 For Love doeth hatin, as I finde,
 A beautie that cometh nat of kinde:
 Alwaie in herte I redè the
 Ful glad and mery for to be,
 And be as joyfull as thou can;
 Love hath no joie of sorowfull man,
 That ill is full of curtisie,
 That knowith in his maladie
 For evir of love the sickenesse
 Is meint with swete and bittirnesse.
 The fore of love is mervailous,
 For now the lovir is joious,
 Now can he plain, now can he grone,
 Now can he singe, now makin mone;
 To daie he plaineth for hevinessse,
 To morue' he plaineth for jolinessse.
 The life of love is full contrarie,
 Whiche stoundè mele can oftin varie;
 But if thou canist mirthis make
 That men in gre woll gladly take
 Do it godely, I commaunde the;
 For men shuld, where so er thei be,
 Doe thing that 'hem besitting is,
 For therof cometh gode loos and pris;
 Whereof that thou be vertuous
 Ne be nat straunge ne dangerous;
 For if that thou gode ridir be
 Prickle gladly that men maie the se:
 In armis also if thou conne
 Pursue till thou a name hast wonne:
 And if thy voice be faire and clere
 Thou shalt makin no grete daungere;
 Whan the to sing thei godely praie
 It is thy worship for to obaie:
 Also to you it longith aie
 To harpe and giterne, daunce and plaie;

For if he can well fote and daunce
 It maie him gretely doe avaunce,
 Emong eke for thy ladie sake
 Songis and complaintes that thou make,
 For that woll mevin in her herte
 Whan that thei redin of thy smerte :
 Loke that no man for scarce the holde,
 For that maie greve the manifolde ;
 Refon woll that a lovir be
 In his yeftis more large and fre
 Than chorles that ben not of loving ;
 For who therof can any thing
 He shall be lese aie for to yeve,
 In londis lore who so would leve,
 For he that through a sodain fight
 Or for a kissing anon right,
 Yave whole his herte in will and thought,
 And to himself kepith right nought,
 Aftir this swift gift 'tis but reason
 He give his gode too in a bandon.

Now woll I shortly here reherce
 Of that I have ysaied in verce
 Alle the sentence by and by
 In wordis fewe compendiously,
 That thou the bet maieft on 'hem thinke
 Wher so it be thou wake or winke,
 For the wordis do little greve
 A man to kepe whan thei be breve.

Who so with Love woll gon or ride
 He mote be curteis, voide of pride,
 Merie, and full of jolite,
 And of largeffe a losid be.

First I joigne the here in penaunce
 That evir without repentaunce
 Thou set thy thought in thy loving
 To last withoutin repenting,
 And think upon thy mirthis swete
 That shall folue' aftir whan ye mete.

And for thou true to Love shalt be
 I will and eke commaunde the
 That in one place thou set all whole
 Thine herte, withoutin halfin dole,
 For trecherie and sikirnesse,
 For I loved nevir doublenesse.
 To many' his herte that woll depart
 Everiche shall have but little part,
 But of him drede I me right nought
 That in one place settith his thought ;
 Therefore in o place thou it set,
 And let it nevir thennis flet,
 For if thou yevest it in lening
 I holde it but a wretchid thing ;
 Therefore yevith it whole and quite,
 And thou shalt have the more merite :
 If it be lent than aftir soen
 The bounte and the thanke is doen ;
 But in love a fre yevin thing
 Requirith a grete guerdoning.

Yeve it in yest all quite fully,
 And make thy gift debonairly,
 For men that yest holdin more dere
 That yevin is with gladsome chere.

That giste nought to praisin is
 That a man gevith mal gre his.
 Whan thou hast yeven thine hert (as I
 Have said the here all opinly)
 Than aventuris shall the fall
 Whiche hard and hevy ben with all ;
 For ofte whan thou bethinkeft the
 Of thy loving, where so thou be,
 Fro folke thou must depart in hie,
 That pone perceive thy maladie,
 But hide thine harme thou must alone
 And go forth sole and make thy mone.
 Thou shalt no while be in o state,
 But whilom colde and whilom hate,
 Now red as rose, now yelow' and fade :
 Such sorow I trow thou ner had ;
 Cotidien ne the quarteine
 It is not half so full of peine ;
 For oftin timis it shal fal
 In love, among thy painis al,
 That thou thy selfin all wholly
 Foryettin shalt so uttirly
 That many timis thou shalt be
 Still as an image made of tre,
 Domme as a stone, without stering
 Of fote or honde, without speking.

And than sone aftir al thy paine
 To memo'rie shalt thou come againe,
 A man abashid wondir fore,
 And aftir sighin more and more ;
 For wit thou wele withoatin wene
 In suche a state ful ofte have bene
 That have the' evill of love affaide,
 Where thorough thou art so dismaide.

Aftir a thought shal take the so
 That thy love is to ferre the fro,
 Thou shalt sa (God) what may this be
 That I ne may my lady se ?
 Mine hert alone is to her go,
 And I abide al sole in wo,
 Departid fro mine ownè thought,
 And with mine eyin se right nought.

Alas ! mine cien sene I ne may
 My carefull herte to convay ;
 Mine hert'is guidè but thei be
 I praise nothing what er thei se ;
 Shul thei abidin than ? why, nay,
 But gone and se without delay
 That whiche mine hert desirith so,
 For certainly but if thei go
 I sole my selfe I may well holde
 Whan I ne se what mine hert wolde
 Wherefore I wol gone her to sene,
 Or esid shall I nevir bene
 But that I have some tokining.

Than goft thou forth without dwelling
 But ofte thou failest of thy desire
 Er thou maieft come her any nere,
 And waistist in vaine thy passage ;
 Than falist thou in a newe rage ;
 For want of sight thou ginnist murne,
 And homwarde pensife dost returne.

In grete mischefe than shalt thou be,
For than againe shal come to the
Sighis and plaintis, with newe wo,
That no itching prickith the so;
Who wote it nought he maie go lere
Of them that buyin love so dere.

No thing thine hert appesin maie,
'That oft thou wolt gone and assaie
If thou maist sene by aventure
'Thy liv'is joye, thine hert'is cure;
So that by grace if that thou might
Attaine of her to have a sight
'Than shalt thou done non othir dede
But with that sight thine eyin fede.
'That faire freshe whan thou maist se
'Thine hert shal so ravishid be
'That ner thou woldest thy thankis lete,
Ne remove for to se that swete:
The more thou seeest, in sothfastnesse,
The more thou covitest that swetenesse;
The more thine herte brennith in fire
The more thine herte is in desire,
For who confidritn every dele,
It may be likened wondir welé
The paine of love unto a fere,
For evirmore thou neighist nere
In thought, or how so that it be,
(For very sothe I tel it the)

'The hotter evir shalt thou brenne,
As experience shall the kenne;
Where so comist in any coste
Who is next fire he brennith mozte:
And yet forsothe for al thine hete,
Though thou for love swelte and swete,
Ne for no thing thou felin may,
'Thou shalt not wille to passe away;
And though thou go, yet must the nede
'Thinkin al day on her faire hede
Whom thou behelde with so gode will,
And holde thy selfe begilid ill
'That thou ne haddest none hardiment
To shewe her aught of thine entent;
'Thine hert ful sore thou wolt dispise,
And eke reprove of cowardise,
'That thou so dull in every thing
Were domme for drede without speking.

Thou shalt eke thinke thou diddest foly
That thou were her so faste bie
And durst not venture the to say
Some thing er that thou came away,
For thou haddist no more wonne
To speke of her whan thou begonne;
But yet if she would for thy sake
In armis godely the have take,
It should have be more worthe to the
Than of tresour a grete plente.

Thus shalt thou morne and eke complaine,
And get encheson t'o gon againe
Unto thy walke or to thy place
Where thou behelde her fleshy face;
And n'ere for false suspicion
'Thou woldist finde occasion
For to gone in unto her house;
'Thou arne than so desirous

A sight of her but for to have,
If thou thine honour mightist save,
Or any crande mightist make,
Thidir for thy lov'is sake,
Ful faine thou woldist, but for drede
Thou goest not, lest that men take hede;
Wherfore I rede in thy going,
And also' in thine againe comming,
Thou be wel ware that men ne wit;
Feine the othir cause than it
To go that waie, or faste bie;
To helin wel is no folie;
And if so be it happè the
That thou thy love there maistie yse,
In sikir wise thou her salewe,
Wherwith thy coloure wold transmewe,
And eke thy bloud shal al to quake,
Thy hewe eke chaungin for her sake,
But worde and wit, with chere ful pale,
Shul want for to tellin thy tale;
And if thou maist so ferforth winne
That thou to reson durst beginne,
And woldist faine thre thinges or mo,
Thou shalt ful scarsly faine the two;
Though thou bethinke the ner so wele
Thou shalt foryetin yet somdele.

But if thou dele with trechery,
For false lovirs mowe all fully
Sain what 'hem lust withoutin dred,
Thei be so double' in ther falsshed,
For thei in hert can thinke o thing
And faine an othre' in ther speking:
And whan thy speche is endid all
Right thus to the it shal befall;
If any worde than come to minde
That thou to say hast left behinde,
Than thou shalt brenne in grete martire,
For thou shalt brenne as any fire:
This is the strife and eke the' affraie,
And the batill, that lastith aie:
This bargaine ende may nevir take
But if that she thy pece wil make.

And whan the night is come anon
A thousande angres shal come on:
To bed as fast thou wolte the dight,
Where thou shalt have but smal delight,
For whan thou wenist for to slepe
So ful of paine shalt thou crepe,
Sterte in thy bed about ful wide,
And turne ful ofte on every side,
Now downward grouse, and now upright,
And walow in wo the long night:
Thine armis shalt thou sprede a brede
As man in warre were forwerede;
Than shal the come a remembraunce
Of her shape and of her femblaunce,
Wherto none othir may be pere:
And wete thou wel withoutin were
That the shal se somtime that night
That thou hast her that is so bright
Nakid bitwene thine armis there,
Al sothfastnesse as though it were;

Thou shalt make castels than in Spaine,
 And dreame of joy al but in vaine,
 And the delitin of right nought
 While thou so slombriest in that thought
 That is so swete and delitable,
 The whiche in sothe n'is but a fable,
 For it ne shall no while last:
 Than shalt thou sighe and wepe fast,
 And say, Dere God! what thing is this?
 My dreame is turnid al amis
 Whiche was ful swete and apparent,
 But now I wake it is al shent;
 Now yede this mery thought away;
 Twenty timis upon a day
 I would this thought would come againe,
 For it alegith wel my paine;
 It maketh me ful of joyfull thought;
 It sleeth me that it lastith nought:
 Ah Lorde! whi n'il ye me socoure?
 The joye I trowe that I langoure,
 The deth I would me shoulde flo
 While I lie in her armis two:
 Mine harme is harde withoutin wene,
 My gret unese ful ofte I mene.

But woulde Love do so I might
 Have fully joye of her so bright
 My paine were quitte me richily.
 Alas! to gret a thing aske I;
 It is but foly' and wrong wening
 To aske so outrageous a thing,
 And who so askith folily
 He mote be warnid hastily;
 And I ne wote what I may say,
 I am so ferre out of the way,
 For I would have ful grete liking
 And ful grete joy of lasse thing;
 For would she of her gentilnesse
 Withoutin more me onis kesse,
 It were to me a grete guerdon,
 Relese of all my passion:
 But it is harde to come therto;
 Al is but foly that I do;
 So highe I have mine herte sette
 Where that I may no comfort gette:
 I n'ote wher I say well or nought,
 But this I wote well in my thought,
 That it were bette of her alone
 For to stintin my wo and mone:
 A loke on her I cast godely
 Than for to have al uttirly
 Of an othir al whole the play.
 Ah Lord! where I shal bide the day
 That ere she shal my lady be?
 He is ful cured that may her se.
 Ah God! whan shal the dauning springe?
 To liggin thus is angry thing;
 I have no joy thus here to lie
 Whan that my love is not me bie:
 A man to lien hath grete disese
 Which maie not slepe ne rest in ese:
 I would it dawed and were now day,
 And that the night were went away,

For were it daye I would up rise:
 Ah slowe sonne! shewe thine enprise;
 Spede the to sprede thy bemis bright,
 And chace the derknesse of the night,
 To put away the stoundis strong
 Whiche in me lastin al to long.

The night shalt thou continue so
 Withoutin rest, in paine and wo;
 If er thou knew of love distresse
 Thou mowe lerne it in that likenesse;
 And thus enduring shalt thou lie,
 And rise on morow up erly
 Out of thy bed, and harneis the
 Er evir dawning thou maist se:
 Al privily than shalt thou gone,
 What wethre' it be, thy selfe alone,
 For reine or haile, for snowe for flete,
 Thidir she dwelleth that is so swete,
 The whiche maie fal a slepe be,
 And thinkith but lite upon the:
 Than shalt thou go, ful soule aserde,
 Loke if the gate be unsperde,
 And waite without in woe and paine,
 Full ill a colde in winde and raine:
 Than shalt thou go the dore before,
 If thou maiste findin any shore,
 Or hole, or reste, what ere it were;
 Than shalt thou stoupe and lay to ere
 If they within a slepe be,
 I mene al save thy lady fre,
 Whom waking if thou maist aspie
 Go put thy selfe in jupardie,
 To askin grace and the bimene,
 That she maie wete withoutin wene
 That thou all night no rest hast had,
 So fore for her thou were bestad.

Women wel ought pite to take
 Of them that sorowen for ther sake:
 And loke for love of that relike
 That thou thinkè none othir like,
 For whan thou hast so gret anney
 Shall kisse the er thou go away,
 And hold that in ful grete deinte:
 And for that no man shal the se
 Before the house ne in the way,
 Loke thou be gon againe er day:
 Suche comming and fuche going,
 Suche heviness and fuche walking,
 Makith lovirs withoutin wene
 Undir ther clothis pale and lene.
 Love ne leveth coloure ne clerenesse;
 Who lovith trewe hath no fatnesse.
 Thou shalt wel by thy selfin se
 That thou must nedes assavid be,
 For men that shape hem othir way
 Falsely ther ladies to betray
 No wondir is though thei be fatte,
 With false othis ther loves thei gatte,
 For ofte I se fuche losingeours
 Fattir than abottes or priours.

Yit with o thing I wolde the charge,
 That is to say, that thou be large
 Unto the maide that her doth serve;
 So best her thanke thou shalt deserve:

Yeve her geftis, and get her grace,
 For fo thou may thanke purchace,
 That ſhe the worthy holde and fre,
 'The lady' and al that may the fe ;
 Also her ſervauntes worſhip aie,
 And plesin as muthe as thou maie ;
 Grete gode through them may come to the,
 Bicaufe with her thei ben prive ;
 Thei ſhal her tell how thei the fande
 Curteis and wiſe, and wel doande,
 And ſhe ſhal preiſe the wel the more ;
 Loke out of londe thou be not fore,
 And if ſuche cauſe thou have that the
 Behoveth to gone out of countre,
 Leave wholely thine hert in hoſtage
 Til thou againe make thy paſſage :
 Thinke longe to ſe the ſwetè thing
 That hath thine hert in her keping.

Now have I told the in what wiſe
 A lovir ſhal do me ſervice ;
 Do it than if that thou wolt have
 The mede that thou doſt aftir crave,

Whan Love al this had bodin me
 I ſaid him, Sir, how may it be
 That lovirs may in ſuche manere
 Endure the paine ye have ſaid here ?
 I marvaillin me wondir faſte
 How any man may live or laſte
 In ſuche paine and in ſuch brenning,
 In ſorue' and thought, and ſuche fighing,
 Aie unrelſid wo to make
 Wher ſo it be thei ſlepe or wake,
 In ſuche anoy continually ;
 As helpe me God this mervaille I
 How man, but he were made of ſtele,
 Might live a monthe ſuch paines to ſele.

'The god of Love than ſaid to me,
 Frende, by the feith I owe to the
 May no man have gode but he' it bie ;
 A man lovith more tendirlic
 The thing that he hath bought moſt dere ;
 For wete thou well withoutin were
 In thanke that thing is takin more
 For which a man hath ſuffrid fore ;
 Certis no wo ne may attaine
 Unto the fore of lov'is paine,
 None evil therto may amounte,
 No more than a man may counte
 The droppes that of the watir be,
 For drie as wel the gretè ſe
 'Thou mightiſt as the harmiſt tell
 Of all them that with Love ydwell
 In ſervice, for peiné them fleeth,
 And that eche wouldè fle the deeth,
 And trewe thei ſhould nevir eſcape,
 Ne were that hope ycouth 'hem make
 Glad as a man in priſon ſete
 And maie not gettin for to ete
 But barlie bred and watir pure,
 And lieth in vermin and ordure ;

With allè this yet can he live.
 Gode hope ſuche comfort hath him yeve,
 Whiche makith wene that he ſhal be
 Releſed and come to liberte :
 In Fortune is fully his truſt
 Although he lie in ſtrawe or duſt ;
 In hope is al his ſuſtaining :
 So fare lovirs in ther wenning
 Whiche Love hath ſhitte in his priſoun,
 Gode hope is ther ſalvacioun ;
 Gode hope (how ſorè that thei ſmerte)
 Yevith 'hem bothè will and herte
 T' offere ther body to martyre,
 For hope ſo ſore doth 'hem deſire
 To ſuffire' eche harme that men deviſe
 For joye that aftirwarde ſhall riſe.

Hope in deſire catche victory,
 In hope of Love' is al the glory,
 For hope is all that Love maie yeve ;
 N'ere hope there ſhould no lengir live ;
 Bleſſid be hope! whiche with deſire
 Avaunceth lovirs in ſuch manire.
 Gode hope is curteife for to pleſe,
 'To kepe lovirs from all diſeſe :
 Hope kepeth his londe, and woll abide
 For any peril maie betide,
 For hope to lovirs, as moſt cheſe,
 Doth 'hem endurin all miſcheſe ;
 Hope is ther helpe whan miſtir is ;
 And I ſhal yeve the eke i-wis
 Thre othir thinges that gret ſolace
 Doth to them that be in my lace.

The firſt gode that may be yfounde
 To them that in my lace be bounde
 Is ſwetè thought, for to recorde
 Thingè wherwith thou canſt accorde
 Beſt in thine herte, whethir ſhe be
 Thinking in abſence gode to the.
 Whan any lovir doth complaine,
 And livith in diſtreſſe and paine,
 Than ſwetè thought ſhal come as blive
 Awaie his angre for to drive ;
 It makith lovirs have remembraunce
 Of comforte and of highe pleaſaunce
 That hope hath hight him for to winne ;
 For thought anone than ſhall beginne,
 As ferre God wote as he can finde,
 To make a mirroure of his minde,
 For to beholde he wol not let,
 Her perſon he ſhal force him ſet,
 Her laughing eyen perſaunt and clere,
 Her ſhape, her forme, her godely chere,
 Her mouthe, that is ſo gracious,
 So ſwete, and eke ſo ſavirous,
 Of al her fetirs ſhal take hede,
 His eyen with all her limmis fede.

Thus ſwete thinking ſhal aſwage
 The paine of lovirs and ther rage ;
 Thy joye ſhal double without geſſe
 Whan thou thinkiſt on her ſemelineſſe,
 Or of her laughing or her chere,
 That to the made thy lady dere ;

'This comfort wol I that thou take,
And if the nexte thou wolt forsake,
Whiche is not lesse favirous,
Thou shouldest not ben to daungirous.

The second shal be swete speche,
That hath to many one be leche,
To bring 'hem out of wo and were,
And helpe many a bachilere,
And many' a lady sent socour,
That had ylovid paramoure,
Thorough speking (whan thei might here)
Of their lovirs to them so dere;
To me it voidith al ther smerte
The whiche is closid in ther herte;
In hert it maketh 'hem glad and light,
Speche, whan thei mowe not havin sight;
And therefore nowe it cometh to minde
In oldè dawis, as I finde,
That clerkis written that her knewe
There was a lady freshe of hewe
Whiche of her love madin a song,
On him for to remembre' among,
In whiche she said, Whan that I here
Spekin of him that is so dere
To me it voidith allè smerte;
Iwis he sittith so nere myn herte,
To spek of him at eve or morowe
It curith me of al my sorowe;
To me is none so high plesaunce
As of his person daliaunce.
She wist ful wele that swete speking
Comfortith in ful mochil thing;
Her love she had full well assaide,
Of him she was ful wel apaide;
To speke of him her joye was set:
Therefore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counsaile, and welle hele,
To whom go shewe wholly thine herte,
Both wele and woe, and joye and smerte;
To get comforte to him thou go,
And privily bitwene you two
Ye shal speke of that godely thing
That hath thine hert in her keping,
Of her beaute and her semblaunce,
And of her godely continuance;
Of al thy state thou shalt him saie,
And aske him counsaile how thow maie
Do any thing that maie her plesse,
For it to the shal do gret ese,
That he maie wete thou trust him so
Both of thy wele and of thy wo;
And if his herte to love be sette
His companie is moche the bette,
For reson wol he shewe to the
Al uttirly his private,
And what she is he lovith so
To the plainly he shal undo,
Withoutin drede of any shame
Both tell her renome and her name;
Than shall he forthir ferre and nere,
And namely to thy lady dere

In sikir wise ye every other
Shal helpin as his owne brother
In trouthe withoutin doublenesse,
And kepin close in sikirnesse;
For it is noble thing in fay
To have a man thou darste say
Thy privy counsaile every dele,
For that woll comforte the right wele;
And thou shalt holde the wel apaied
Whan suche a frende thou hast assaied.

The thirdè gode of grete comfort,
That yevith lovirs most disport,
Comith of sight and beholding,
That is yclepid Swete Loking,
The whiche may none ese ydo
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro,
Wherfore thou plesse alway to be
In place where thou maist her se,
For it is thing most amirous
Moste delitable' and favirous,
For to asswage a mann's sorow
To sene his lady by the morow;
For it is a ful noble thing
Whan that thine eyin have meting
With that relike so precious
Whereof thei be so desirous.

But al daie aftir sothe it is
Thei have no drede to faren amis;
Thei dredin neither winde ne raine,
Ne non othir manir of paine;
For whan thine eyen were thus in blisse
Yet of ther curtisie iwise
Alone thei can not have ther joye,
But to the herte thei convoye
Parte of ther blisse, to him thou sende
Of all this harme to make amende,

The eye is a gode messangere,
Which can to the' hert in such manere
Tidingis sende, that he hath sene
To voide him of his painis clene,
Wherof the hert rejoyfith so
That a grete partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight;
Right as the derkenesse of the night
Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,
Right so is al his wo ful sone
Devoidid clene whan that the sight
Beholdin may that freshe wight
Whiche that the hert desirith so,
That al his derkenesse is ago,
For than the herte is all at ese
When thei sene that that maie 'hem plesse.

Now have I declared the al out
Of that thou were in drede and doute,
For I have tolde the faithfully
What the may curin uttirly,
And all lovirs that wollin be
Faithful and of stabilite;
Gode Hope alway kepe by thy side,
And Swete Thought make eke abide,
Swete Loking and Swete Speche,
Of al thine harmes thei shal be leche:

Of bale thou shalt have grete plesaunce
Yf thou canst bide in suffiraunce,
And servin wele without feintise;
Thou shalt be quite of thine emprise
With more guerdoun if that thou live,
But al this time this I the yeve.

The god of Love, whan al the day
He' had taught me as ye have herd say,
And enformid compendiously,
He vanished al sodainly,
And I alone ylefte al sole,
So full of complaint and of dole,
For I sawe no man there me by.
My woundes me grevid wondirfly;
Me for to cure nothing I knewe
Save the bothum so bright of hewe,
Wheron was sette wholly my thought;
Of othir comforte knewe I nought,
But it were through the god of Love;
I knew nat else to my behove
That might me ese or comfort gette
But if he would him entermette.

The rosir was withoutin doute
Yclosid with an hedge without,
As ye to forne have herde me saine,
And fast I besied and would saine
Have passid the hay, if I might
Have gettin in by any sleight,
To the bothum so faire to se,
But evir I dradde blamed to be
Yf men would have suspicion
That I would of entencion
Have stole the rosis that there were,
'Therefore to entre' I was in fere;
But at the laste, as I bethought
Whethir I shuldè passe or nought,
I sawe come, with a gladdè chere,
To me a lusty bachilere
Of gode stature and of gode height,
And Bialacoil forsoth he height;
Sonnè he was to Curtisie,
And he me grauntid ful gladlie
The passage of the uttir hay,
And saidè, Sir, how that ye may
Passe, if that it your wille ybe,
The freshe rosir for to se,
And ye the swetè favour sele,
Your warrant I may be right wele;
So thou the kepin fro folie
Shal no man do the vilanie;
Yf I mai helpin you in ought
I shall not faine, dredith right nought,
For I am bounde to your service
Fully devoide of all feintise.
Than unto Bialacoil saide I,
I thank you, Sir, ful hertily,
And your behest I take at gre
That ye so godely profir me;
To you it cometh of grete fraunchis
That ye me profir your servise.

Than astir ful delivirly
Through the breris anone went I

Wherof encombrid was the haie;
I was well plesed, the sothe to saie,
To se the bothum faire and sote
So freshe ysprung oute of the rote.

And Bialacoil me servid wele
Whan I so nigh me mightin sele
Of the bothum the swete odoure,
And so lusty hewed of coloure;
But than a chorle, foule him betide!
Beside the rosis gan him hide,
To kepe the rosis of that rosere,
Of whom the namè was Daungere.
This chorle was hid there in the greves,
Ycovirid with grasse and leve,
To spie and take whom that he fonde
Unto that rosir put an honde.

He was not sole, for there was mo,
For with him werin othir two
Of wickid manirs and ill fame;
That one was clepid by his name
Wickid Tonge, God yeve him sorowe!
For neither at eve ne at morowe
He can of no man gode yspeke;
On many' a justic man doth he wreke.

There was a woman that eke hight
Shamè, that who can rekin right
Trespasce ywas her fathir's name,
Her mothir Reson; thus was Shame
Ybrought forth of these ilke two,
And yet had Trespasce nere adoe
With Reson, ne nere leie her by,
He was widous and so ugly;
I menè this, that Trespasce hight,
But Reson conceveth of a sight
That Shame of which I spake asorne:
And whan that Shame was thus yborne
It was ordained that Chastite
Should of the rosir lady be,
Whiche of the bothums more and las
With sondrie folke assailid was,
That she ne wistè what to doe,
For Venus her assailith so
That night and daie fro her she stall
Bothoms and rosis ovir all:
To Reson than praieth Chastite,
Whom Venus hath flemed ore the se,
That she her doughter would her lene
To kepe the rosir freshe and grene.

Anon Reson to Chastite
Is fully' assentid that it be,
And grauntid her at her request
That Shame, bicause she is honest,
Shall kepir of the rosir be;
And thus to kepe it there were thre,
That none should hardie be ne bolde
(Were he yongè or were he olde)
Again her will awaie to bere
Bothoms ne rosis that there were,
I had well sped had I nat ben
Awaitid with these thre and sene,
For Bialacoil, that was so faire,
So gracious and debonaire,

Quitte him to me ful curtisly,
 And me to plesin badde that I
 Should drawe to the bothom nere;
 Frefe in to touchin the rofere
 Whiche bare the rose he yafe me leve;
 This graunt ne might but litill greve;
 And for he sawe it likid me
 Right nigh the bothom pullid he
 A lese all grene, and yave me that,
 The whiche full nigh the bothom sat:
 I madin of that lese full queint,
 And whan I felt I was aqueinte
 With Bialacoil, and so prive,
 I wende all my will had ybe,
 Than wext I hardie for to tell
 To Bialacoil how me befell
 Of Love that toke and woundid me,
 And sayid, Sir, so mote I the,
 I maie no joie have in no wise
 Upon no side, but it arise
 For sithè (if I shall not faine)
 In herte I have had so grete paine,
 So grete anoie, and soche affraie,
 That I ne wotte what I shall saie;
 I drede your wrothe to deserve;
 Levir me were that knivis kerve
 My bodie should in pecis small
 Than in any wise it should fall
 That ye wrothid should ben with me.

Saie boldily thy will, (quod he)
 I n'll be wrothe, if that I maie,
 For nought that thou shalt to me saie.

Than saied I, Sir, not you displese
 To knowin of my grete unese,
 In which only Love hath me brought,
 For painis grete, disese, and thought,
 Fro daie to daie it doeth me drie;
 Supposith not, Sir, that I lie;
 In me five woundis did he make,
 The fore of whiche shall nevir flake
 But ye the bothom graunte me
 Whiche is most paussaunt of beaute,
 My life, my deth, and my martyre,
 And tresour that I moste desire.
 Than Bialacoil, affrayid all,
 Sayid, Sir, it maie not befall
 That ye desire; it maie not rise;
 What! would ye shende me in this wise?
 A mokill folè than I were
 If I suffrid you' awaie to bere
 The freshe bothom so faire of fight,
 For it were neithir skill ne right
 Of the rosir ye broke the rinde,
 Or take the Rose asorne his kinde:
 Ye are not curteis to aske it;
 Let it still on the rosir sit;
 Let it growe till it' amendid be,
 And perfitly come to beaute;
 I n'olde not that it pullid were
 Fro the rosir that doth it bere,
 To me it is so lese and dere.
 With that anon fterst out Daungere

Out of the place where he was hidde;
 His malice in his chere was kidde;
 Full grete he was, and blacke of hewe,
 Sturdie and hidous, who so' him knewe;
 Like sharpe urchons his here was growe,
 His eyes red-sparking as fire glowe;
 His nose frouncid full kirkid stode;
 He come criande as he were wode,
 And saied, Bialacoil, tel me why
 Thou bringist hidir so boldely
 Him that so nigh to the rofere?
 Thou worchist in a wrong manere;
 He thinkith to dishonour the;
 Thou art well worthy to have malgre
 To let him of the rofere witte:
 Who servith Fellone is ill quitte.

Thou woldist have doen grete bounte,
 And he with shame would quite the.
 Flie hens, felows; I rede the go;
 It wantith lite he wol the flo,
 For Bialacoil ne knewe the nought
 Whan the to serve he fet his thought,
 For thou wolt shame him if thou might
 Bothe again reson and 'gainst right:
 I woll no more in the affie
 That comest so slightly for t' espie,
 For it provith wondirly wele
 Thy sleight and treson every dele.

I durst no more make there abode
 For the chorle, he was so wode:
 So gan he threttin and manace,
 And through the haie he did me chace,
 For fere of him I trembled and quoke,
 So chorlishely his hedde he shoke,
 And saied, If est he might me take
 I should nat from his hondis scape,
 Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
 And I all sole disconsolate
 Was left alone in pain and thought;
 Fro shame to deth I was nigh brought;
 Than thought I on my high folie,
 How that my bodie uttirlic
 Was yeve to paine and to martire,
 And therto had I so grete ire,
 That I ne durst the hayis passe;
 There was no hope, there was no grace:
 I trowe nevir man wiste of pain
 But he were laced in Lov's chain,
 Ne no man wist, (and soth it is)
 But if he love, what angir is.
 Love holdeth his heste to me right wele;
 Whan pain (he sayid) I should fele
 No herte maie thanke no tonge fain
 A quartir of my wo and pain;
 I might not with the angir last;
 Mine herte in poinet was for to brast
 Whan I thought on the Rose, that so
 Was thorough Daungir cast me fro.
 A long while stode I in that state,
 Till that me sawe so madde and mate
 The ladie of the highè ward,
 Whiche from her toure lokid thidirward,
 Reson men clepin that lady,
 Whiche from her toure delivirly

Came doune to me withoutin more;
 But she was neither yong ne hore,
 Ne high ne lowe, ne fatte ne lene,
 But best, as it were in a mene;
 Her eyin two were clere and light
 As a candill that brennith bright;
 And on her hedde she had a croune;
 Her semid well an high persoune,
 For round environ her crounet
 Was full of riche stonis afret;
 Her godely semblaunt by devise
 I trowe was made in Paradise,
 For Nature had nevir soche grace
 To forge a worke of soche compace;
 For certain, but if the' lettir lie,
 Grete God himself, that is so hie,
 Formid her astir his image,
 And yafe her sithe soche avauntage
 That she hath might and seignorie
 To kepè men from all folie:
 Who so woll trowè wele her lore
 Ne maie offendin nevirmore.

And while I stode thus derke and pale
 Reson began to me her tale:
 She saied, Al haile, my swetè frende!
 Folie and childhod woll the shende,
 Whiche the have put in grete afraie;
 Thou hast bought dere the time of Maie,
 That made thin herte merie to be;
 In evill time thou wentest to se
 The gardin whereof Idilnesse
 Ybare the keie and was maistresse,
 Whan that thou yedist in the daunce
 With her, and haddin acquaintaunce;
 Her acquaintaunce is perillous,
 First soft, and astir full noious;
 She hath the trashid without wene;
 The god of Love had the nat sene,
 Ne had Idilnesse the conveide
 Within the verge where Mirthe himpleide;
 If Folie have surprisid the
 Doe so that it recovered be,
 And be well ware to take no more
 Counsaile that grevith astir fore:
 He' is wise that woll himself chastise.

Though a yong man in any wise
 Trespasse emong end doe folie,
 Let him nat dwelle, but hastilie
 Let him amende what so be mis;
 And eke I counsaile the i-wis
 The god of Love wholly foryete,
 That hath the in soche pain ysete,
 And the in herte tourmentid so;
 I can not sene how thou maiest go
 Othir waies the to garisoun,
 For Daungere, that is so feloun,
 Fellie purposeth the to werreie,
 Whiche is fulle cruill, sothe to seie.

And yet of Daungere cometh no blame;
 In reward of my daughtir Shame,
 Whiche hath the rosis in her warde,
 As she that maie be no musarde,

A Wickid Tong is with these two,
 That suffrith no man thidir go,
 For er a thing be doe he shall,
 Where that he comith ovir all,
 In fourtie placis, if it be sought,
 Saie thing that nere was don ne wrought,
 So moche traizon is in his male,
 Of falsenesse for to faine a tale,
 Thou delest with angrie folke i-wis,
 Wherefore to the bettir is
 From these folkis awaie to fare,
 For thei woll make the live in care;
 This is the ill that Love thei call,
 Wherein there is but folie all,
 For love is folie every dell;
 Who loveth in no wise maie doe well,
 Ne set his thought on no gode werke;
 His schole he leseth if he be clerke,
 Or othir craft if that he be
 He shall not thrive therein, for he
 In love shal have more passioun
 Than monke, or hermite, or chanoun.
 This pain is herd out of mesure;
 The joie maie no while endure;
 And eke in the possession
 Is mochil tribulacioun;
 The joie it is so short lasting,
 And but in hape is the getting;
 I se there many in travaile
 That at the last shall foully faile;
 I was nothing thy counsaile,
 Whan thou were made the homager
 Of god of Love to hastily,
 Where was no wisedome but folie;
 Thine harte was jolic but not sage
 Whan thou were brought in soche a rage
 To yelde the up so redily
 To Love of his grete maistiry.

I rede the Love awaie to drive,
 That maketh the reche not of thy live;
 The folie more fro dai to daie
 Shall growe but thou it put awaie;
 Take with thy tethe the bridill faste
 To daunt thy herte, and eke thec aste,
 If that thou maiest, to get defence
 For to redresse thy first offence;
 Who so his herte alwaie woll leve
 Shall finde emong that shall him greve.

Whan I her herd thus me chastise
 I answerde in full angrie wise,
 I prayid her cesse of her speche
 Eithir to chastise me or teche,
 To biddè me my thought refrein,
 Whiche Love hath caught in his demein:
 What wenin ye Love woll consent
 (That me asleyith with bowe bent)
 To drawe mine herte out of his honde,
 Whiche is so quickly in his bonde?
 That ye counsaile maie nevir be,
 For whan he first areftid me
 He toke mine herte so sore him till
 That it is nothing at my will;

He taught it so him for to obeie
 That he it sparrid with a keie.
 I praie you let me be all still,
 For ye maie well, if that ye will,
 Your wordis waste in idilnesse,
 For uttirly, withoutin gesse,
 All that ye saine is but in vain;
 Me were levir die in the pain
 Than Love to meward should arette,
 Falshe de or treson on me sette:
 I woll me gettin pris or blame,
 And love true for to save my name:
 Who me chastifith I him hate.
 With that worde Reson went her gate,
 Whan she sawe for no sermoning
 She might me fro my folie bring:
 Than difmayid I left all sole,
 For-werie, for-wandred, as a sole,
 For I ne knewe no cherifaunce:
 Than fell into my remembraunce
 How Love ybadde me to purveie
 A felawe to whom I might seie
 My counsaile and my privite,
 For that should moche availin me.

With that bethought I me that I
 Yhad a felaw faste by
 True and fikir, curteis and hende,
 And he called was by name a Frende;
 A truer Felawe was no where none.
 In haste to him I went anone,
 And to him all my wo I told,
 Fro him right nought I would withhold,
 I tolde him all withoutin were,
 And made my compleint on Daungere,
 How for to seie he was hidous,
 And to meward contrarious,
 The whiche through his cruilte
 Was in point to have meimid me,
 With Bialacoil whan he me seie
 Within the gardin walke and pleie
 Fro me he made him for to go,
 And I be left alone in wo;
 I durst no lengir with him speke,
 For Daungir saied he would be wreke
 Whan that he sawe how that I went
 The freshe bothom for to hent,
 If I were hardie to come nere
 Bitwene the haie and the rosere.

This frende, whan he wist of my thought,
 He discomfortid me right nought!
 But saied, Felawe, be nat so madde,
 Ne so abashid nor bestadde;
 My selfe I knowe full well Daungere,
 And how that he is fiers of chere,
 At primè temps, Love to manace;
 Full oft I have ben in his case;
 A felon first though that he be,
 Astir thou shalt him souple se:
 Of long passid I knewe him wele;
 Ungodelie, first though men him sele
 He woll meke afre in his bering
 Ben for service and obeising:
 I shall the tell what thou shalt doo;
 Mekely I rede thou go him to,

Of herte praie him specially
 Of thy trespase to have mercie,
 And hotin him well here to plese,
 That thou shalt ner more him displese:
 Who can best serve of flatiry
 Shall plese Daungir most uttirly.

My frende hath saied to me so wele
 That he me esid hath somede le,
 And eke allegged of my tourment,
 For through him had I hardiment
 Again to Daungir for to go,
 To preve if I might make him so.

To Daungir cam I all ashamed,
 The whiche aforne me had yblamed,
 Desiring for t' apese my wo,
 But over hedge durst I nat go,
 For he forbode me the passage:
 I founde him cruill in his rage,
 And in his honde a grete bourdoun:
 To him I knelid lowe adoun,
 Full meke of port and simple of chere,
 And saied, Sir, I am comin here
 Only to ask of you mercie;
 It grevith me full gretily
 That evir I have wrathid you,
 But for to amende I am come now,
 With all my might bothe loude and still
 To doin right at your own will,
 For Love madin me for to do
 That I have trespassed hidirto,
 Fro whome I ne maie drawe mine herte,
 Yet shall I nere for joie ne smerte
 (What so befall me, gode or ill)
 Offendin more again your will;
 Levir I have endure disese
 Than doe that whiche should you displese.

I you require and praie that ye
 Of me have mercie and pite,
 To stint your ire that grevith so,
 That I woll swere for evirmo
 To be redressed at your liking
 If I trespase in any thing,
 Save that (I praie the) graunte me
 A thing that maie nat warnid be,
 That I maie love all onily,
 None othir thing of you aske I;
 I shall doin all wele i-wis,
 If of your grace you graunt me this,
 And that ye maie nat lettin me,
 For well wote ye that love is fre,
 And I shall loven soche that I will,
 Who evir like it well or ill,
 And yet ne would I for all Fraunce
 Doe thing to doe you displefaunce.

Than Daungir fill in his entent
 For to foryeve his male talent,
 But all his wrathe yet at the last
 He hath relefed, I praied so fast.
 Shortly, (he sayid) thy request
 Is nat to mokill dishonest,

Ne I woll nat wernin it the,
 For yet nothing engrevith me;
 For though thou love thus evirmore
 To me is neithir soft ne fore:
 Love where the list, what rechith me?
 So ferre thou fro my rosis be;
 Trust not on me for none affaie
 In any time to passe the haie.

Thus hath he grauntid my praier:
 Than went I forth withoutin were
 Unto my frende, and told him all
 Whiche was right full of my tale.
 (He saied) Now goeth well thine affaie,
 He shall to the be debonaire;
 Though he asorne was dispitous
 He shall hereaftir be gracious;
 If he were touched on some gode vein
 He should yet rewyn on thy peyn:
 Suffir, I rede, and no bolste make
 Till thou at gode mes maieist him take.

By suffraunce and by wordis soft
 A man maie ovircomin oft
 Him that asorne he had in drede,
 In bokis sothly as I rede.
 Thus hath my frende with grete comfort
 Avauncid me with high disport,
 Whiche would me gode as moche as I;
 And than anon full sodainly
 I toke my leve, and streight I went
 Unto the haie, for grete talent
 I had to sene the freshe bothom
 Wherein laie my salvacion,
 And Daungir toke kepe if that I
 Kepe him covinaunt truily:
 So fore I drede his manasing
 I durst not brekin his bidding,
 For lest that I were of him shent
 I brake not his commaundiment,
 For to purchasin his gode will
 It was for to comin there till;
 His mercie was to ferre behinde
 Ykept, for I ne might it finde:
 I complainid and sighid sore,
 And languishid evir the more,
 For I ne durst nat ovir go
 Unto the Rose I lovid so,
 Throughout my deming uttirly
 That he had knowlege certainly:
 Than Love me ladde in soche wise
 That in me there was no feintise
 Ne falsshedde, ne no trecherie,
 And yet he full of villanie,
 And of disdaine and cruilte,
 On me ne would have no pite
 His cruill will for to refrain,
 Tho I wept aie and me complain.

And while I was in this turment
 Were come of grace, by God ysent,
 Dame Fraunchise, and with her Pite,
 Fulfilde the bothom of bounte:
 Thei go to Daungir anon right
 To ferthir me with all ther might,

And helpe me in worde and in dede,
 For well thei sawe that it was nede.
 First of her grace Dame Fraunchise
 Ytaken hath of this emprise;
 She saied Daungir, grete wrong ye doe
 To worch this man so mochil woe,
 Or pinin him so angirlic,
 It is to you grete vilanie;
 I can not se ne why ne how
 That he hath trespassed again you,
 Save that he loveth, wherefore ye shold
 The more in charite of him hold:
 The force of Love maketh him do this;
 Who would him blame he did amis:
 He levith more than he maie doe;
 His pain is harde ye maie se so!
 And Love in no wise would consent
 That he have powir to repent,
 For though that quicke ye would him flo
 Fro Love his herte ne maie nat go.

Now, swete Sir, it is your ese
 Him for to angir or disese.
 Alas! what may it you avaunce
 To doen to him so grete grevaunce?
 What worship is it again him take,
 Or on your man a werrè make,
 Sithe he so lowlie every wise
 Is redy as ye luste devise?
 If Love have caught him in his lace,
 You fort' obaie in every cace,
 And ben your subject at your will,
 Should ye therfore willin him ill?
 Ye shold him sparin more all out
 Than him that is bothe proude and stout:
 Cartesie would that ye succoure
 Them that ben meke undir your cure:
His herte is hard that woll not meke
Whan men of mekenesse him beseke.

This is certain, sayid Pite,
 We se oft that humilite
 Bothe ire and also felonie
 Venquish'eth, and also melancolie,
 To stondin forth in soche duresse
 This cruilte and wickednesse;
 Wherefore I praie you, Sir Daungere,
 For to maintein no lenger here
 Soche cruill werre again your man,
 As wholly your's as er he can,
 Nor that ye worchin no more wo
 On this caitife languishing so,
 Whiche woll no more to you trespase,
 But put him wholly in your grace:
 And his offence ne was but lite;
 The god of Love it was to wite
 That he your thrall so gretely is:
 If ye him harme ye doen amis,
 For he hath had full hard penaunce
 Sith that ye rest him th' aquaintaunce
 Of Bialacoil, his moste joie,
 Whiche all his pains might acioie:
 He was before enoyid sore,
 But than ye doublid him well more,

For he of blisse hath ben ful bare
 Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare :
 Love hath to him done grete distresse,
 He hath no nede of more duresse :
 Voidith from him your ire I rede ;
 Ye maie not winnin in this dede :
 Maketh Bialacoil repaire again
 And havith pite on his pain,
 For Fraunchise wolle, and I Pite,
 That mercifull to him ye be ;
 And sithe that she and I accorde
 Have upon him misericorde,
 For I you prairie, and eke moneste,
 Nought to refusin our requeste,
 For he is hard and fell of thought,
 That for us two wolle doe right nought.
 Daungir ne might no more endure,
 He mekid him unto mesure.

I wolle in no wise, saith Daungere,
 Denie that ye have askid here,
 It were to grete uncurtisie ;
 I wolle ye have the companie
 Of Bialacoil, as ye devise ;
 I wolle him lettin in no wise.
 To Bialacoil than went in hie
 Fraunchise, and saied full curtisie,
 Ye have to long yben deignous
 Unto this lovir and daunge'rous,
 Fro him to withdrawe your presence,
 Whiche hath doe to him grete offence,
 That ye not would upon him se,
 Wherefore a sorowfull man is he :
 Shape ye to paie him and to plesse,
 Of my love if ye wolle have ese :
 Fulfill his will : sith that ye knowe
 Daungir is dauntid and brought lowe
 Through helpe of me and of Pite
 You dare no more aserde to be.

I shall doin right as ye will,
 Saith Bialacoil, for it is skill,
 Sith Daungir wolle that it so be ;
 Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me,

Bialacoil at the beginning
 Saluid me in his comming ;
 No straungeneffe was in him sene
 No more than he ne' had wrathid ben ;
 As faire semblaunt than shewed he me,
 And godely, as asorne did he,
 And by the honde withoutin doubt
 Within the haie right all about
 He lad me with a right gode chere,
 All environ on the vergere
 That Daungere had me chafid fro
 Now have I leve ovre' all to go,
 Now am I raised at my devise
 Fro hell up unto paradise.
 Thus Bialacoil of gentilnesse
 With all his pain and businesse
 Hath shewid me onely of grace
 The eftirs of the sote place.

I sawe the Rose, when I was nigh,
 Was gretir woxin and more high,

Freshe and roddy, and faire of hewe,
 Of colour evir illiche newe :
 And whan I had it longè sene
 I sawe that through the levis grene
 The Rose spred to spannishing,
 To sene it was a godely thing,
 But it ne was so sprede on brede
 That men within might knowe the fede,
 For it covert ywas and close
 Bothe with the leves and with the Rose ;
 The stalke was even' and grene upright,
 It was thereon a godely sight,
 And well the bettir without wene
 For that the fede was not yfene :
 Full faire it sprad, the god of Blesse,
 For soche an othir as I gesse
 Aforne ne was, ne more vermaile ;
 I was abawed for marveile,
 For er the fairir that it was
 The more I'am boundin in Love's laas.
 Long I abode there, sothe to saie,
 Til Bialacoil I gan to prairie,
 Whan that I sawe him in no wise
 To me to warnin his service,
 That he to me would graunt a thing
 Whiche to remembre' is well fitting,
 This is to saine, that of his grace
 He would me yeve leifar and space,
 To me that was so desirous
 To have a kissing precious
 Of the so godely freshe rose
 That so swetely smelleth in my nose,
 For if it you displeid nought
 I wolle gladly, as I have sought,
 Havin a kisse therof frely
 Of your yeste, for certainly
 I wolle none have but by your leve,
 So lothe me werre you for to greve.

He sayid, Frende, so God me spede,
 Of Chastite I have soche drede,
 Thou shouldest not warnid be for me,
 But I dare not for Chastite ;
 Again her dare I not misdoe,
 For alwaie biddith she me so
 To yeve no lovir leve to kisse,
 For who thereto may winnen, i-wisse
 He of the surplus of the prairie
 May live in hope to get some daie ;
 For who so kissing maie attain
 Of lov'is pain hath (soth to saie)
 The best and the moste avinaunt,
 And earnest of the reminaunt.
 Of his answere I sighid fore,
 I durste assaie him tho no more,
 I had suche drede to greve him aie ;
 A man shoulde not to muche assaie
 To chafe his frende out of mesure,
 Nor put his life in avinture ;
 For no man at the first stroke
 Ne may not fel adoune an oke,
 Nor of the reifins have the wine
 Till grapes be ripe and well a-fine.

Be sore empresse, I you ensure,
 And drawin out of the pressure:
 But I, forpeinid wondir strong,
 Thoughte that I abode right long
 Aftir the kisse in paine and wo,
 Sith I to kisse desirid so;
 Till that rewing on my distresse
 There comin Venus the goddesse,
 (Whiche aie weryith Chastite)
 Came of her grace to socour me,
 Whose might is knowin ferre and wide,
 For she is mothir of Cupide,
 The god of Love, as blinde as stone,
 That helpith lovirs many one.
 This lady brought in her right honde
 Of brenning fire a blasing bronde,
 Whereof the flame and hotè fire
 Hath many' a lady in desire
 Of love ybrought, and fore yhette,
 And in her service her herte sette.
 This lady was of gode entaile,
 Right wondirful of apparaile;
 By her atire so bright and shene
 Men might perceivin well and sene
 She was not of religioun;
 Nor I n'il makin menciou
 Nor of her robe nor of tresour,
 Of broche ne of her riche attour,
 Ne of her girdle' about her side,
 For that I n'il not long abide;
 But knowith well that certainly
 She was arrayid richily;
 Devoide of pride certaine she was;
 To Bialacoil she went a paas,
 And to him shortely in a clause
 She sayid, Sir, what is the cause
 Ye ben of porte so daungirous
 Unto this lovir and dainous,
 To graunt him nothing but a kisse?
 To warne it him ye done amisse,
 Sithe well ye wotin how that he
 Is Love's servaunt, as ye may se,
 And hath beaute, wher through he is
 Worthy of love to have the blis.
 How he' is semely beholde and se,
 How he is faire, how he is fre,
 How he is sote and debonaire,
 Of agè yonge, lusty and faire:
 There is no lady so hauteine,
 Duchesse, countesse, ne chastelaine,
 That I n'olde her ungodely
 For to refuse him attirly.

His brethe is also gode and swete,
 And his lippes roddy; are thei mete
 Only to plaine and not to kisse?
 Graunt him a kisse of gentilnesse.

His teth arne also white and clene;
 Me thinkith wrong withoutin wene
 If ye now warne him, trustith me,
 To graunte that a kisse have he;
 The lasse ye helpe him that ye haste,
 And the more timè shul ye waste.

Whan the flame of the very bronde
 That Venus brought in her right honde

Had Bialacoil with his hete smeie
 Anone he bade me without lete,
 And grauntid me the Rose to kisse,
 Than of my paine I ganne to lisse,
 And to the Rose anon went I,
 And kissid it ful faithfully.
 Nede no man aske if I was blith
 Whan the favour so softe and lith
 Stroke to mine hert withoutin more,
 And me alleggid of my fore,
 So was I ful of joye and blisse;
 It is faire fuche a floure to kisse;
 It was so sote and savirous
 I might not be so anguishous
 That I mote glad and joly be;
 Whan that I do remembre me
 Yet evre' among (sothly to faine)
 I suffre noie and mochil paine.

The se may nevir be so still
 But with a litill winde at will
 May ovirwhelme and tourne also
 As it were wede in wawis go;
 Aftir the calme the trouble sone
 Mote folow, and chaunge as the mone.

Right so fareth Love, that felde in one
 Holdeth his ancre, for right anone
 Whan thei in ese wene best to live
 They ben with tempest all fordrive.
 Who servith Love can tell of wo
 The stoundmele joye mote ovirgo;
 Now he hurtith and now he cureth,
 For felde in o pointe Love endureth.

Now it is right me to procede
 How Shame gan medle and take hede,
 Through whom fel angirs I have hade,
 And how the strongè wall was made,
 And the castell of brede and length,
 That god of Love wan with his strength:
 Al this in Romaunce will I set,
 And for no thing ne will I let,
 So that it liking to her be
 That is the floure of all beaute,
 For she may best my labour quite
 That I for her love shal endite.

Wickid Tonge, whiche that the covine
 Of every lovir can devine
 Worste, and aie addith more somdele,
 (For wickid tonge saith nevir wele)
 To mewarde bare he right grete hate,
 Espying me erly and late,
 Til he hath sene the gretè chere
 Of Bialacoil and me ifere:
 He ne might not his tonge withstonde
 Worste to reportin than he fonde,
 He was so ful of cursid rage:
 It sat him wele of his linage,
 For him an Irishe woman bare:
 His tonge was flid sharpe and square,
 And right poignaunt, and right kerving,
 And wondir bittir in speking;
 For whan that he me gan espie
 He swore (affirming sikirly)

Bitwene Bialacoil and me
 Was ill aquaintaunce and prive :
 He spake therof so folilie
 That he awakid Jelousie,
 Whiche all afraied in his rising,
 Whan that he herdè the jangling,
 He ran anon as he were wode
 To Bialacoil there that he stode,
 Whichè had levir in this cas
 Have ben at Reines or Amias
 For fote-hote in his felonie
 To him thus saide Jelousie ;
 " Why hast thou ben so negligent
 " To kepin, whan I was absent,
 " This vergir here leste in thy warde ?
 " To me thou haddist no regarde
 " To trust (to thy confusion) !
 " Him thus, to whom suspicion
 " I have right grete, for it is nede,
 " It is well shewid by the dede :
 " Grete faute in the now have I founde ;
 " By God anon thou shalt be bounde,
 " And faste lockin in a toure,
 " Withoutin refuite or socoure.

" For Shame to long hath be the fro ;
 " Ovir sonè she was ago ;
 " Whan thou hast lost both drede and fere
 " It semid well she was not here,
 " For she was besy in no wise
 " To kepin the and to chastice,
 " And for to helpin Chastite
 " To kepe the rosir, as thinketh me,
 " For than this boie knave so boldly
 " Ne shoulde nat have be hardy,
 " Ne in this vergir had sliche game,
 " Which now me tournith to grete shame."

Bialacoil n'is what to saie,
 Ful faine he would have fled awaie,
 For fere have hyid, ne'ere that he
 All sodainly toke him with me ;
 And whan I sawe that he had so
 This Jelousie takin us two,
 I was astoned, and knewe no rede,
 But fledde away for very drede.

Than Shame came forth ful simpilly ;
 She wende have trespaced ful gretely,
 Humble of her porte, and made it simple,
 Wering a vaile in stede of wimple,
 As nonnis done in ther abbey :
 Bicause her hert was in affray
 She gan to speke within a throwe
 To Jelousie right wondir lowe.

First of his grace she him besought,
 And sayid, Sir, ne levith nought
 Wickid Tonge, that false espie,
 Which is so glad to faine and lie ;
 He hath you made through flatiring
 On Bialacoil a false lesing ;
 His falsnesse is not nowe a newe,
 It is so longe that he him knewe ;

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This ne is not the firste daie,
 For Wickid Tonge hath custome aie
 The yonge folkis to bewrie,
 And false lesingis on 'hem lie.
 Yet nere-thelesse I se among
 That the soigne it is so long
 Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure
 In Lov'is service for to endure,
 Ydrawing suchè folke him to
 That he hath nothing with to do,
 But in lothnesse I trowe nought
 That Bialacoil had er in thought
 To do trespace or vilanie,
 But for his mothir Curtisie
 Hath taught him evir for to be
 Gode of aqueintaunce and prive,
 For he lovith none hevinesse,
 But mirth and play, and all gladnesse ;
 He hatith eke allè trèchours,
 And soleine folke and envious,
 For ye wele wetin how that he
 Wol evir glad and joyful be
 Honeestly with folke to pley :
 I have be negligent in fey
 To chastise him, therefore now I
 Of herte ycrie you here mercy,
 That I have ben so rechiles
 To tamin him withouten lees ;
 Of my foly I me repent ;
 Now wol I whole set mine entent
 To kepin bothè low and still
 Bialacoil to do your will.

O Shame ! o Shame ! saide Jelousie,
 To be bitrashed grete drede have I ;
 Lecherie hath yclombe so hie,
 That almost blerid is mine cie :
 No wondir is if drede have I,
 Ovir all reignith Lechery,
 Whose might ygrowith night and dey
 But in cloistre and in abbey ;
 Chastite' is wetried ovir all,
 Therefore I woll with sikir wall
 Close both the rosis and rosere ;
 I have to long in this manere
 Leste 'hem unclosid wilfully,
 Wherfore I am right inwardly
 Sorowfull, and repentè me ;
 But now thei shall no lengir be
 Unclosid ; and yet I drede fore
 I shall repentè ferthirmore,
 For the game goith all amis ;
 Counsaile I muste newe i-wis :
 I have to long ytrustid the,
 But now it shal no lengir be,
 For he may best in every coste
 Decevin that men trustin moste :
 I se well that I am nigh shent
 But if I set my full entent
 Some remedie for to purveie,
 Wherfore closin I shall the wey
 From them that woll the Rose espie ;
 And come to waite me vilonie ;
 For now in gode faith and in trouth
 I wol not lettin for no slouth,

U

To live the more in sikernesse,
 Do make anon a fortireffe,
 Than close the rosis of gode favour;
 In middis shal I make a tour
 To put Bialacoil in prison,
 For evir I drede me of trefon:
 I trow I shal him kepè so
 That he shal have no might to go
 About to makin companie
 To them that thinke of vilanie,
 Ne to no suche as hath ben here
 Aforne, and found in him gode chere,
 Whiche han assailid him to shende,
 And with ther towandise to blende:
 A folè is eith to begile;
 But may I live a litil while
 He shal forthinke his faire semblaunt;

And with that worde came Drede Avaunt,
 Which was abashed, and in grete fere
 Whan he wist Jelousie was there;
 He was for drede in suche affray
 That not a worde durste he say,
 But quaking stode ful stil alone,
 (Til Jelousie his way was gone)
 Save Shamè, that him not forfoke;
 Both Drede and she ful forè quoke,
 That at the lastè Drede abraide,
 And to his cosin Shamè saide:

Shamè, (he said) in sothfastnesse
 To me it is gret hevinesse
 That the noise is so ferre ygo,
 And eke the sclaudir, of us two;
 But fithin that it is befall,
 We maie it not againe call
 Whan onis sprongin is a fame;
 For many' a yere withoutin blame
 We have ben, and many a day,
 For many' an Aprill, many' a May,
 We han ypassid nothing shamed,
 Til Jelousie hath us yblamed
 Of mistrust and suspicion
 Causelesse, without encheson:
 Go we to Daungir hastily,
 And let us shewe him opiny
 That he hath not aright ywrought
 Whan that he settè not his thought
 To kepin bettir the purprise;
 In his doing he is not wise;
 He hath to us do gretè wrong,
 That hath suffirid now so long
 Bialacoil to have his will
 Allè his lustis to fulfill:
 He must amende it uttirly,
 Or els shal he vilainously
 Exilid be out of this londe;
 For he the werre maie not withstonde
 Of Jelousie, nor bere the grese,
 Sithe Bialacoile is at mischese.

To Daungir, Shame and Drede anon
 The rightè way ben both ygon;
 The chorle thei foundin hem aforne
 Ligging undir an hawethorne;

Undir his hede no pilowe was
 But in the stede a trusse of gras;
 He slombrid, and a knappe he toke,
 Til Shamè pitously him shoke,
 And grete manace on him gan make.
 Why slepist thou whan thou should wake?
 (Quod Shame) thou doest us vilanie
 Who trustith the he doth folie
 To kepè rosis or bothoms
 Whan thei ben faire in ther sasons:
 Thou arte woxe to familiere
 Wher thou should be straunge of chere
 Stoute of thy porte, redy to greve:
 Thou doest gret folie for to leve
 Bialacoil here iane to call
 The yongir man to shenden us all:
 Though that thou slepe we mowin here
 Of Jelousie grete noise here:
 Art thou now late? rise up an hie,
 And stoppe sone and delivirly
 Allè the gappis of the hay;
 Do no favour I do the pray:
 It fallith nothing to thy name
 To make fayre semblaunt wherethou mayste blame.

If Bialacoil be swete and fre,
 Doggid and fel thou shouldist be,
 Forward and outrageous i-wis;
 A chorle chaungith that curteis is:
 This have I herde oft in saying,
 That man ne maie for no daunting
 Make a sperhauke of a bosarde:
 Al men wol hold the for musarde
 That debonaire have foundin the:
 It fitteth the nought curteis to be:
 To do men plesaunce or servise
 In the it is recreaundise:
 Let thy werkis ferre and nere
 Be like thy name, whiche is Daungere.

Than als abashid in shewing
 Anon spake Drede, right thus saying,
 And sayid, Daungir, I drede me
 That thou ne woltè besy be
 To kepin that thou hast to kepe:
 Whan thou shouldest wake thou art a-slepe:
 Thou shalt be grevid certainly
 If the aspyin Jelousie,
 Or if he finde the in blame;
 He hath to day assailid Shame,
 And chased away with grete manace
 Bialacoil out of this place,
 And swerith shortly that he shall
 Enclose him in a sturdy wall;
 And al is for thy wickidnesse,
 For that the failith straungenesse;
 Thine hert I trowe be failid all;
 Thou shalt repent in speciall,
 If Jelousie the sothè knewe,
 Thou shalt forthinke and forè rewe.

With that the chorle his clubbe gon shake,
 Frowning his eyin gan to make,
 And hidous chere, as man in rage;
 For yre he brent in his visage:

Whan that he herde him blamid so
 He said, Out of my wit I go,
 To be discomfite I have grete wrong;
 Certis I have now lived to long
 Sithe I may not this clofir kepe:
 Al quicke I would de dolvin depe
 Yf any man shall more repayre
 This gardin for foule or fayre;
 Mine hert for ire goith a-ferre
 That I let any entre here:
 I have do foly now I fe,
 But now it shal amended be:
 Who settith fote here any more
 Truly he shall repent it sore,
 For no man more into this place
 Of me to entre shall have grace;
 Levir I had with swerdis twaine
 Throughout mine hert in every vaine,
 Percid to be with many' a wounde
 Than slouthè should in me be founde:
 From hennisforth by night or dey
 I shall defende it if I may
 Withoutin any excepcion
 Of eche manir condicion,
 And if I it any man graunte
 There holdith me for recreaunte.

Than Daungir on his fete gan stonde
 And hent a burdon in his honde;
 Wroth in his ire ne left he nought,
 But through the vergir he hath fought
 If he might findin hole or trace
 Where through that memote forth by pace,
 Or any gappe, he did it close;
 That no man might touchin a Rose
 Of the rofir allè about,
 He shittith every man without,

Thus day by day Daungir is wers,
 More wondirfull and more divers,
 And fellir eke than evre' he was,
 For him ful oft I singe alas!
 For I ne may nought through his ire
 Recovir that I moste desire;
 Mine hert, alas! wol brest a-two,
 For Bialacoil I wrathid so;
 For certainly in every membre
 I quake whan that I me remembre
 Of the bethom whiche that I wolde
 Ful oft a day sene and beholde;
 And when I thinke upon the kisse,
 And how much joie and how much blisse,
 I hadde through the favour swete,
 For want of it I grone and grete!
 Me thinketh I fele yet in my nose
 The fote favour of the Rose,
 And now I wote that I mote go
 So ferre the freshe flouris fro,
 To me ful welcome were the dethe,
 Absence therof (alas! me flethe;
 For whilom with this Rose, alas!
 I touchid nose, and mouthe, and face,
 But now the deth I must abide:
 But Love consent an othir tide

That onis I touche maie and kisse
 I trow my paine shal nevir lisse;
 Theron is all my covetise,
 Whiche brent my hart in any wise;
 Now shal repaire againe sighing,
 Long watche on nightes, and no sleping,
 Thought in wishing, turment, and wo,
 With many' a tourning to and fro,
 That halfe my paine I cannot tell,
 For I am fallin into hell
 From paradise and welthe; the more
 My turment grevith, more and more
 Anoyith now the bittirnesse
 That I to forne have felte swetnesse:
 And Wickid Tonge through his falsshede
 Ycausith all my wo and drede;
 On me he lieth a pitous charge,
 Bicause his tonge was to large.

Now is it time shortly that I
 Tel you somthing of Jelousy,
 That was in grete suspicion:
 About him leste he no mason
 That stone could laie, ne no querroure,
 He hirid 'hem to make a tour;
 And first the rofis for to kepe
 About 'hem mede he a dicke depe,
 Right wondir large, and also brode,
 Upon the whichè also stode
 Of squarid stone a sturdy wall,
 Whiche on a cragge was foundin all,
 And right grete thicknesse eke it bare;
 About it was yfoundid square
 An hundrid fadome' on every side;
 It was al liche both long and wide:
 Lest any time it were assailed
 Ful wel about it was batailed,
 And rounde environ eke were set
 Ful many a riche and faire tournet:
 At every cornir of this wall
 Was set a tour full principall,
 And evèriche had without fable
 A portcolise defensable,
 To kepe of en'emies, and to greve
 That there ther forcè would yprave.

And eke amidde this purprise
 Was made a tour of grete maistrise,
 A fairir faugh no man with sight,
 Largè and wide, and of grate might:
 Thei draddè nought nonè assaut
 Of ginn or gonn, nor of skaffaut:
 The tempereure of the mortere
 Was made of lycoure wondir dere,
 Of quicklime persaunt and egre,
 Which temprid was with vinegre.
 The stone was harde of adamaunt
 Wherof thei made the foundemaunt;
 The tour was rounde made in compas;
 In al this world no richir was,
 Ne bettir ordained therewithall:
 About the tour was made a wall,
 So that betwixt that and the toure
 Rosis were set of swete savoure,
 With many rofis that thei bere:
 And eke within the castil were

Springoldis, gones, bowes, and archers,
 And eke about at the corners
 Men seinin ovir the wall stonde
 Gret engins, which ywere nere honde,
 And in the kernils here and there
 Of arblastirs grete plentie were;
 None armour mighte ther stroke withstonde,
 It were foly to prese to honde;
 Without the diche were listis made
 With wal batailid large and brade,
 For men and horse shoulde not attaine
 To nigh the diche ovir the plaine.
 Thus Jelosie hath environ
 Yfett about his garnison
 With wallis rounde and dichè depe,
 Onely the rosir for to kepe,
 And Daungir bothe erly and late
 The keys kept of the uttir gate,
 The whiche opened towarde the est,
 And he had with him at the lest
 Thurty servauntes echone by name.

That othir gate was kept by Shame,
 Whiche opinid, as it was couthe,
 Towardis the parte of the southe,
 Sergeauntes assignid were here to
 Full many, her will for to do:
 Than Drede had in her baillie
 The keping of the constable'rie
 Towarde the north I understonde,
 That opened upon the leste honde,
 The whiche for nothing may be sure
 But if she do her besy cure
 Erly on mor'we', and also late,
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.
 Of every thing that she may se
 Drede is aferde where so she be,
 For with a puffle of litill winde
 Drede is astonied in her minde,
 Therefore for steling of the Rose
 I rede her nat the yate unclofe:
 A foul'is flight would make her fle,
 And eke a shadowe, if she' it se.

Than Wickid Tonge, full of envy,
 With soudiers of Normandy,
 As he that causith all debate,
 Was kepir of the fourthe gate,
 And also to the tothir thre
 He went ful oft for to se.
 Whan his lotte was to walke a night
 His instrumentis would be dight
 For to blowin and makin sounce
 Oftir than he hath enchesounce,
 And walkin oft upon the wall,
 Cornirs and wickittes ovir all
 Ful narowe serchin and espie:
 Though he nought fonde yet would he lie
 Discordaunt er fro armonie,
 And dissonid fro melodie;
 Controve he would, and foulè faile
 With hornpipis of Cornèwaile;

In floitis made he discordaunce,
 And in his musike, with mischaunce!
 He wouldè seine with notis newe
 That he ne fonde no woman trewe,
 Ne that he sawe nere in his life
 Unto her husbonde a trewe wife,
 Ne none so ful of honeste
 That she n'il laugh and mery be
 Whan that she hereth or may espie
 A man spekin of lecherie;
 Evèriche of 'hem hath some vice;
 One is dishonest, t'other nice;
 Yf one be ful of vilanie,
 An othir hath a lico'rous eie;
 If one be ful of wantonessè,
 Anothir is a chidireffe.

Thus Wickid Tonge, God yeve him shame!
 Can put 'hem everichone in blame
 Without desert, and causileffe:
 He lieth though thei ben giltyesse:
 I have pity to sene the sorowe
 That wakith bothe evin and morowe
 To innocentes doth suche grevaunce,
 I pray God yeve him evil chaunce!
 That he evir so besy is
 Of any woman to' seine amis.

Eke Jalousie may God confounde!
 That hath makid a toure so rounde,
 And made about a garison,
 To sette Bialacoil in prison,
 The whiche is shette there in the tour,
 Ful long to holdè ther sojour,
 There for to livin in penaunce;
 And for to do him more grevaunce,
 Whiche hath ordainid Jalousie,
 An oldè vecke for to espie
 The manir of his governaunce,
 The whiche devil in her infaunce
 Had lernid all of Lov'is arte,
 And of his pleyis take her parte:
 She was expert in his servise;
 She knewe eche wrenche and every gife
 Of Love, and every secret wile;
 It was right harde her to begile.

Of Bialacoil she toke aie hede,
 That er he liveth in wo and drede
 He kepte him coye and eke prive,
 Lest that in him she haddè se
 Any lite foly countinaunce,
 For she knew all the oldè daunce.

And aftir this whan Jalousie
 Had Bialacoil in his baillie,
 And shette him up that was so fre,
 For sure of him he would ybe,
 He trustith fore in his castell,
 The strongè werke him likith well;
 He dradde nat that no glotons
 Shoulde stele his rosis or bothoms;
 The rosis weren assurid all,
 Defencid with the strongè wall:
 Now Jalousie full well may be
 Of drede devoide in liberte;

Whether that he or slepe or wake
Of his rois may none be take.

But I (alas!) now morne shall
Bicause I was without the wall:
Ful mochil dole and mone I made;
Who so had wist what wo I had
I trowe he would have had pite;
Love all to dere had foldè me;
The gode that of his love had I
I went about it al queintly,
But nowe through dubling of my paine
I fe he woll it sell again,
And me a newè bargain lere,
The whiche all out the more is dere
For the solace that I have lorne
Than I had it nevir aforne:
Certain I am full like in dede
To him that caste in yerth his fede,
And hath joie of the newe springing
Whan it grenith in the ginning,
And is so faire and freshe of floure,
Lustie to sene, fote of odoure,
But er he it in shevis there
Maie fall wethir that shall it dere,
And makin it to fade and fall
The stalke, the greine, and flouris all,
That to the tiller is fordoen,
The hope he had conceived to sone.
I drede certaine that so fare I,
For hope and travaile sikirly
Ben me birafte all with a storme:
The floure n'ill sedin of my corne,
For Love hath so avauncid me,
Whan I began my privite
To Bialacoil all for to tell,
Whom I ne founde froward ne fell,
But toke agre all whole my plaie;
But Love is of so harde assaie,
That all at ones he revid me
Whan I wened best above to have be.
It is of Love as of Fortune,
That chaungith oft, and n'ill contune,
Whiche whilom will on folke smile,
And glombe on 'hem an othir while;
Now frende now foe thou shalt her fele,
For a twincling tournith her whele.

She can writhin her hedde awaie;
This is the concourse of her plaie,
She can areise that doith mourne,
And whirle adoune and ovirtourne
Who sittith hiest but as her lust:
A sole is he that woll her trust,
For it is I that am come doune
Through charge and revolucioun;
Sithe Bialacoil mote fro me twin,
Shette in her prison yonde within,
His absence at mine herte I fele,
For all my joie and all mine hele
Twas in him and in the Rose,
That but you woll, whiche him doeth close,
Opin, that so I maie him fe,
Love woll not that I curid be

Of the painis that I endure,
Nor of my cruill avinture.

Ah, Bialacoil, mine own dere!
Though thou be now a prisonere,
Kepith at lest thine herte to me;
Suffir not that it dauntid be,
Ne let not Jelousie' in his rage
Puttin thine herte in no servage:
Although he chastice the without,
And make thy bodie to him lout,
Have herte as harde as diamant,
Stedfast and stout, and naught pliaunt:
In prison though thy bodie be
At largè kepe thine herte fre:
A trewè hert ne will not plie
For no manace that it maie drie:
If Jelousie doith the pain
Quite him his wilè thus again,
To vengè the at lest in thought,
If othir waie thou mayist nought,
And in this wise full subtiltie
Worchin and winne the maistiry.
But yet I am in grete affraie
Lest thou sholdest nat doe as I saie;
I drede thou canst me grete maugre
That thou enprisoned art for me,
But yet right nought for my trespas,
For through me nere discovered was
Yet thing that ought to be secre:
Well more annoiè is in me
Than is in the of this mischaunce,
For I endure more hard penaunce
Than any man can saie or thinke,
That for the sorowe' almoste I sinke:
Whan I remembir me' of my wo
Full nigh out of my witte I go.

Inward mine herte I fele blede,
For comfortlesse the deth I drede:
Owe I nat well to have distresse
Whan falsè through ther wickidnesse,
And traitours, that arne envious,
To noien me be so coragious?

Ah, Bialacoil! full well I fe
That thei 'hem shape to deceve the,
To make the buxum to ther lawe,
And with ther cordè the to drawe
Where so 'hem lust, right at ther will;
I drede thei have the brought there till;
Withoutin comfort thought me flaeth;
This game would bring me to my deth,
For if that I your gode will lese
I mote be dedde, I maie not chese,
And if that thou foryetè me
Mine herte shall nere in liking be,
Nor ellifwhere findin solace:
If I be put out of your grace,
As it shall nevir ben I hope,
Than shuldin I fall in wanhope.

Alas, in wanhope! naie, parde,
For I woll nere dispeirid be:
If Hope me faile, than alle am I
Ungracious and unworthy:

In Hope I woll comfortid be,
For Love, whan he betaught her me,
Sayid that Hope where so I go
Should aie be relese to my wo.

But what and she my balis bete,
And be to me curteis and swete?
She is in nothing full certain;
Lovirs she put in full grete pain,
And makith 'hem with wo to dele:
Her faire behestes decevith sele,
For she woll behote sikirly
And failin aftir uttirly.

Ah! that is a full noious thing,
For mony' a lovir in loving
Hangeth upon her, and trustith fast,
Whiche lese ther travaile at the last.

Of thing to comme she wote right nought,
Therefore if it be wisely sought
Her counsaile folie is to take;
For many times whan she woll make
A full gode syllogisme, I drede
That aftirwarde there shall in dede
Folowe an ill conclusion:
This put me in confuson,
For many times I have it sene
That many have begilid bene
For trust that thei have set in Hope,
Whiche fell 'hem aftirward a-slope.

But nath'less yet gladly she wold
That he that woll him with her hold
Had all timis her purpose clere
Withoutin deceipt any where;
That she desirith sikirly;
Whan I her blamed I did foly.
But what availith her gode will
Whan she ne maie staunche my stound ill?
That helpith lite that she maie doe,
Out take behestes unto my wo,
And heste certain in no wise
Without ifete is not to preise.

Whan heste and dede a sondir vary
Thei doin a gretè contrary:
Thus am I possid up and doune
With dole, thought, and confusioun:
Of my disese there is no nomber,
Daungir and Shame me encomber,
Drede also and Jelosie,
And Wickid Tong, full of envie,
Of whiche the sharpe and cruill ire
Full oft me put in grete martire:
Thei have my joie fully let,
Sith Bialacoil thei have beset
Fro me in prison wickidly,
Whom I love so entierly,
That it wollin my banè be
But I the sonir maie him se.

And yet moreovir, worst of all,
There is set to kepe, foule her befall!
A rimplid vecke ferre ronne in age,
Frowning and yel'we' in her visage,

Whiche in awaite lieth daie and night,
That none of him maie have a fight.

Now mote my sorowe enforced be
Ful sothe it is that Love yafe me
Thre wondir yestis of his grace,
Whiche I have lorne now in this place,
Sith thei ne maie withoutin drede
Helpin but lite who takith hede,
For here availith no Swetè Thought,
And Swetè Speche helpith right nought,
The thirde was callid Swete Loking,
That now is lorne without lesing.

Yestis were faire, but nat for thy
Thei helpin me but simplilly
But Bialacoil losid be
To gone at large and to be fre;
For him my life lieth all in dout
But if he come the rathir out.

Alas! I trowe it woll nat ben,
For how should I ere more him sene?
He maie nat out, and that is wrong,
Bicause the tourè is so strong:
How should he' out, or by whose prowesse,
Out of so strong a fortireffe?

By me certain it n'll be doe,
God wotte I have no witte therto,
But well I wote I was in rage
Whan I to Love did my homage;
Who was the cause (in sothfastnesse)
But her self Damè Idilnesse,
Whiche me conveyde through faire praiere
To' entir into that faire vergere?
She was to blame me to leve,
The whiche now doeth me fore greve:
A fol'is worde is nought to trowe,
Ne worthe an apple for to lowe;
Men should him snibbe bittirlic
At primè temps of his folie:
I was a sole, and she me leved,
Through whom I am right nought releved:
She accomplishid all my will
That now me grevith wondir ill.

Reson me sayid, What should fall
A sole my self I maie well call,
That Love aside I had not laied,
And trowid that Dame Reson saied;
Reson had bothè skill and right
Whan she me blamed with all her might
To medle' of Love, that hath me shent,
But certain now I woll repent.

And should I repent? naie, parde,
A false traitour than should I be:
The devil's engins would me take
If evir I Love would forsake,
Or Bialacoil falsly betraie.
Should I at mischief hate him? naie,

Sithe he now for his curtisie
Is in prison of Jelousie;
Curtisie certain did he me
So moche it maie not yoldin be:
Whan he the haie passin me lete
To kisse the Rose faire and swete
Should I therefore conne him maugre?
Naie, certainly, it shall nat be,
For Love shall nevir, save gode will,
Here of me ne through worde or will
Offence or complaint more or lesse
Neithir of Hope nor Idlenesse;
For certis it were wrong that I
Hatid hem for ther curtisie.
There is not els but suffre' and thinke,
And wakin whan I shoulde winke,
Abide in hope till Love through chaunce
Sende me foccour or allegaunce,
Expectaunt aie till I maie mete
To gettin mercie of that swete.

Whilom I thinke how Love to me
Sayid that he would take at gre
My service if unpacience
Ycausid me to doen offence;
He saied, In thanke I shall it take,
And high maistr eke they make,
If Wickidnesse ne reve it the,
But, sone, I trowe that shall nat be.
These were his wordis by and by,
It semed he lovid me truely.

Now is there not but serve him wele
If that I thinke his thanke to fele:
My gode, mine harme, lithe whole in me,
In Love maie no defaute ybe,
For true Love ne failed nevir man;
Sothly the faute mote nedis than,
As God forbide, be founde in me,
And how it cometh I can not fe.
Now let it gone as it maie go,
Wher Love woll foccour me or flo,
He maie do wholly on me his will;
I am so fore ybounde him till
From his service I maie not flene,
For life and deth withoutin wene
Is in his hande; I maie nat chese;
He maie me doe bothe winne and lese:
And sithe so fore he doeth me greve,
Yet if my lust he would acheve,
To Bialacoil godely to be,
I yeve no force what fell on me;
For though I die, as I mote nede,
I praie Love of his godelihede
To Bialacoil doe gentilnesse,
For whom I live in soche distresse
That I mote dyin for penaunce:
But first withoutin repentaunce
I will me confesse in gode entent,
And make in haste my testament,
As lovirs doin that felen smerte.
To Bialacoil leve I mine herte
All whole, withoutin departing
Or doublenesse or repenting.

Comment Raïson vient a L'amant.

Thus as I madin my passage
In compleint and in cruill rage,
And I n'ot where to find a leche
That couthe unto mine helping eche,
Sodainly again comin doun
Out of her toure I sawe Refoun,
Discrete and wise, and full plesaunt,
And of her porte full avenaunt:
The right waie she toke unto me,
Whiche stode in grete perplexite,
That was peshid in every side,
That I n'ist where I might abide,
Till she, demurely sadde of chere,
Sayid to me as she came nere;
Mine ownè frende, art thou agreved?
How is this quarell yet acheved?

Of Lov'is side? anon me tell
Hast thou not yet of love thy fill?
Art thou nat werie' of thy service
That the hath grevid in soche wise?

What joie haste thou in thy loving?
Is it a swete or bittir thing?
Canst thou yet chesin, let me se,
What best thy succour mightin be?
Thou servist a full noble lorde,
That maketh the thrall for thy rewarde,
Whiche aie reneweth thy tourment,
With folie so he hath the blent:
Thou fell in mischief thilkè daie
Whan thou diddist, the sothe to saie,
To him obeisaunce and homage:
Thou wroughtist nothing as the sage
Whan thou became his liegè man;
Thou diddist a grete folie than:

Thou wistist nat what fell therto,
With what lorde thou haddist to doe:
If that thou haddist him well knowe
Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe,
For if that thou wiste what it were
Thou n'oldist serve him halfe a yere,
No, nat a weke nor halfe a daie,
Ne yet an houre without delaie:
Ne nevir I lovid paramours,
His lordship is so full of shours:
Knowist him ought?—
L'amanut. Ye, Dame, parde.—

Raïson. Naie, naie.—*L'amaunt.* Yes I, —

Raïson. Wherefore, let se.—

L'amanut. Of that he sayid I should be
Glad to have soche a lorde as he,
And maistr of soche seignorie.—

Raïson. Knowist him no more?—

L'amaunt. Naie, certis, I,

Save that he yafe me rulis there,

And went his waie I ne wist where,

And I abode bounde in balaunce:

Lo, there a noble cognisaunce!

Raïson.

But I woll that thou knowe him now

Ginning and ende, sithin that thou

U iiiij

Art so anguifhous and so mate,
Disfigurid out of astate,
There maie no wreche have more of wo,
Ne catife non endurin so;
It were to every man fitting
Of his lorde to have knowleging,
For if thou knewe him out of dout
Lightly thou shouldist fcapin out
Of thy prifon that marrieth the.

L'amaunt.

Ye, Dame, fithin my lorde is he,
And I his man made with mine honde
I wouldè right faine undirftonde
To knowin of what kinde he be,
If any would enforme me.

Raifoun.

I would (fayid Refon) the lere,
Sithe thou to lerne haft foche defire,
And shewin the withoutin fable
A thing that is not demonftrable.
Thon shalt knowe withoutin fciencie
And withoutin experience
The thing that maie not knowin be,
Ne wift ne shewed in no degre,
Thou maieft the fothe of it not witten
Although in the it were ywritten;
Thou shalt not knowin therof more
While thou art rulid by his lore,
But unto him that Love will flie
The knottè maie unclofid be
Whiche hath to the, as it is founde,
So longe to knitte and not unbounde;
Now fet well thine entencion
To here of love the defcripcion.

Love it is an hateful pefe,
A fre' acquitance without relefe,
And through the fret full of falshede
A fikerneffe all fet in drede;
In herte is a difpering hope,
And full of hope it is wanhope;
A wife wodneffe, and void refon,
A swete perill in to droun,
And hevie burthin light to bere,
A wickid wave awaie to were;
It is Charybdis perilous,
Disagreable and gracious;
It is discordaunce that can acorde,
And accordaunce unto difcorde;
It is conning without fciencie,
And wifedome without fapiencie,
Witte withoutin discrecion,
Havoire without poffeffion;
It is like hele and whole fickenefse,
A trust drounid and dronkineffe,
And helth all full of maladic,
And charite full of envie,
And angre full of aboundaunce,
And a full gredie fuffifaunce,
Delite right full of hevineffe,
And drerineffe-full of gladneffe,
Bittir swetenefse and fwete errour,
Right evill favoured gode favour,

A fin that pardone hath withinne,
And pardone spottid without finne,
A paine alfo it is joious,
And felonie right piteous,
Alfo a plaie that felde is ftale,
And ftedefastneffe right mevable,
A ftrengh weikid to ftonde upright,
And a feblenefse full of might,
Witte unavifid, fage folie,
And joie full of tourmentrie,
A laughtir it is weping aie,
Rest that travailith night and daie,
Alfo a swete hell it is,
And a forowfull paradis,
A plefaunt gaille and efie prifoun,
And full of froftis fomir fefoun,
Primè temps fall of froftis white,
And Maie devoide of all delite,
With fere braunchis bloffoms ungrene,
And newe fruiet filled with wintir tene;
It is a flowe maie not forbere,
Ragges ribanid with gold to were,
For all fo well woll Love be fette
Undir raggis as riche rotchette,
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke as bright burnettes,
For none is of fo mokill prife,
Ne no man foundin is fo wife,
Ne no man fo high of parage,
Ne no man founde of witte fo fage,
No man fo hardie ne fo wight,
Ne no man of fo mokill might,
None fo fullfillid of bounte,
That he with love maie dauntid be;
All the worldè holdith this waie,
Love makith all to gone miſwaie
But if it be thei of evill life,
Whom Genius curfid, man and wife,
That wrongly werke again Nature;
None foche I love, ne have no cure
Of foche as Lov'is fervauntes ben,
And woll nat by my counfaile fleen,
For I ne preifin that loving
Where through man at the laſt ending
Shall call 'hem wretchis full of wo,
Love grevith 'hem and fhendith fo;
But if thou wolt well Love efchewe
For to efcape out of his mewe,
And make all whole the forowe flake,
No bettir counfaile maieft thou take
Than thinke to flein wel i-wis,
Maie nought helpe els, for wit thou this,
If thou flie it shall flie the,
Folowe' it and folowen shall it the.

L'amaunt.

Whan I had herid Refon fain,
Whiche had ysplith her ſpeche in vain,
Dame, (fayid I) I dare well faie
Of this avaut me well I maie,
That from your ſcole ſo deviaunt
I am, that nere the more avaut
Right nought I am through your dooſtine
I dulle undir your difcipline;

I wot no more than I wiste ever,
To' me so contrarie and so fer
Is every thing that ye me lere,
And yet I can it all by partivere;
Mine herte foryeteth thereof right nought;
It is so writtin in my thought,
And depe gravin it is so tender,
That all mine herte I can it render,
And rede it ovir communely,
But to my self lewdist am I.

But sithe ye love diserivin so,
And lacke and preise it bothè two,
Definith it into this letter,
That I maie thinke on it the better,
For I herd nevir defined here,
And wilfully I would it lere.—

Raïson. If love be serchid well and fought,
It is a sickeneffe of the thought,
Annexid and knedde betwixt tweine,
Which male and female with o cheine,
So frele bindeth, that thei n'ill twinne
Wedir thereof thei lese or winne:
The rote springith through hote brenning
In to disordinate desiring
For to kissin and to embrace,
And at ther lust them to solace;
Of othir thing Love retchith nought,
But setteth ther herte and all ther thought
More for ther delectacioun
Than any procreacioun
Of other fruiet by engendrure,
Whiche love to God is nat plesure,
For of ther bodie fruite to get
Thei yeve no force, thei are so set
Upon delite to plaie in fere;
And some have also this manere
To fainin 'hem for love seke;
Soche love I prese not at a leke,
For paramours thei do but faine,
To lovin truely thei disdaine;
Thei fallin ladies traitourfly,
And swerne 'hem othis uttirly,
With many' a lesing, many' a fable,
And all thei findin disceivable.

And whan thei han ther lust ygetten
The hote ernes thei all foryetten;
Women the harme byin full fore;
But men this thinkin evirmore,
The lasse harme is, so mote I the,
Disceive them than disceivid be,
And namily where thei ne maie
Findin none othir mene ne waie,
For I wote well in sothfastnesse,
That who doeth now his businesse
With any woman for to dele
For any lust that he maie fele,
But if it be for engendrure
He doeth trespasse I you ensure,
For he should settin all his will
To getten a likely thing him till,
And to sustain, if that he might,
And kepin forth by kind'is right

His owne likeneffe and semblable;
For bicause all' is corruptible,
And failin should successioun,
Ne were the generacioun,
Our sect'is firenè for to save,
Whan fadre' or mothir arne in grave
Ther chiidrin shulde whan they ben dede
Full diligent ben in ther stede
To use that worke on soche a wise
That one maie through an othir rise;
Therefore set kinde therein delite,
For men therein should 'hem delite,
And of that dede be not erke,
But oftè sithis haunt that werke,
For none would drawe thereof a draught
Ne were delite whiche hath him caught;
This had subtile Dame Nature,
For none goeth right I the ensure,
Ne hath entten whole ne parfite,
For ther desire is for delite,
The whiche forteneid crese, and eke
The plaie of love, for oft thei seke
And thrall 'hem self, thei be so nice,
Unto the prince of every vice,
For of eche sinne it is the rote
Unlesfull lust, though it be sote,
And of all evill the racine,
As Tullius can determine,
Whiche in his time was full sage,
In a boke whiche he made of age,
Where that more he ypraisith Elde,
Though he be crokid and unwelde,
And more of commendacioun
Than youth in his diseripcoun;
For youth set bothè man and wife
In all perill of soule and life,
And perill is, but men have grace,
The perill of youth for to pace
Without any deth or distresse,
It is so full of wildeneffe,
So oft it doeth shame and damage
To him or unto his linage,
It ledith man now up now down,
In mokill dissolucioun,
And maketh him love ill companie,
And lede his life disrullie,
And halte him paied with none estate;
Within himself is soche debate
He chaungith purpose and entent,
And yaltè into some covent,
To livin astir ther emprise,
And lesith fredome and fraunchise
That Nature in him had yset,
The whiche again he maie not get,
If there he make his mansion,
For to abide professioun;
Though for a time his herte absent
It maie not faile he shall repent,
And eke abidin thilkè daie
To leve' his abite and gon his waie,
And leseth his worship and his name,
And dare not come again for shame,
But all his life he doeth so mourne,
Bicause he dare not home retourne,

Fredome of kinde so lost hath he
 That nevir maie recurid be,
 But that if God him grauntin grace
 That he maie, er he hennis pace,
 Contein undir obedience,
 Through the vertue of pacience;
 For youth set man in all folie,
 In unthrift and in ribaudrie,
 In lecherie and in outrage,
 So oft it chaungith of corage:
 Youth ginnith oft soche a bargain
 That maie not end withoutin pain:
 In grete perill is Youth-hede,
 Delite so doeth his bridill lede;
 Delite this hangith, drede the nought,
 Bothe mann'is bodie and his thought;
 Onily through youth'is chambere,
 That to doen ill is customere,
 And of naught ellis takith hede
 But onely folkis for to lede
 Into disport and wildenesse
 So froward is it from sadnesse,
 But elde ydrawith 'hem therfro;
 Who wote it not he maie well go,
 And mo of 'hem that now arne old,
 That whilom youth yhad in hold,
 Whiche yet remembre' of tendir age
 How it 'hem brought in many' a rage,
 And many' a folie therin wrought,
 But new that elde hath 'hem through fought
 Thei repent 'hem of ther folie
 That youth 'hem put in jeopardie,
 In perill and in mokill woe,
 And made 'hem oft amisse to doe,
 And sewin evill companie
 And riot and advouterie,

But Eldè gan againe restraine
 From suchè folie and refraine,
 And set men by her ordinaunce
 In gode rule and in governaunce;
 But ill she spendith her servise,
 For no man wol her love ne preise;
 She is hatid, this wot I wele,
 Her acquaintance would no man fele,
 Ne han of Eldè companie,
 Men hate to be of her alie,
 For no man wold becomin olde,
 Ne die whan he is yonge and bolde;
 And Elde mervailith right gretely
 Whan thei remembre 'hem inwardly
 Of many' a perillous emprise
 Whiche that thei wrought in sondry wise,
 How evir thei might without blame
 Escape awaie withoutin shame,
 In youth without any damage,
 Without represe of ther linage,
 Lesse of membre, sheding of blode,
 Perill of deth, or losse of gode.
 Wotist thou nat where Youth abit,
 That men so preisin in ther wit?
 With Delite she yhalte sojour,
 For both thei dwellin in o tour;

As longe as Youthe is in seson
 Thei dwellin in one mansion:
 Delite of Youth woll have service
 To do what so he woll devise,
 And youth is redy evirmore
 For to obey for smerte or fore
 Unto Delite, and him to yeve
 Her service while that she maie live.

Where Elde abitte I wol the tell
 Shortily, and no while ydwelle,
 For thidir behoveth the to go,
 Yf Deth in youthè the not slo;
 Of this journey thou maiste not faile.
 With her Labour and eke Travaile
 Lodgid ben, with Sorow and Wo,
 That nevir out of her court go,
 Paine and Distresse, Sickenesse and Ire,
 And Melan'coly, that angry fire,
 Ben of her paleis senatours,
 Groning and grutching her herbegeours:
 The day and night her to tourment
 With cruill Deth thei her present,
 And tellin her erliche and late
 That Death stondeth arnid at her gate;
 Than bring thei to her remembraunce
 The foly dedes of her enfaunce,
 Whiche causin her to mourne in wo
 That youth hath her begilid so,
 Whiche sodainly awaie is hasted;
 She weped the time that she hath wasted,
 Complaining of the preteritte
 And the present, that nat abitte,
 And of her oldè vanite,
 That but asorne her she maie se
 In the future some smale socoure
 To leggin her of her doloure,
 To graunt her time of repentaunce,
 For her finnis to do penaunce,
 And at the last so her governe,
 To winne the joye that is eterne,
 Fro whiche go backwarde youth her made,
 In vanite to drowne and wade;
 For present time abidith nought,
 It is more swifte than any thought;
 So litill while it doth endure
 That there is ne compte ne mesure.

But how that evir the game go,
 Who list love joye and mirth also
 Of love, be it he or she,
 Or hie or lowe, who so it be,
 In frute thei shouldin 'hem delite,
 Ther parte thei maie not ellis quite,
 To save 'hem self in honeste;
 And yet full many one I se
 Of women, sothly for to faine,
 That desirin and wouldin faine
 The plaic of love, thei be so wilde,
 And not coveite to go with childe;
 And if with childe thei be perchaunce,
 Thei wol it holde a grete mischaunce;
 But what so evir wo thei fele
 Thei wol not plainin, but concele,
 But it be any fole or nice,
 In whome that shame hath no justice;

For to delite echone thei drawe
 That haunt this worke, both hie and lawe,
 Save fuche that arne worth right nought,
 That for money wol be ybought;
 Suche love I preisin in no wise
 Whan it is given for covetise;
 I preise no woman, though she' is wode,
 That yeveth her selfe for any gode,
 For litill should a man ytelle
 Of her that wil her body felle,
 Be she a maide or be she wife,
 That quicke wol felle her by her life,
 How faire chere that ever she make,
 He is a wretche I undirtake
 That love fuche one, for swete or soure,
 Though she him called her paramoure,
 And laugheth on him, and maketh him fest,
 For certainly no fuche best
 To be lovid is nat worthy,
 Or berin the name of Drury;
 None should her plesse, but he wer wode,
 That wol dispoile him of his gode:
 Yet nathelless I wol not saie
 That she for solace and for plaie
 Maie a jewil or othir thing
 Take of her lov'is fre yeving,
 But that she aske it in no wise
 For drede of shame or covetise;
 And she of hers maie him certaine
 Without sclaundir yevin againe,
 And joyne ther hertes togidir so
 In love, and take and yeve also:
 Trowe nat that I wollin 'hem twinne
 Whan in ther love there is no finne;
 I wol that thei togidir go,
 And done al that thei han ado,
 As curtis should and debonaire,
 And in ther love berin 'hem faire,
 Withoutin vice, both he and she,
 So that alwaie in honeste
 Fro foly Love to kepe 'hem clere,
 That brennith hertis with his fere,
 And that ther love in any wise
 Be devoide of all covetise.
 Gode love should engendrid be
 Of trewe hert, juste and secre,
 And not of fuche as set ther thought
 To have their lust and ellis nought,
 So are thei caught in Lov'is lace
 Trewly for bodily solace;
 Fleshely delite is so present
 With the, that set al thine entent
 Withoutin more, what should I glose?
 For to gettin and have the Rose,
 Whiche makith the so mate and wode
 That thou desirest none other gode:
 But thou art not an inche the nerre,
 But evre' abidest in forroue' and werre,
 As in thy face it is yfene;
 It makith the bothe pale and lene;
 Thy might, thy vertue, gothe awaie,
 A fory gest in gode faie
 Thou harborist than in thine inne,
 The god of Love whan thou let inne;

Wherfore I rede thou shette him oute,
 Or he shal greve the out of doute,
 For to thy profite it wol turne,
 If he no more with the sojourne.
 In grete mischese and sorow sonken
 Ben hertis that of love arne dronken,
 As thou peraventure knowen shall
 Whan thou hast lost thy time all,
 And spent thy thought in idilnesse,
 In waste, and woful lustinesse.
 Yf thou maist live the time to se
 Of love for to delivered be
 Thy time thou shalt bewepè sore,
 The whiche nevir thou maist restore,
 For time ylost, as men may se,
 For nothing may recovered be:
 And if thou scape yet at the laste
 Fro Love that hath the so faste
 Yknitte and boundin in his lace,
 Certaine I holde it but a grace;
 For many one, as it is seine,
 Have losse and spent also in veine
 In his service without socour
 Body and soule, gode and trefour,
 And witte and strength, and eke richeffe,
 Of whiche thei had nevir redresse.

L'amant.

Thus taught and prechid hath Refon,
 But Love yspilte hath her sermon,
 That was so impid in my thought
 That her doctrine I set at nought,
 And yet ne saide she nevre' a dele
 That I ne understode it wele
 Wordè by worde the matir all;
 But unto Love I was so thrall,
 Whiche callith ovir all his praie,
 He chasith so my thoughtis aie,
 And holdeth min herrte undir his sele
 As trusty and trewe as any stele,
 So that I no devocion
 Ne haddè in the wise sermon
 Of Dame Refon, ne of her rede
 I toke no sojour in mine hede,
 For allè yede out at one ere
 That in that othir she did lere;
 Fully on me she lost her lore;
 Her speche me grevid wondir fore.

That unto her for ire I saide,
 For angir as I did abraide,
 Dame, and as it your will algate
 That I not love but that I hate
 All men, as ye me now do teche?
 For if I do astir your speche,
 Sith that you seine love is not gode,
 Than must I nedis say with mode,
 Yf I it leve, in hatrid aie
 Livin, and voidin love awaie
 Ferrè from me a sinful wretche,
 Yhatid of allè that tette,
 I may not go none othir gate,
 For either must I love or hate,
 And if I hatin men of newe
 More than love it wol me rewe,

As by your preching semith me,
 For Love nothing ne praisith the :
 Ye yeve gode counsaile sikirly
 That prechith me al day that I
 Ne should not Lov'is lore alowe;
 He were a sole woulde you not trowe;
 In speche also ye han me taught
 Anothir love that knowen is naught,
 Whiche I have herde you not repreve :
 To love eche othir, by your leve,
 If ye would definin it me,
 I woulidin gladly here, to se
 At the lest if I mowin lere
 Of sondry lovis the manere.

Raïson.

Certis, frende, a grete sole art thou,
 Whan that thou nothing wolt alow
 Whiche that I for thy profite saie;
 Yet wol I saie the more in saie,
 For I am redy at the lest
 To accomplisshin thy request;
 But I n'ot where it wol aveile;
 In vaine perav'enture I travaile.
 Love there is in sondrie wise,
 Right as I shal the here devise.

For some love lesul is and gode,
 I mene not that whiche maketh the wode,
 And bringith the in many' a fitte,
 And ravisheth fro the al thy witte,
 It is so marveilous and queint;
 With suche love be no more aqueint.

Comment Raïson diffinist Amfete.

Love of frendshippe also there is
 Whiche makith no man don amis,
 Of will ykните betwixin two,
 That wol not breke for wele ne wo,
 Whiche longe is likely to contune,
 Whan wil and godes ben in commune,
 Groundid by Godd'is ordinaunce,
 All whole withoutin discordaunce,
 With them yholding commaunce,
 Of al ther gode in charite,
 That there be none exception
 Through chaunging of ententioun,
 That eche helpe othir at ther nede,
 And wisely hele both worde and dede,
 Trewe of mening, devoide of flouthe,
 For wit is nought withoutin trouthe,
 So that the t' one dare all his thought
 Saine to his frende, and sparin nought,
 As to him selfe, without dreding
 To be discovered by wreying,
 For glad is that conjunctioun
 Whan there is none suspectioun
 Betwixin 'hem whome thei wold prove,
 That trewe and parfite weren in love;
 For no man may be amiable
 But if he be so ferme and stable
 That Fortune chaunge him not ne blinde,
 But that his frende alway him finde
 Bothe pore and riche in one estate,
 For if his frende through any gate
 Wol complaine of his poverté
 He should not bide so long til he

Of his helping doth him require,
 For gode dede done thorough prayire
 Is solde and bought to dere i-wis
 To hert that of grete valure is,
 For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse
 Can evil demene his distresse;
 And man that worthy is of name
 To askin oftin hath grete shame.

A gode man brennith in his thought
 For shame whan that he askith ought;
 He hath grete thought, and dredith aie
 For his disese whan he shal praie
 His frende lest that he warnid be
 'Till he preve his stabilite;
 But whan that he hath foundin one
 That trusty is and trewe as stone,
 And hath assayid him at all,
 And founde him stedfast as a wall,
 And of his frendshippe be certaine,
 He shal him shewe bothe joie and paine,
 And all that he dare thinke or saie,
 Withoutin shame, as he well maie,
 For how shoud he ashamid be
 Of suche an one as I tolde the?
 For whan he wot his secret thought
 The third shal know therof right nought,
 For twey in nombre' is bet than thre
 In every counsaile and secre :
 Repreve he dredith nevre' a dele
 Who that beset his wordis wele,
 For every wise man out of drede
 Can kepe his tong till he se nede.

And folis can not holde ther tonge;
 A fol'is belle is sone yronge;
 Yet shall a trewe frende doin more
 To helpe his felowe of his sore,
 And socour him whan he hath nede
 In all that he may done in dede,
 And gladdir that he him plesith
 Than his felowe that he esith :
 And if he do nat his request
 He shal as mochil him molest
 As his felowe, bicause that he
 Maie not fulfill his volunte
 All fully as he hath required.
 If both the hertis Love hath fired
 Bothe joye and wo thei shal departe,
 And take evinly eche his parte,
 Halfe his anoye he shal have aie,
 And comforte him what that he maie,
 And of his blisse parte shal he,
 If love wollin departid be.

And whilom of this unite
 Spake Tullius in a dite,
 A man should makin this request
 Unto his frende that is honest,
 And he godely should it fulfill,
 But it the more were out of skill,
 And otherwise not graunt therto,
 Except only in causis two.

Yf men his frende to deth would drive
 Let him be besy to' save his live.

Also if men wollen him assaile,
Of his worship to make him faile,
And hindrin him of his renoun,
Let him with ful entencioun
His devir done in eche degre,
That his frende ne shamid be.

In these two casis with his might,
Taking no kepe to skill nor right,
As ferre as love may him excuse,
This ought no man for to refuse.

This love that I have told to the
Is nothing contrarie to me;
This wol I that thou folowe wele,
And leve the t'othir every dele;
This love to vertue al entendeth,
The t'othir folis blent and shendeth.

An othir love also there is
That is contrary unto this,
Which desire is so constrainid
That it ne is but will fainid;
Away fro trouth it doth so varie
That to gode love it is contrarie,
For it maymith in many wise
Sike hertis with covetise;
All in winning and in profite
Suche love yfettith his delite:
This love so haungith in balaunce,
That if it lese his hope perchaunce
Of lucre that he' is set upon
It woll failin and quench anon,
For no man maie be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But if he lovin more in mode
Men for 'hem selfe than for ther gode;
For love that profite doth abide
Is false, and bidith not to tide:
Soche love comith of Dame Fortune,
That litil while woll contune,
For it shall chaungin wondir sone,
And take eclips as doth the mone,
Whan that she is from us ylet
Through erth, that betwixin is set
The sonne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie or in all:

The shadowe makith her bemes merke,
And her hornis to shewin derke
That part where she hath lost her light
Of Phebus fully and the sight,
Till whan the shadowe' is ovir paste
She' is enlumined agein as faste
Through the brightnes of the sonne bemes,
That yevith to' her again her lemes:
That love is right of such nature,
Now it is faire and now obscure,
Now bright, now clippy of manere,
And whilom dimme and whilom clere,
As sone as povertie ginnith take,
With mantil and with wedis blake
Hidith of love the light away,
That into night it tournith day,
It may not sein Richeffe shine
Till that the blacke shadowis fine,
For whan that Richeffe shinith bright
Love recovereth ayen his light,

And whan it failith he wol flit,
And as she grevith so grevith it.

Of this love herith what I saie:
The riche men are ylovid aie,
And namely tho that sparande bene,
That wol not washe ther hertis clene
Of the filthe nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning avarice.

The riche man ful fond is i-wis
That wenith that he lovid is;
If that his hert it undirstode
It is not he; it is his gode:
He may wel wetin in his thought
His gode is loved and he right nought;
For if he be a nigarde eke
Men wol not set by him a leke,
But hatin him, this is the sothe.
Lo what profite his catil dothe!
Of every man that may him se
It getteth him nought but enmite,
But he amende him of that vice,
And know himselfe he is not wise.

Certis he should aie frendly be
To get him love, also ben fre,
Or els he is not wise ne sage,
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not lovith his dede proveth,
Whan he his richeffe so well loveth
That he wol hide it aie and spare,
His pore frendis sene forfare,
To kepin aie his ill purpose,
Till that for drede his eyin close,
And til a wickid deth him take
Him had levir a sondre shake,
And let al' his limmes a sondre rive,
Than leve his richeffe in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man;
Certain no love is in him than,
For how should love within him be
Whan in his hert is no pite?
That he trespafith well I wate,
For eche man knowith his estate,
For wel him ought to be reprovéd
That lovith nought ne is not loved.

But sithe we arne to Fortune comen,
And hath our sermon of her nomen,
A wondir will I tell the now,
Thou herdist nere suche one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me levin shall,
Although sothfastenesse it be all,
As it is writtin, and is sothe,
That unto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than doth the sote and debonaire;
And if the thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For Fortune debonaire and softe
Yfalsith and begilith ofte,
For liche a mothir she can cherishe,
And milkin as doth a norice,
And of her gode to him ydeles,
And yeveth 'hem parte of her jeweles,
With grete richis and dignite,
And 'hem she hoteth stabilite

In a state that is nothing stable,
 But chaunging aie and variable,
 And fedith him with glory veine,
 And worldely blisse nothing certeine:
 Whan she 'hem settith on her whele
 Than wenin thei to be right wele,
 And in so stable state withall
 That nevir thei wene for to fall;
 And whan thei sette so high to be
 Thei wene to have in certainte
 Of hertly frendis to grete nombre,
 That nothing might their state encombre;
 Thei trust 'hem so on every side,
 Wening with 'hem thei would abide
 In every perill and mischaunce
 Withoutin chaunce or variaunce
 Bothè of catil and of gode,
 And also for to spende ther blode,
 And al ther membris for to spill,
 Onily to fulfill ther will:
 Thei maken it whole in many wise,
 And hotin 'hem their full service,
 How fore so that it do 'hem smerte
 Into ther very nakid sherte;
 Herte and hande also whole thei give,
 For al the time that thei may live,
 So that with this ther flatiry
 Thei makin folis glorifie
 Onely of ther wordis speking,
 And han chere of a rejoyfing,
 And trow 'hem as the Evangile;
 And it is al falsshedè and gile,
 As thei shal afterwardis se;
 Whan thei arne sal in povertè,
 And ben of gode and catil bare,
 Than should thei sene who frendis ware,
 For of an hundrid certainly,
 Nor of a thousande full scarfly,
 Ne shall thei finde unnethis one
 Whan povertè is comen upon.

For thus Fortune that I of tell,
 With men whan that her lust to dwell,
 Maketh 'hem to lese ther conisaunce,
 And noriseth 'hem in ignoraunce.

But frowarde Fortune and perverse,
 Whan high estates she doth reverse,
 And makith 'hem to tumble doune
 Of her whele with a sodaine tourne,
 And from ther richesse dothe 'hem fle,
 And plongith 'hem in povertè,
 As a stepmothir envious,
 And laieth a plaistir dolorous
 Unto ther hertis woundid egre,
 Whiche is not tempered with vinegre,
 But with povertè and indigence,
 For to shewe by experience
 That she is Fortune verilie,
 In whom no man ne should affie,
 Nor in her yestis have fiaunce,
 She is so ful of variaunce.

Thus can she makin hie and lowe,
 Whan thei from richesse arne throwe,
 Fully to knowin without were
 Frende of affecte and frende of chere,

And whiche in love weren trewe and stable,
 And whiche also weren variable,
 Aftir Fortunè ther goddesse,
 In povertè, either in richesse,
 For all that yeveth here out of drede
 Unhappy yberith it in dede,
 For Infortunè lette not one
 Of frendis whan Fortune is gone,
 I mene tho frendis that woll fle
 Anone as entrith povertè;
 And yet thei wol not leve 'hem so,
 But in eche place where that thei go
 Thei callin 'hem wretche, scorne, and blame,
 And of ther mishappe 'hem diffame,
 And namely suche as in richesse
 Pretendith moste of stablenesse,
 Whan that they sawe 'hem set on losse,
 And werin of hem sucoured ofte,
 And most iholpe in al ther nede,
 But now thei take no maner hede,
 But seine in voice of flatirè
 That now appereth ther folie
 Ovir al wher so that thei fare,
 And singe, Go, farewell, Feldefare.

Allè suche frendis I beshrewe,
 For of trewe frendis ther be to fewe,
 But sothfast frendes, what so betide,
 In every fortune wollen abide;
 Thei han their hertes in such nobleffe
 That thei n'il love for no richesse,
 Nor for that Fortune may 'hem sende
 Thei wollen 'hem socour and defende,
 And chaungin for softe ne for fore;
 For who his frende loveth evirmore,
 Though men drawe swardis him to flo,
 Thei may not hewe ther love a two;
 But if in case that I shall say,
 For pride and ire lese it he may,
 And for reprove by nicete,
 And discovering of privite
 With tonge wounding, as felon,
 Through venomous detraccion.

Frende in this case wol gon his way,
 For nothing greve him more ne may,
 And for nought ellis wol he fle
 If he love in stabilite:
 And certaine he is well begone
 Among a thousande that findeth one,
 For there ne may be no richesse,
 Ayenst frendship of worthinesse,
 For it ne may so high attaine
 As may the valoure, sothe to saine,
 Of him that lovith trewe and well:
 Frendship is more than is catell,
 For frende in courte aie bettir is
 Than peny is in purse certis,
 And than is Fortune mishaping,
 Whan upon men she is fabling
 Thorough misturning of her chaunce,
 And castith 'hem out of balaunce.

She maketh through her adversite
 Men ful and clerly for to se
 Him that is frende in existence
 From him that is by apparence,

For infortune makith anone
To know thy frendis fro thy sone
By experience right as it is,
The whiche is more to praise i-wis
Than in muche richesse and tresour,
For more depe profite and valour
Poverté, and suche adversite
Before, than doeth prosperite,
For that one yeveth conisaunce,
And t'othir gevith ignoraunce.

And thus in poverté is in dede
Trowthé declarid fro falskede,
For faint frendis it wol declare,
And trewe also, what way they fare;
For whan he was in his richesse
These frendis ful of doublenesse
Offrid him in many wise
Ther herte and body, and service,
What would he then have you to have brought
To knowin opialy ther thought,
That he now hath so clerely sene?
The lasse begiled he should have bene
And he had than percevid it,
But Richesse n'olde not let him wit;
Wel more avauntage doeth him than,
Sithe that it makith him a wise man,
The grete mischefe that he perceveth
Than doeth richesse, that him deceveth:
Richesse riche ne ymakith nought
Him that on tresour set his thought,
For richesse stonte in suffisaunce,
And nothing stonte in haboundaunce,
For suffisaunce all onily
Makith menne to live richily.

For he that hath but mitchis tweine,
Ne value in his whole demeine,
Liveth more at ese, and more is riche,
Than doith he whiche that is chiche,
And in his barne hath, soth to saine,
An hundrid mavis of whete graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of golde many befaunt,
For in the getting he hath suche wo,
And in the keping drede also,
And sette ere more his besinesse
For to encrese and nat to lesse,
For to augment and multiply;
And though on hepes that lie him by,
Yet nevir shall make his richesse
Affleth unto his gredinesse;
But the pore man that retchith nought
Save of his livelode in his thought,
Whiche that he getteth with his travaile,
He dredith nought that it shall faile,
Though he have little world's gode,
Meté and drinke, and esie fode,
Upon his travaile and living,
And also suffisaunt clothing,
Or if in sickenesse that he fall,
And lothé mete and drinke withall,
Though he have not his mete to buie,
He shall bethinke him hastily

To put him out of all daungere,
That he of mete hath no mistere,
Or that he maie with little eke
Be foundin while that he is seke,
Or that men shall him berne in haste
To live till his sicknesse be paste
Unto some maifondewe beside:
He caste nought what shall him betide;
He thinkith nought that evre' he shall
Into any sickenesse yfall.

And though it fall, as it maie be,
That all betime sparin shall he
As mokill as shall to' him suffice
While he is sicke in any wise,
He doith for that he woll be
Contentid with his poverté
Withoutein nede of any man:
So moche in little have he can
He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he n'ill be importune
Unto no wight ne onerous,
Nor of ther godeffe covetous,
Therefore he spareth, it mai well ben,
His pore estate for to sustene.

Or if him luste not for to spare,
But suffrith forthe as nat yet ware,
At lasse it happeneth, as it maie,
All right unto his haste daie,
And take the worlde as it would be;
For evir in herte thinkith he
The sonir that Deth him yslo
To paradise the sonir go
He shall, there for to live in blisse
Where that he shall no godis misse:
Thidir he hopeth God shall him sende
Aftir this wretchid liv'is ende.
Pythagoras himself reherfes,
In a boke that The Goldin Verses
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honorable dite,

Than whan thou goest thy body fre
Fre in the ayre thou shalt up go,
And levin all humanite,
And purely live in dicte.
He is a sole withoutin were
That trowith have his countrey here.

In yerth is not our countere,
That maie these clerkis seine and se
In Boece of Consolacion,
Where it is makid mencion
Of our contre plaine at the eye
By teching of philosophie,
Where leude men mightin lerin wit,
Who so that would translatin it.
If he be suche that can well live
Aftir his renté maie him yeve,
And not desirith more to have
Than maie fro poverté him save.
A wiseman saied, as we maie sene,
Is no man wretched but he it wene,

Be he a king, knight, or ribaude :
 Many a ribaude is merie and baude
 That swinketh and berith daie and night
 Many a burthin of grete might,
 The whiche doith him lasse offence
 For he that suffrith in pacience :
 Thei laugh and daunce, thei trippe and sing,
 And laie nought up for ther living,
 But in the taverne all dispendeth
 The winning whiche that God 'hem sendeth;
 Than goeth he fardils for to bere
 With as gode chere as he did ere :
 To swinke and travaile he not fainith;
 For to robbin he disdainith,
 But right anon after his swinke
 He goeth to taverne for to drinke.
 All these are riche in haboundaunce
 That can thus havin suffisaunce
 Well more than can an usere,
 As God well knowith, without were,
 For 'an usere, so God me se,
 Shall nevir for richesse riche be,
 But er more pore and indigent,
 Scarce, and gredy in his entent.

For sothe it is, whom it displese,
 There maie no marchaunt live at ese,
 His herte in soche a where is set
 That it quicke brennith for to get,
 Ne nevir shall though he hath gotten,
 Though he have golde in garnirs yeten,
 For to be nedy he dredeth fore,
 Wherefore to gettin more and more
 He set his herte and his desire :
 So hote he brennith in the fire
 Of covetise, that maketh him wode
 To purchase othir mennis gode.
 He undirfongith a grete pain
 That undertaketh to drinke up Sain,
 For the more that he drinkith aie
 The more he levith, sothe to saie.
 Thus is the thrust of false getting,
 That laste evir in coviting,
 And the anguishe and the distresse,
 With the fire of gredinesse ;
 She fightith with him aie and striveth,
 So that his herte a fonder riveth :
 Soche gredinesse him assailith
 That whan he moste hath moste he failith.

Phisiciens and advocates
 Goin right by the same yates ;
 Thei sell ther science for winning,
 And haunte ther crafte for grete getting :
 Ther winning is of soche swetenesse
 That if a man fall in sickenesse
 Thei are full glad for ther encrece,
 For by ther will withoutin lese
 Ev'riche man shouldin be seke ;
 Though thei die thei set not a leke ;
 Astir whan thei the golde have take
 Full little care for him thei make :
 Thei would fowertie were sicke at ones,
 Ye, two hundrid, in fleshe and bones,
 And yet two thousande, as I gesse,
 For to encrefin ther richesse.

Thei woll not worchin in no wise
 But for lucre and covetise,
 For physicke ginnith first by (phi)
 The phisicien also sothly ;
 And sithen it goeth fro sic to fie
 To trust on 'hem it is folie,
 For thei n'il in no manir gre
 Doin right nought for charite,
 Eke in the same secte are set
 All tho that prechin for to get
 Worship, and honour, and richesse ;
 Ther hertis arne in grete distresse
 That folke livin not holily,
 But abovin all specially
 Soche as yprechin veinglorie,
 And towarde God have no mem'orie,
 But forthe as ipocritis trace,
 And to ther foulis deth purchase,
 And outward shewing holinesse,
 Though thei be full of cursidnesse :
 Nat liche to the apostlis twelve,
 Thei deceive othir and 'hem selve :
 Begilid is the gilir than
 For preching of a cursid man :
 Though it to othir maie profite
 Himself it availeth not a mite,
 For oft gode predicacioun
 Cometh of evill entencioun :
 To him nat availeth his preching,
 All helpe he othir with his teching,
 For where thei gode example take
 There is he with veinglorie shake.

But let us leven these prechours,
 And speke of 'hem that in their tours
 Hepe up ther golde and fast yshet,
 And fore thereon ther hertis set :
 Thei neither lovin God ne drede ;
 Thei kepin more than it is nede,
 And in ther baggis fore it binde
 Out of the sunne and of the winde ;
 Thei puttin up more than nede ware
 Whan thei sene povir folk forfare,
 For hungre die, and for cold quake ;
 God can well vengeaunce thereof take ;
 The grete mischivis 'hem assaileth,
 And thus in gadring aie travaileth ;
 With mochil pain thei winne richesse,
 And drede 'hem holdith in distresse
 To kepin that thei gathir fast :
 With sorowe thei leve it at last,
 With sorowe thei bothe die and live
 That unto richesse ther hertes yeve.
 And in defaute of love it is,
 As it shewith full well i-wis,
 For if these gredy, sothe to saine,
 Lovidin and were loved againe,
 And gode love reignid ovir all,
 Soche wickidnesse ne should yfall,
 But he should yeve that moste gode had
 To 'hem that weren in nede bestad,
 And live withoutin false usure,
 For charite ful clene and pure ;
 If thei 'hem yeve unto godenesse,
 Defending 'hem from idilnesse,

In all this worlde than povir none
 We shouldin finde I trowe not one.
 But chaungid is this worlde unstable,
 For love is ovir all vendable:
 We se that no man lovith now
 But for his winning and for prowē;
 And love is thrallid in servage
 Whan it is sold for avauntage;
 Yet women wol ther bodies sell:
 Soche soules goith to the devill of hell.

Whan Love had tolde 'hem his entent
 The baronage to counsaile went.
 In many sentencis thei fill,
 And diversly thei saied ther will;
 But aftir discorde thei accorded,
 And ther accorde to Love recorded:
 Sir, saidin thei, we ben at one,
 By even accorde of everichone,
 Out take Richeffe all onily,
 That swornè hath full hauteinly
 That she the castill n'ill assaile,
 Ne smite a stroke in this battaile
 With darte ne mace, ne spere, ne knife,
 For man that speketh or bereth life,
 And blamith your emprise iwis,
 And from our hoste departid is,
 At lestè waie, as in this plite,
 So hath she this man in dispite;
 For she saieth he ne loved her never,
 And therefore she woll hate him ever;
 For he woll gathir no tresore
 He hath her wrathe for evirmore;
 He' agilte her nere in othir case,
 Lo here all wholly his trespassē!
 She saieth well that this othir daie
 He asked her leve to gon the waie
 That is clepid to moche yeving,
 And spake full faire in his praying,
 But whan he praied her poore was he,
 Therefore she warned him the entre,
 Ne yet is he not thrivin so
 That he hath gettin a penie or two
 That quietly' is his owne in holde:
 Thus hath Richeffe us all ytolde,
 And whan Richeffe us this recorded
 Withoutin her we ben acorded.

And we finde in our accordaunce
 That Falsē Semblant and Abstinaunce,
 With all the folke of ther battaile,
 Shull at the hindir gate assaile
 That Wickid Tong hath in keping,
 With his Normans full of jangling,
 And with him Curtesie and Largesse,
 That shullin shewe ther hardinesse
 To the old wise that kept so hard
 Faire Welcoming within her ward,
 Than shall Delite and Well-Heling
 Yfondin Shame adoun to bring
 With all her hoste erly and late,
 Thei shull assailin that ilke gate;
 Ayenist Drede shall Hardinesse
 Assaile and also Sikirnesse,
 With all the folke of ther leding,
 That nevir wiste what was slaying.

Vol. I.

Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite
 With Daungir ful of cruilte,
 Thus is your hoste ordainid wele;
 Doune shall the castill every dele
 If everiche doe his entent,
 So that Venus ybe present,
 Your mothir, full of vesselage,
 That can inough of soche usage;
 Withoutin her maie no wight spede
 This werke neither for worde ne dede,
 Therefore is gode ye for her sende,
 For through her maie this worke arrende.

Lordinges, my mothir the goddes,
 That is my ladie and maistres,
 Ne is nat all at my willing,
 Ne doeth nat all my desiring;
 Yet can she sometime doen labour
 Whan that her luste in my focour,
 As my nede is for to atcheve,
 But now I thinke her nat to greve:
 My mothir is she', and of childhede
 I both worship her and eke drede,
 For who that dredeth sire ne dame
 Shall it abie in bodie' or name:
 And nathèlesse yet connè we
 Sende aftir her if nede ybe,
 And were she nigh she commin wold;
 I trowe that nothing might her hold.

My mothir is of grete prowesse,
 She hath tane many a fortresse
 That cost hath many' a pound er this
 There I n'as not present iwis,
 And yet men saied it was my dede:
 But I come nevir in that stede,
 Ne me ne liketh, so mote I the,
 That soche tours ben ytake with me;
 For why? me thinkith that in no wise
 It maie be cleped but Marchaundise.

Go buie a courfir blacke or white,
 And paie therefore, than art thou quite:
 The marchaunt owith the right nought.
 Ne thou him whan thou hast it bought.
 I woll not felling clepe Yeving,
 For felling asketh no guerdoning;
 Here lithe no thanke ne no merite,
 That one goth from that othre' all quite;
 But this felling is not semblable;

For whan his horse is in the stable
 He maie it sell again parde,
 And winnen on it, soche happe maie be,
 All maie the manne nat lese iwis,
 For at the lest the skinne is his;

Or ellis, if it so betide
 That he woll kepe his horse to ride,
 Yet is he lorde aie of his horse;
 But thilkè chafare is well worse
 There Venus entremetith ought,
 For who so soche chaffare hath bought
 He shall not worchin so wisely
 That he ne shall lese uttirly

X

Bothe his money and his chaffare ;
 But the seller of thilkè ware
 The prife and profite havin shall ;
 Certaine the buier shall lese all,
 For he ne can so dere it buie
 To have lordship and full maistrie,
 Ne havin power to make letting
 Neither for yeste ne for preching,
 That of his chaffare maugre his
 An other shall have as moche iwis,
 If he woll yeve as moche as he,
 Of what countrey so that he be,
 Or for right nought, so happe ymaie,
 If he can flattir her to her paie.

And ben than soche marchauntis wife ?
 No, but folis in every wise :
 Whan thei buie soche thing wilfully
 There thei lese ther gode folily ;
 But nathèlesse this dare I saie,
 My mothir is not wont to paie,
 For she' is neither so sole ne nice
 To entremete her of soche vice ;
 But trustith well he shall paie all
 That repente of his bargaine shall,
 Whan Poverté put him in distresse,
 All were he scholir to Richeffe,
 That is for me in grete yerning
 Whan she assenteth to my willing.

But by my mothir Saint Venus,
 And by her fathir Saturnus,
 That her engendrid by his life,
 But nat upon his weddid wife,
 Yet woll I more unto you swere,
 To makin this thing the surere.

Now by that faithe and that beaute
 That I owe to all my brethrin fre,
 Of whiche ther n'is wight undir heven
 That cant her fadir's namis neven,
 So divers and many there be
 That with my mothre have be prive,
 Yet woll I swere for sikirnesse
 The pole of helle to my witnesse,
 Now drink I not this yere clarre
 If that I lie or forsworne be,
 For of the goddes the usage is
 That who so him forswerith anis
 Shall that yere drinkin no clarre.

Now have I sworne inough parde ;
 If I forswere than am I lorne ;
 But I woll nevir be forsworne,
 Sithe Richeffe hath me failid here
 She shall abie that trespas dere
 At lestè waie but I her harme
 With swerde, or sparth, or with gifarme.

For certis sithe she loveth not me,
 Fro thilkè time that she maie se
 The castill and the toure to shake,
 In forie time she shall awake ;
 If I maie gripe a richè man
 I shall so pulle him if I can,
 That he shall in a few stoundis
 Lese all his markes and his poundis.

I shall him make his pens out fling
 But that thei in his garnir spring ;
 Our maidins shall eke plucke him so
 That him shall nedin fethirs mo,
 And make him sell his londe to spende
 But he the bet conne him defende.

Pore men han made ther lorde of me ;
 Although thei nat so mightie be
 That thei maie fede me in delite
 I woll not have hem in dispite :
 No gode man hateth hem as I gesse,
 For chinche and feloun is Richeffe,
 That so can chafe hem and despise,
 And hem defoule in sondrie wise :
 Thei loven full bette, so God me spede,
 Than doith the riche chinchy grede,
 And ben (in gode faith) more stable,
 And truir and more serviable,
 And therefore it suffisith me
 Ther gode hertis and ther beaute :
 Thei han on me set all their thought,
 And therefore I foryete hem nought.

I woll hem bring in grete noblesse,
 If that I were god of Richeffe,
 As I am god of Love sothely,
 Soche ruthe upon ther plaint have I ;
 Therefore I must his succour be
 That painith him to servin me,
 For if he deied for love of this
 Than semith in me no love there is.

Sir, saied thei, sothe is every dele
 That ye reherce, and we wote wele
 Thilke othe to holde is resonable,
 For it is gode and covenable
 That ye on riche men han ysworne ;
 For, Sir, this wote we well beforne,
 If riche men doin you homage
 That is as folis doen outrage ;
 But ye shull not forsworne ybe,
 Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie,
 Or piment makid freshe and newe :
 Ladies shull hem soche pepir brewe
 If that thei fall into their laas
 That thei for wo mowe saine Alas !
 Ladies shullen ere so curteis be
 That thei shall quite your othe all fre ;
 Ne seketh nevir othir vicaire,
 For thei shall speke with hem so faire
 That ye shall holde you paid full wele,
 Though ye you medle nere a dele.
 Let ladies worchin with ther thinges,
 Thei shall hem tell so fele tidinges,
 And move so many requestis,
 By flatterie, that not honest is,
 And thereto yeve hem soche thankinges,
 What with kissing and with talkinges,
 That certis if thei trowid be
 Shall nevir leve hem londe ne fe
 That it n'ill as the moeble fare,
 Of whiche thei first delivered are.
 Now maie you tell us all your will,
 And we your hertis shall fulfill.

But False Semblant dare not for drede
Of you, Sir, medle' him of this dede,
For he faith that ye ben his so,
He n'ot if ye wolle worche him wo;
Wherefore we praie you all, beau Sire,
That ye foryeve him now your ire,
And that he maie dwell as your man
With abstinence his dere lemman:
This our accorde and our will now.

Parfei, saied Love, I graunt it you
I wolle well holde him for my man;
Now let him come: and he forthe ran.

False Semblant, (quod Love) in this wise
I take the here to my service,
That thou our frendis helpe alwaie,
And hindre 'hem neither night ne daie,
But doe thy might 'hem to releve,
And eke our en'mies that thou greve:
Thine be this might; I graunt it the;
My king of Harlotes shalt thou be:
We wolle that thou have soche honour:
Certain thou art a false traitour,
And eke a thief; sithe thou were borne
A thousande times thou art forsworne:
But nathelesse in our hering,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde the teche 'hem, wost thou how?
By some genèrall signe now,
In what place thou shalt foundin be
If that men had mistir of the,
And how men shall the best espie,
For the to knowe is grete maistre:
Tell in what place is thine haunting.

Sir, I have fully divers wonning
That I kepe not reherfid be,
So that ye would respitin me,
For if that I tell you the sothe
I maie have harme and shame bothe?
If that my felawes wistin it
My talis shouldin me be quit,
For certaine thei would hate me
If er I knewe ther cruelte,
For thei would ore all hold 'hem still
Of trothe that is again ther will:
Soche talis kepyn thei not here;
I might eftsoone buie it full dere
If I saied of 'hem any thing
That displeith to ther hering,
For what word that 'hem pricketh or biteth
In that worde nor of 'hem deliteth,
All were it gospel the' Evangile,
That would reprove 'hem of ther gile,
For thei are cruill and hautain;
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I speke ought to paire or loos
Your courte shall not so well be cloos
That thei ne shall wite it at last:
Of gode men am I nought agast,
For thei wolle taken on 'hem nothing
Whan that thei knowe all my mening,
But he that wolle it on him take
He wolle himself suspicious make
That he his life let covirtly
In Gile and in Ypocrisie,

That me' engendrid and yave fostring.

Thei made a full gode engendring,
(Quod Love) for who so sothly tell
Thei engendrid the divell of hell.

But nedely, howsoere it be,
(Quod Love) I will and charge the
To tell anon thy wonning placis
Hering eche wight that in this place is;
And what life thou livist also,
Hide it no lengir now; wherto?
Thou must discovre' all thy worching,
How thou servist, and of what thing,
Though that thou shouldest for thy soth-faw
Ben all to-betin and to-drawe,
And yet art thou not wont parde;
But nathelesse though thou betin be
Thou shalt not be the first that so
Hath for sothfawe ysuffrid wo.

Sir, sithe that it maie likin you,
Though that I should be slain right now,
I shall doen your commaundement,
For thereto have I grete talent.

Withoutin wordis mo, right than
False Semblant his sermon began,
And saied 'hem thus in audience:

Barons, take hede of my sentence.
That wight that list to have knowing
Of False Semblant, full of flatt'ring;
He must in worldly folke him seke,
And certis in the cloistirs eke;
I won no where but in 'hem twaie,
But not like evin, sothe to saie:
Shortly, I wolle herberowe me
There I hope best to hulftrid be;
And certainly sikere? hiding
Is undirneith humblif clothing.

Religious folke ben full covert;
Seculer folke ben more appert;
But nathelesse I wolle not blame
Religious folke, ne 'hem diffame;
In what habite that er thei go;
Religion humble' and true also
Wolle I not blamin ne dispise,
But I n'ill love it in no wise;
I mene of false religious,
That stout ben and malicious,
That wollin in an habite go
And settin not ther herte thereto.

Religious folke ben all pitous;
Thou shalt not sene one dispitous;
Thei lovin no pride ne no strife,
But humbly thei wolle lede ther life,
With whiche folke wolle I nevyr be,
And if I dwell I faine me
I maie well ther habite go;
But me were lever my necke a two
Then let a purpose that I taky,
What covenaunt that er I make.

I dwell with 'hem that proude ybe,
And full of wiles and subtilte,
That worship of this worlde coveiten,
And gretè nede connin expleiten,

And gon and gadrin grete pitaunces,
 And purchafe 'hem the acqueitaunces
 Of men that mightie life maie leden,
 And faine 'hem pore, and 'hem self feden
 With gode morcils delicious,
 And drinkin gode wine precious,
 And preche us povert and distresse,
 And fishin 'hem self grete richesse
 With wily nettis that thei cast :
 It woll come foule out at the last.

Thei ben fro clene religion went ;
 Thei make the worlde an argument
 That hath a foul conclusion :
 I have a robe of religion,
 Than am I all religious :
 This argument is all roignous ;
 It is not worth a crokid brere :
 Habite ne makith monke ne frere,
 But clene life and devocion
 Makith gode men of religion.

Nathellese there can none answere,
 How high that er his hedde he there
 With rasour whettid nere so kene,
 That gile in braunchis cutte thurtene,
 There can no wight distinct it so
 That he dare saie a word therto.

But what herb'row that ere I take,
 Or what semblaunt that er I make,
 I mene but gile, and folowe that,
 For right no more than Gibbe our cat
 (That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
 Ne entende I but to begilen :
 Ne no wight maie by my clothing
 Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
 Ne by my wordis yet parde,
 So soft and so plefaunt thei be.

Beholde the dedis that I doe,
 But thou be blinde thou oughtist so,
 For varie ther wordes fro ther dede
 Thei thinke on gile withoutin drede,
 What manir clothing that thei were,
 Or what estate that ere thei bere,
 Lerid or leude, lorde or ladie,
 Knight, squier, burgeis, or bailie.

Right thus while Falso Semblant sermoneth
 Eft sonis Love him aresoneth,
 And brake his tale in his speking
 As though he had him tolde lesing,
 And said, What devill is that I here ?
 What folke hast thou us nempnid here ?
 Maie men findin religioun
 In worldly habitacioun ?
 Ye, Sir, it foloweth nat that thei
 Should lede a wickid life parfei,
 Ne not therefore ther foulis lese
 That 'hem to worldly clothis chese,
 For certis it were grete pite ;
 Men maie in seculer clothes se
 Florishin holy religioun
 Ful many' a fainct in felde and toun,
 With many' a virgine glorious,
 Devoute and full religious,
 Han died that commin clothe aie beren,
 Yet fainctis nertheleffe thei weren :

I could reckin you many a ten,
 Ye, welnigh all these holy women
 That men in churchis herry' and seke,
 Bothe maidins and these wivis eke,
 That bare ful many' a faire childe here,
 Werid alway clothis seculere,
 And in the same clothes didin they
 That saintis weren and ben alway.

The ix thousande maidinis dere,
 That beren in heven ther ciergis clere,
 Of whiche men redein church and sing,
 Were take in seculer clothing,
 Whan thei recevid martirdome,
 And wonnin heven unto ther home.
 Gode hert ymakith the gode thought,
 The clothing yeveth ne revith nought :
 The gode thought and the gode worching
 That maketh the religion flouring ;
 There lieth the gode religioun
 Aftir the righte entencioun,

Who so ytoke a wethir's skinne,
 And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinn,
 For he should go with lambis white,
 Wenist thou not he would 'hem bite ?
 Yes ; nertheleffe as he were wode
 He would 'hem wirry', and drinke the blode
 And wel the rathir 'hem disceve,
 For sithin thei coude nat perceve
 His tregette and his cruilte
 Thei would him folow tho he fle.

If there be wolvis of suche hewe
 Amongis these apostlis newe,
 Thou, holy church, thou maiste be wailed ;
 Sithe that thy cite is assailed
 Through knightis of thine ownè table
 God wot thy lordship is doutable :
 If thei enforcin it to win
 That should defend it fro within
 Who might defence ayenst 'hem make ?
 Withoutin stroke it mote be take
 Of trepeget or mangonell,
 Without displaying of pensell ;
 And if God n'il done it socour,
 But let remain in this colour,
 Thou must thy hestis lettin be ;
 Than is there nought but yeldè the,
 Or yeve 'hem tribute doutilefs,
 And holde it of 'hem to have pees :
 But gretir harme betidith the
 That thei all maistir of it be ;
 Wel con thei scornin the withall,
 By day ystuffin thei the wall,
 And al the night thei minin there :
 Nay, thou plantin must ellis where
 Thine impis if thou wolt frute have ;
 Abide not there thyself to save.

But now pece ; here I turne againe ;
 I wol no more of this thing saine,
 Yf I may passin me hereby,
 For I might makin you wery ;

But I wol lettin you alway
 To helpe your frendis what I may,
 So thei wollin my company,
 For thei be shent all uttirly;
 But if so fallin that I be
 Oftin with 'hem and thei with me,
 And eke my lemman mote thei serve,
 Or thei shul not thy love deserve
 Forsoth I am a false traitour;
 God judged me for a thefe trechour:
 Forsworne I am, but wel nigh none
 Wote of my gile til it be done.

Through me hath many' one deth receved
 That my treget ner aperceved,
 And yet receveth, and shal receive,
 That my falsnesse shal nere perceive;
 But who so doth, if he wise be,
 Him is right gode beware of me;
 But so flighe is the perceiving,
 That al to late comith knowing,
 For Proteus, that coude him chaunge,
 In every shappe homely and straunge,
 Coude nevir suche gile ne tresoun
 As I, for I come nere in toun
 There as I might yknowin be
 Though men me both might here and see;
 Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
 Take one and make an othir straunge;
 Now am I knight, now chastelaine,
 Now prelate, and now chapelaine,
 Now priest, now clerke, and now fostere,
 Now am I maistr, now scholere,
 Now monke, now chanon, now baily;
 Whatevir mistir manne am I.

Now am I prince, now am I page,
 And can by hert ev'ry language;
 Somtimis am I hore and olde,
 Now I am yong, and stout, and bolde,
 Now am I Robert, now Robin,
 Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin:
 And with me foloweth my loteby
 To done me solace and comp'any,
 That hight Dame Abstinence, and raigned
 In many a queint arraie fained;
 Right as it commeth to her liking
 I fulfill all her desiring.

Somtime a woman's clothe take I,
 Now am I a maide, now lady:

Somtime I am religious,
 Now like an ankir in an hous:

Somtime am I a prioress,
 And now a nonne, and now abbess,
 And go thorough all regiounes
 Yseeking all religiounes.

But to what ordir that I' am sworne
 I take the strawe and bete the corne:
 To jolie folke I enhabite
 I aske no more but ther habite.

What wol ye more? in every wise
 Right as me list I me disgise.

Wel can I bere me undir wede,
 Unlike is my worde to my dede.
 Thus make I into my trappes fall
 The folke through my priv'ilegis all

That ben in Christendome a live.

I may assoile and I may thrive,
 That no prelate may lettin me,
 All folke where evir thei found be:
 I n'ot no prelate maie don so
 But it the Pope be, and no mo.
 That madin thilke establisshing:
 Now is not this a propre thing?
 But were by sightis aperceved

.....

As I was wont, and wost thou why?
 For I did 'hem a tregetry;
 But therof yeve I' a litil tale,
 I have the silvir and the male.
 So have I prechid and ake shriven,
 So have I take, so have I yeven,
 Through ther foly husbonde and wife;
 That I lede right a joly life:
 Through simplese of the prelacie
 Thei know not all my tregettrie.

But for as moche as man and wife
 Shuld shew ther parish priest ther life
 Onis a yere, as faith the boke,
 Er any wight his housil toke,
 Then have I privilegis large
 That maie of mochil thing discharge,
 For he may say right thus parde:

Sir Priest, in shrift I tel it the,
 That he to whom that I am shriven
 Hath me assoilid, and me yeven
 Penaunce sothly for alle my sin
 Whiche that I founde me giltie in;
 Ne I ne' have nevir entencion
 To make double confession,
 Ne reherce este my shrift to the;
 O shrifte is right enough to me;
 This ought the to suffisin wele,
 Ne be not rebell nere a dele,
 For certis though thou haddest it sworne,
 I wote no priest ne prelate borne
 That maie to shrift est me constraine,
 And if thei done I wol me plaine,
 For I wote where to plainin wele:
 Thou shalt not streinin me a dele,
 Ne enforce me ne not me trouble
 To makin my confession double:
 Ne I have none affection
 To' have double absolucion;
 The first is right inough to me;
 This lettre' assoiling quite I the:
 I am unbounde; what maist thounde
 More of my sinnes me to unbinde,
 For he that might hath in his honde
 Of all my finnis me unbounde?
 And if thou wolt me thus constraine,
 That me mote nedis on the plaine,
 There shall no juge imperiall,
 Ne bishop ne officiall,
 Done judgemen on me, for I
 Shal gone and plaine me openly

Anon to my shriftfathir newe,
 Whiche that hight Frere Wolfe untrewe,
 And he shal chusin him for me,
 For I trowe he can hampir the;
 But Lord! he would be wrothe withall
 Yf men would him Frere Wolfe ycall,
 For he would have no pacience,
 But done all cruill vengience;
 He would his might done at the lest,
 Than nothing spare for Godd'is hest:
 And God so wise be my socour
 But thou yeve me my Saviour
 At Estir, whan it likith me,
 Withoutin presing more on the,
 I wol forth and to him ygone,
 And he shal housil me anone,
 For I am out of thy grutching;
 I kepe not dele with the nothing.

Thus may he shrive him that forsaketh
 His parish priest and to me taketh,
 And if the priest wol him refuse
 I am full redy him to' accuse,
 And him punish and hampir so
 That he his churchè shal forgo.

But who so hath in his feling
 The consequence of suche shriving
 Shal sene that priest maie nere have might
 To know the conscience aright
 Of him that is undir his cure;
 And this is ayenst holy' scripture,
 That biddith every herde honest
 Have very knowing of his best;
 But povir folke, that gon by strete,
 That have no golde ne summis grete,
 Them would I let to ther prelates
 Or let ther priestis know ther states,
 For to me right nought yevin thei,
 And why it is, for thei ne may.

Thei ben so bare I take no kepe,
 But I woll havin the fat shepe;
 Let parish priestis have the lene;
 I yeve not of ther harme a bene:
 And if that prelatis grutche it,
 That oughtin wroth be in ther wit
 To lesin ther fat bestis so,
 I shal yeve hem a stroke or two,
 So that thei shal lesin with force
 Ye, both ther mitre and ther croce.

Thus jape I' hem, and have do longe,
 My privilegis ben so strong.

False Semblant would have stintid here,
 But Love ne made him no suche chere,
 That he was wery of his sawe,
 But for to make him glad and fawe
 He said, Tell on more specially
 How that thou servist untruly:

Tel forth, and shame the nere a dele,
 For as thiþe habit shewith wele,
 Thou servest an holy heremite.

Sothe is but I' am but an ipocrite,
 Thou goest and prechist poverté.

Ye, Sir, but Richeffe hath posté,
 Thou prechist abstinence also.

Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,

My paunche of gode mete and gode wine,
 As shoud a maistr of divine,
 For how that I me povir faine
 Yet al povir folke I disdaine.

I love bettir the acquaintance
 Ten timis of the King of Fraunce
 Than of a pore man of milde mode
 Though that his soule be all so gode,
 For whan I se beggirs quaking,
 Nakid on mixins all stinking,
 For hungre crie and eke for care,
 I entremet not of ther fare;
 Thei ben so pore and ful of pine,
 Thei might not ones yeve me a dine,
 For thei have nothing but ther life;
What shoud be yeve that licketh his knife?
 It is but foly to' entremete

To seke in hounde'is nest fat mete:
 Let bere him to the spittle' anone,
 But for me comfot get thei none:
 But a full riche sicke usurere
 Would I visitin and drawe nere;
 Him would I comfote and reheté,
 For I hope of his golde to gete;
 And if that wickid Deth him have,
 I woll go with him in his grave:
 And if there any reprove me
 Why that I let the povir be,
 Wost thou how I know how to' ascape?
 I say and swerin him full rape
 That richè men han more tetchis
 Of sinne than han these pore wretchis,
 And han of counsaile more mistere,
 And therfore I would drawe hem nere:
 But as gret hurt, it maie so be,
 Hath soule in right grete poverté,
 As soule in grete richesse forsothe,
 Al be it that thei hurtin bothe,
 For richesse and mendicitees
 Bene clepid two extremitees,
 The mene is clepid Suffisaunce,
 There lieth of vertue the' aboundaunce.

For Salomon, ful wel I wote,
 In his wise Parablis us wote,
 As it is knowen of many' a wight,
 In his thirtieth chapitir right,
 God thou me kepe for thy posté
 Fro richesse and mendicite,
 For if a richè man him dresse
 To thinkin to moche on richesse
 His hert on that so ferre is sette
 That he' his Creatour doth foryette,
 And him that beggith woll aie greve;
 How shoud I by his worde him leve
 Unneth that he n'is a micher
 Forsworne, or els Godd'is lier?
 Thus sayith Salomon'is sawes.

Ne we find writtin in no lawes,
 And namely in our Christin laie,
 Who so saith ye I dare say naie,
 That Christ ne his apostils dere
 While that thei walkid in erth here,

Were nevir sene herbrid begging,
 For they n'olde beggin for nothing.
 And right thus were men wont to teche,
 And in this wise wouldin it preche
 The maistirs of divinite
 Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appose
 The nakid texte and let the glose,
 It mightin sone assoilid be,
 For men may wel the sothe yse,
 That pardie thei might aske a thing
 Plainly forth withoutin begging,
 For they weren Godd'is herdis d're,
 And cure of foulis haddin here,
 Thei ne wolde nothing begge ther fode,
 For astir Christ was done on rode
 With ther propir hondis thei wrought,
 And with traveile, and ellisnought,
 Thei wonnin al their sustinaunce,
 And lividin forth in ther penaunce,
 And the remenaunt yaf awaie
 To othir pore folkis alwaie.

Thei neithir bildin toure ne hall,
 But thei in housis smal with alle.

A mighty man, that can and maie,
 Should with his honde and body' alwaie,
 Winne him his fode in labouring,
 Yf he ne' have rent or suche a thing:
 Although he be religious,
 And God to servin curious,
 Thus mote he done or do trespas,
 But if it be in certaine caas,
 That I can telle if mistir be
 Right wel whan that the time I se.

Seke the boke of Saincte Augustine,
 Be it in papir or perchemene,
 There as he writte of these worchinges,
 Thou shalt sene that none excusinges
 A perfite man he should yseke
 By wordis ne by dedis eke,
 Although he be religious
 And God to servin curious,
 That he ne shal so mote I go,
 With propir hondes and body' also
 Yget his fode in laboring,
 Yf he ne' have properte of thing,
 Yet should he sel all his substaunce,
 And with his swinke have sustinaunce,
 If he be parfite in bounte;
 Thus han the bokis toldè me:
 For he that wol gone idilly,
 And usith it aie befily

To hauntin othir menn'is table,
 He is a trechour full of fable,
 Ne he ne maie by gode reson
 Excuse him by his orison,
 For men behovith in some gise
 Ben somtime out of God's servise,
 To gon and purchasin ther nede.

Men mote etin, that is no drede,
 And slepe, and eke do othir thing,
 And so long may thei leve praying.

So may they eke ther praiere blinne
 While that thei werke ther mete to winne;
 Seint Austen wol therto accorde
 In thilkè boke that I recorde.

Justinian eke, that made lawes,
 Hath thus forbodin by olde sawes.
 No man, up paine for to be ded,
 Mighty' of body, to begge his bred
 Yf he may swinke it for to gete;
 Men should him rathir maime or bete,
 Or done of him aperte justice,
 Than suffrin him in suche malice.

Thei done not wel, so mote I go,
 Whiche that takin suche almesse so,
 But if thei have some privilege
 That of the paine 'hem woll alege.

But how that is can I not se
 But if the prince discevid be;
 Ne I ne wene not sikirly
 That thei maie have it rightfully.

But yet I wol not determine
 Of princis powir ne define,
 Ne by my worde compre'hende iwis,
 Yf it so ferre may stretche in this;
 I wol nat entremete a dele
 But I trowe that the boke faith wele,
 Who that taketh almessis that be
 Dewe to folke that men may yle
 Lame and feble, wery and bare,
 Povir, or in suche manir care,
 That con winnin 'hem nevir mo,
 For thei havin no power therto,
 He etith his ownè dampning,
 But if he lie that made al thing;
 And if ye suche a truaunt finde,
 Chastise him wel if ye be kinde;
 But thei would hatin you parcaas
 If that ye fillin in ther laas.

Thei would estsonis do you scathe,
 If that thei mightin, late or rathe,
 For thei be not ful pacient
 That han the worlde thus foule yblent:
 And wetith wel that God ybad
 The gode man sell al that he had
 And folowe' him, and to pore it yeve:
 He would not therfore that he live
 To servin him in mendience,
 For it was nevir his sentence,
 But he bad werke whan that nede is,
 And folowe him in gode dedis.

Saint Poule, that loved al holy church,
 He bade th' apostils for to wurch,
 And winne ther livelode in that wise,
 And 'hem defendid truandise,
 And sayid, Werkith with your honden;
 Thus should the thing be understonden.

He n'olde iwis have bid 'hem begging,
 Ne sellin gossell ne preching,
 Lest thei berafte with ther asking
 Folke of ther cattle or of ther thing.

For in this world is many' a man
 That yeveth his gode, for he ne can
 Werne it for shame, or ellis he
 Would of the' askir delivered be,

And for he him encombrith so
He yeveth him gode to let him go :
But it can him nothing profite ;
Thei lese the yeste and the merite.

The gode folke that St. Poule to preched
Profrid him ofte, whan he 'hem teched,
Some of ther gode in charite,
But therof right nothing toke he,
But of his hondis would he gette
Clothis to wrine him, and his mete.

Tel me than how a man may liven
That al his gode to pore hath yeven,
And wol but onely bidde his bedes,
And ner with hondes labour his nedes.
May he do so ? Ye, Sir. And howe ?
Sir, I woll gladly tellin you.
Saint Austyn saith, A man may be
In housis that han properte,
As Templers and Hospitellers,
And as these Chanons Regulers,
Or these White Monkis, or these Blake,
I wol no mo ensamplis make,
And take thereof his susteining,
For therin lyith no begging,
But othirwayis not iwis,
Yet Austyn gabbith not of this ;
And yet ful many' a monke laboureth
That God in holy church honoureth,
For whan ther swinking is agon
Thei rede and sing in church anone.

And for there hath ben grete discorde
As many' a wight may bere recorde,
Upon the' estate of mendicience,
I wol shortely in your presence
Tel how a man maie begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede,
Maugre his felowis janglinges,
For sothfastnes wol none hidinges,
And yet percase I may obey,
That I to you sothly thus sey.

Lo, here the case especiall :
If a man be so bestiall
That he of no crafte hath science,
And nought desirith ignorance,
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he some othir crafte can lerne,
Through whiche withoutin truanding
He may in trouthe have his living :

Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or sickenesse, or langour,
Or for his tendir age also,
Than may he yet a begging go :

Or if he have peravinture
Through usage of his noriture
Livid ovir delicioufly,
Than oughtin gode folke cominly
Han of his mischese some pite,
And suffrin him also that he
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for hongir ded :

Or if he have of crafte conning,
And strength also and desiring
For to worchin, as he had what,
But he finde neithir this ne that,
Than may he beggin til that he
Have gettin his necessite :

Or if his winning be so lite
That his labour will not quite
Sufficiantly al his living,
Yet may he go his brede begging,
Fro dore to dore he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchase :

Or if a man would undirtake
Any emprise for to ymake
In the rescous of our lay,
And it defendin as he may,
Be it with armis or lettrure,
Or othir convenable cure,
If it be so that he pore be,
Than may he beggin til that he
Maie findin in trouthe for to swinke,
And get him clothis, mete, and drinke,
Swinke he with his hondes corporel,
And not with hondes esprituel,

In all this case, and in semblables,
If that there ben mo resonables,
He maie begge as I tell you here,
And ellis not in no manere,
As William Saint Amour would preche,
And oftyn would dispute and teche
Of this matir al opinly
At Paris fully' and solemply ;
And all so God my soule blesse
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The' acorde of the' Universite,
And of the peple', as semith me.

No gode man ought it to refuse,
Ne ought him thereof to excuse,
Be wrothe or blithe, who so thou be,
For I wol speke and tell it the
All should I die and be put down,
As was Saint Poule, in derke prisoun,
Or be exilid in this caas
With wrong, as Maistir William was,
That my mothir Hypocrisie
Banished for her gret envie.

My mothir flemed him Saint Amour :
This noble man did suche labour
To susteine er the loialte,
That he to muche agiltè me :
He made a boke and let it write,
Wherin his life he did all dite,
And would that eche renied begging,
And livin by my traveiling,
If I ne' had rent ne othir gode ;
What ! wenith he that I were wode ?
For labour might me nevir plesse,
I have more will to ben at ese,
And have well levir, sothe to saie,
Before the peple patre' and praie,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Undir a cope of papelardie

(Quod Love) What diuel is this I here?

What wordis tellist thou me here?

What, Sir, Why Falsenesse that apert is.

Than dredist thou not God? No, certis;

For selde in grete thing shal he spede

In this world that God wol ydrede,

For folke that 'hem to vertue yeuen,

And truily on ther owne liven,

And 'hem in godenesse aie contente,

On 'hem is litil thrifte isente :

Suche folke ydrinkin grete misese;

That life ne may me nevir plese.

But se what golde han userers,

And silvir eke, in ther garners!

Tailagiers, and these moniours,

Bailiffes, bedils, provostes, contours,

These livin well nigh by ravine;

The smale peple 'hem mote encline,

And thei as wolvis wol 'hem eten;

Upon the povir folke thei geten

Ful muche of that thei spende or kepe;

N'is none of 'hem that thei n'il strepe,

And wrine 'hem selvin well at full;

Withoutin scalding thei 'hem pull:

The strong the feble ovirgothe,

But I that were my simple clothe

Robbe bothe the robbid and robbours,

And gile the gilid and gilours;

By my treget I gathre' and threste

The grete tresour into my cheste,

That lieth with me so faste ybounde;

Thus myn high paleis do I founde,

And by my delitis I fulfill

With wine at festis at my will,

And tablis full of extremeis:

I wol no life but ese and pees,

And winnin golde to spende also,

For whan the grete bagge is ago

It comith full right with my japes,

Make I not wel tomble mine apes?

To winnen is alwaie mine entent;

My purchace' is bettir than my rent;

For though that I should betin be

Ovir al I entremet me:

Withoutin me maie no wight dure;

I walkin foulis for to cure:

Of all the world the cure have I

In brede and eke in length; boldly

I wol bothe preche and eke counfailen:

With hondis wol I not travailen,

For of the Pope I have the bull;

I ne holde not my wittis dull:

I wol not stintin in my live

These emperouris for to thrive,

Or kingis, dukes, and lordis grete,

But povir folke al quite I lete:

I love no fuche shriving parde

But it for othir cause ybe:

I recke not of these povir men;

Ther estate is not worthe an hen.

Wher findest thou' a fwinkir of labour

Have me to be his confessioure?

But empreffis and ducheffis,

These quenis and eke counteessis,

These abbessis and eke bigins,

And these grete ladies palasins,

These joly knightis and bailives,

These nonnis and these burgeis wives,

That riche yben and eke plesing,

And these maidinis welfaring,

Where so thei clad or nakid be,

Uncounfailed goeth there none fro me;

And for ther foulis favite

At lorde and lady', and ther meine,

I aske, whan thei 'hem to me thrive,

The propertie of al ther live,

And make 'hem trowe, both moste and lest,

Ther parish priest is but a best

Ayens me and my company,

That shrewis ben as gret as I,

Fro whiche I wol not hide in holde

No privite that me is tolde,

That I by worde or signe iwis

Ne wol make 'hem know what it is,

And thei wollen also tellin me

Thei hele fro me no privite;

And for to make you them perceiven

That usin folke thus to deceiven,

I wol you saine withoutin drede

What men maie in the Gospell rede

Of Sainct Mathewe the gospellere,

That saith as I shall you saie here.

Upon the chairè of Moses

Thus it is glosid doutileis,

(That is, The Oldè Testament,

For thereby is the chairè ment)

Sittin Scribis and Pharisen,

That is to saine, the cursid men,

Whiche that we Ipocritis call;

Doeth that thei preche I rede you all;

But doeth not as thei doen a dele

That ben not werie to saie wele,

But thei doe well no will have thei,

And thei would binde on folke alwaie,

That ben to be begilid able,

Burdons that ben importable;

On folkis shouldirs thinges thei couchen,

That thei n'ill with ther fingirs touchen;

And why woll thei not touch it? why!

For them ne list nat sikirly,

For the sadde burdons that men taken

Ymakin folkis shouldirs aken.

And if thei doe ought that gode be

That is for folke it shouldin se;

Ther burdons largir makin thei,

And makin ther hemmes wide alwaie,

And lovin fetis at the table

The first and the moste honourable;

And for to han the first chairis

In sinagogges to 'hem full dere is,

And willen that folke 'hem loute and grete

Whan that thei passin through the strete,

And wollen be cleped Maistir also;

But thei ne should not willin so,

The Gospell' is there ayenst I gesse,

That shewith well ther wickidnesse

An othir custome usin we;
 Of 'hem that woll ayenst us be
 We hate him dedly everychone,
 And we woll werrey him as one;
 Him that one hatith hate we all,
 And coniecte how to doen him fall;
 And if we sene him winne honour,
 Richesse or preise, through his valour,
 Provende or rent, or dignite,
 Full faste iwis compassin we
 By what laddre' he is clombin so;
 And for to make him doune to go
 With traïson we woll him defame,
 And doen him lesin his gode name.

Thus from his laddir we him take,
 And thus his frendis foes we make,
 But worde ne wetin shall he none
 Till al his frendis ben his sone;
 For if we did it opinly
 We mightin have blame redily,
 For had he wiste of our malice
 He had him kept but he were nice.

An othir' is this, that if so fall
 That there be one emong us all
 That doeth a gode tourne, out of drede
 We faine it is our aldir dede,
 Ye, sikirly though he it fained,
 Or that him liste or that him dained
 A man through him avauncid be,
 Thereof all partineres be we,
 And tellin folke where so we go
 That man through us is sprongin so.

And for to have of men praisin
 We purchase through our flattering
 Of richè men of grete poste
 Lettirs to witnesse our bounte,
 So that man weneth that maie us se
 That allè vertue in us be,

And alwaie povir we us fain,
 But how so that we begge or plain
 We ben the folke without lesing,
That all thing have without having.

Thus be dradde of the peple' iwis,
 And gladly my purpose is this:

I delin with no wight but he
 Have golde and tresour grete plente;
 Ther acquaintaunce well lovin I:
 This moche is my desire shortly;
 I entremete me of brocages,
 I makin pece and mariages,
 I am gladly exécutour,
 And many times a procuratour,
 I am sometime a messagere,
 That fallith not to my mistere.

And many timis I make enquest,
 For me that office is nat honest;
 To dele with othir mennis thing
 That is to me a grete liking;
 And if that ye have ought to doe
 In place that I repairin to,
 I shall it spedin through my witte
 As sone as ye have told me it:
 So that ye servin me to paie
 My service shal be yours alwaie.

But who so wol chastise me
 Anone my love yloste hath he,
 For I love no man in no gise
 That woll me reprove or chastise,
 But I woll all folke undirtake,
 And of no wight no teching take;
 For I that othir folke chastie
 Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I ne love none hermitage more;
 Al desertis and holtis hore.
 And grete wodis evèrichone
 I let 'hem to the Baptist John;
 I queth him quite, and him releste,
 Of Egypt all the wildirnesse:
 To ferre were all my manfounis
 Fro allè citees and gode touns.

My paleis and mine house make I
 There men maie renne in opinly
 And saie that I the worlde forsake;
 But all amidde I bulde and make
 My house, and swimme and plaie therci
 Bette than a fishe doth with his finne.

Of Antichrist's men am I
 Of whiche that Christ saïeth opinly
 Thei have habite of holinesse,
 And livin soche wickidnesse.

Al' outward lambin semin we,
 Full of godenesse and of pite,
 And inwarde we withoutin fable
 Ben gredy wolvis ravisable.

We environ bothe londe and se;
 With all the worlde werryin we:
 We woll ordain of allè thing,
 Of folkis gode and ther living.

If there be castill or cite
 Within that any bougerons be,
 Although that thei of Millaine were,
 For therof ben thei blamid there;
 Or if a wight out of mesure
 Would lene ther gold and take usure,
 For that he is so covetous,
 Or if he be to lechirous,
 Or these that hauntin simonie,
 Or provost full of trechirie,
 Or prelate living jolilie,
 Or priest that halt his quein him by,
 Or oldè whoris hostilers,
 Or othir baudes or bordillers,
 Or ellis blamed of any vice,
 Of whiche men shouldin doen justice;

By all the sainctis that we preie,
 But thei defende them with lampreie,
 With luce, with elis, with samons,
 With tendir gees and with capons,
 With tartis or with cheffis fat,
 With deinte flaunis brode and flat,
 With caleweis or with pullaile,
 With coninges or with fine vitaille,
 That we undir our clothis wide
 Ymakin through our golet glide,

Or but he wolle doe come in haste
 Rae venison ybake in paste,
 Whethir so that he loure or groine
 He shall have of a corde a loigne,
 With whiche men shall him binde and lede
 To brenne him for his sinfull dede,
 That men shull here him crie and rore
 A mil'is waie about and more,
 Or els he shall in prison die
 But if he wolle his frendship buie,
 Or smertin that that he hath doe
 More than his gilt amountith to.

But and he couthe thorough his sleight
 Doe makin up a toure of height,
 Nought rought I wher of stone or tree,
 Or yerth or turvis, though it be,
 Though it were of no vounde stone
 Ywrought with square and scantilone,
 So that the toure were stuffid well
 With allè richis temporell;

And than that he would him up dresse
 Enginis bothè more and lesse,
 To caste at us by every side,
 To berin his gode name wide.

Soche sleightis I shullin you yeven,
 Barelles of wine by fixe or seven,
 Or golde in sackis grete plente,
 He should though sone delivered be;
 And if he have no suche pitences
 Let him studie' in equipolences,
 And lerin lies and fallaces,
 If that he would deserve our graces,
 Or we shall bere him soche witnesse
 Of sinne and of his wretchidnesse,
 And doen his lose so wide renne,
 That all quicke we shouldin him brenne,
 Or ellis yeve hem soche penaunce
 That is well worse than the pitaunce.

For thou shalt nevir for nothing
 Con knowen aright by ther clothing
 The traitours full of trechèrie
 But thou ther werkis can espie.

And ne had the gode keping be
 Whilom of the' Univerfite,
 That kepeth the kei of Christendome,
 We' had ben tourmentid all and some.

Soche ben the stinking Prophetis;
 N'is none of 'hem that gode prophete is,
 For thei through wickid entencion,
 The yere of the' incarnation
 A thousande and two hundrid yere
 Five-and-fifte, ferther ne nere,
 Broughtin a boke with forie grace,
 To yeven ensample in common place,
 That sayid thus, though it were fable,
 This the Gospell pardurable
 That fro the Holie Ghost is sent:
 Well were it worthy to be ybrent.
 Entitlid was in soche manere
 This boke of whiche I tell here,
 There n'as no wight in al Paris
 Before our Ladie at parvis
 That thei ne might the bokè by;
 The sentence plesed 'hem well truely.

To' the copie if him talent toke
 Of the Evangelist's boke,
 There might he se by grete traifoun
 Full many' a false comparifoun.

As moche as thorough his grete might,
 Be it of hete be it of light;
 The sunne ysurmountith the mone,
 That troublir is, and chaungith sone,
 And the nutte kerneill dothe the shell,
 I skorne nat that I you it tell,

Right so withoutin any gile
 Surmountith this noble' Evangile
 The worde of any' evangelist,
 And to ther title thei toke Christ.
 And many soche comparifoun,
 Of whiche I make no mencion,
 Mightin men in that bokè finde,
 Who so coud of 'hem havin minde.

The' Uni'versite, that was a slepe,
 Gan for to braied, and takin kepe,
 And at the noise the hedde up cast,
 Ne nevir sithen slept it fast,
 But up it stert, and armis toke
 Ayenst this false horrible boke,
 All redy bataille for to make,
 And to the judge the boke thei take.

But thei that broughtin the boke there
 Hent it anone awaie for fere;
 Thei n'old shewe it no more a dele,
 But than it kept, and kepin wele,
 Till soche a time that thei maie se
 That thei so strong ywoxin be
 That no wight maie 'hem well withstonde,
 For by that boke thei durst not stonde:
 Awaie thei gonne it for to bere,
 For thei ne durstin not answere
 By expoficion ne glose
 To that that clerkis wolle oppose
 Ayenst the curfidnesse iwis
 That in that boke ywrittin is.

Now wotte I nat ne can nat se
 What manir ende that there shall be
 Of all this whiche that thei yhide,
 But yet algate thei shall abide
 Till that thei maie it bette defende;
 This trowe I best wolle be ther ende.

This Antichrist abidin we.
 For we ben all of his meine,
 And what man that wolle not be so
 Right sone he shall his life forgo:
 We wolle a peple' on him arise,
 And through our gile doin him cease,
 And him on sherpe speris rive,
 Or othir waies bring him fro live,
 But if that he wolle folowe' iwis
 That in our boke ywrittin is.

Thus moche wolle our boke signifie,
 That while Peter had maistrice
 Maie nevir John shewe well his might.

Now have I you declarid right
 The mening of the barke and rinde
 That makith the entencions blinde;

But now at erst I woll begin
 To expounē you the pithe within,
 And the seculers comprehendē
 That Christ's lawe wollin defende,
 And shoud it kepen and maintenē
 Ayenist them that all sustenen,
 And falsly to the peple techen
 That John betokeneth 'hem to prechen
 That there n'is lawe covenable
 But thilke Gospell pardurable
 That fro the Holy Ghost was sent
 To tournin folke that ben miswent.

The strength of John thei undirstonde
 The grace in whiche thei saie thei stonde,
 That doeth the sinfull folke convert,
 And 'hem to Jesu Christ revert :
 Full many' an othre' horriblete
 Mowin men in that boke se,
 That ben commaundid doutilef,
 Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse,
 And all with Antichrist thei holden,
 As men maie in the boke beholden.

And than commaundin thei to fleen
 All tho that with Peter yben ;
 But thei shall nevir have that might,
 And God to forme, for strief to fight,
 That thei ne shall ynough yfinde
 That Peter's lawe shall have in minde,
 And evir holde and so maintene,
 That at the last it shall be sene
 That thei shall all comin therto
 For aught that thei can speke or do.

And thilkē lawe ne shall not stonde
 That thei by John have undirstonde,
 But maugre them it shall adoun,
 And ben brought to confusion.

But I woll stint of this matere,
 For it is wondir long to here ;
 But had that ilke boke endured
 Of better' estate I were ensured,
 And frendis have I yet parde
 That han me set in grete degre.

Of all this worlde is emperour
 Gile my fathir, the false trechour,
 And emperesse my mothir is,
 Maugre the Holie Ghoste iwis.
 Our mightie linage and our rout
 Reignith in every reigne about,
 And well' is worthy we mini'sters be,
 For all this worlde governe we,
 And can the folke so well deceve
 That none our gilis can perceive,
 And though thei doen thei dare not saie ;
 The sothe dare no wight bewraie.

But he in Christ's wrathe him ledeth
 That more than Christ my brethrin dredeth ;
 He n'is no full gode champion
 That dredeth soche similacion,
 Nor that for pain woll refusin
 Us to correcte and accusin.
 He woll not entremete by right,
 Ne havin God in his eyen sight,

And therefore God shall him punice :
 But me ne rekith of no vice
 Sithen men us loven communablie,
 And holdin us for so worthie,
 That we maie folke repreve echone,
 And we n'll have represe of none :
 Whom shoudin folke worshipin so
 But us that stintin nevir mo
 To patrin while that folke maie' us se
 Though it not so behinde 'hem be ?

And where is there more wode folie
 Than to enhauncin chivalrie,
 And lovin noble men and gaie,
 That jolie clothis weren alwaie ?
 If thei be soche folke as thei semen,
 So clene as men ther clothis demen,
 And that ther wordes folowe ther dede,
 It is grete pite out of drede
 For thei woll be none hypocritis ;
 Of 'hem me thinkith gretē spite is :
 I can not love 'hem on no side :

But beggirs with these hodie wide,
 With sleigh and palē facis lene,
 And with graie clothis nat full clene,
 But frettid full of tatar wagges,
 And high shewis knoppid with dagges,
 That frouncin like a qualē pipe,
 Or botis riving as a gipe ;
 To soche folke, as I you devise,
 Should princis and these lordis wise
 Take all ther landis and ther thinges,
 Bothe warre and pece in govirninges,
 To soche folke should a prince him yeve
 That would his life in honour live.

And if thei be nat as the seme,
 That servin thus the worlde to queme,
 There would I dwellin to deceive
 The folke, for thei shall nat perceive.

But I ne speke in no soche wise
 That men should humble' habite dispise ;
 So that no pride there undir be
 No man should hate, as thinkith me,
 The povir man in soche clothing ;
 But God ne presith him nothing
 That saieth he hath the worlde forsake,
 And hath to worldly glory 'him take,
 And woll of soche delicis use ;
 Who maie that beggir well excuse ?

That papelarde that him yeldith so,
 And woll to worldly ese ygo,
 And saieth that he the worlde hath lest,
 And gredily it gripith est,
 He is the hounde, shame is to fain,
 That to his casting goeth again.

But unto you dare I not lie,
 But might I felin or espie
 That ye perceived it nothing
 Ye shoudin have a starke lesing :
 Right in your honde thus to beginne,
 I ne wolde it let for no sinne.

The god lough at the wondir tho,
And every wight gan laugh also,
And sayid, Lo, here a man right;
For to be trustie to' every wight!

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) ſaie to me,
Sith I thus have avauncid the,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of Ribaudes ſhalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holdin my forwardes?

Ye, Sir, quod he, from hens forwardes
Had ner your fathir here beforne
Servaunt ſo true ſithe be was borne.
That is ayeniſt all nature.

Sir, put you in that avinture,
For though ye borowes take of me
The ſikerer ſhall ye nevir be
For hoſtagis ne ſikirneſſe
Or chartris for to bere witneſſe:
I take your ſelf to recorde here
That men ne maie in no manere
Terin the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be ſlain bothe backe and ſide,
Though men him bete and all deſile:
What! wene ye that I woll begile?

For I am clothid mekily,
There undre' is all my trechiry;
Mine herte chaungith nevir the mo
For none habite in which I go:
Though I have chere of ſimpleneſſe,
I am not werie of ſhredneſſe:
My lemman, ſtrainid Abſtenaunce,
Hath miſtir of my purveiaunce,
She had full long ago be dedde
N'ere for my counſaile and my redde:
Let her alone, and you and me.

And Love answerid, I truſt the
Without borowe, for I woll none.

And Falſe Semblant the theſe anone
Right in that ike ſame place,
That had of trefon all his face
Right blacke within and white without,
Thanking him gan on his knees lout.

Than was ther nought but every man
Now to aflaute that failin can,
(Quod Love) and that full hardily:
Than armid thei hem cominly
Of ſoche armour as to 'hem fell.
Whan thei were armid fiers and fell,
Thei went 'hem forthe all in a rout
And ſet the caſtill all about;
Thei will not awaie for no drede
Till it ſo be that thei ben dede,
Or till thei have the caſtill take.
And four battellis gan thei make,
And partid 'hem in foure anone,
And toke there waie, and forthe thei gone
The foure gatis for to aflaile,
Of whiche the kepirs woll not faile,
For thei ben neithir ſicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and ſtrong in dede.

Now woll I ſaine the countenance
Of Falſe Semblant and Abſtenaunce,

That ben to Wickid Tong ywent;
But firſt thei helde ther parliement
Whethir it to be doin were
To makin 'hem be knowin there
Or ellis walkin forthe diſgiſed;
But at the laſtè thei deviſed
That thei would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,
Like gode and holie folke unfeined;
And anon Dame Abſtinence ſtreined
Toke on a robe of cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine.

A large coverchief of threde
She wrappid all about her hede;
But ſhe forgate not her pſaltere.

A paire of bedis eke ſhe bere
Upon a lace all of white threde,
On whiche that ſhe her bedis bede;
But ſhe ne bought 'hem nevre' a dele;
For thei were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holie frere,
That ſaied he was her fathir dere,
To whom ſhe had oftiner went
Than any frere of his covent;

And he viſitid her alſo,
And many' a ſermone ſaied her to;
He n'olde let for no man on live
That he ne would her oftin ſhrive,
And with ſo grete devocion
Thei madin her confeſſion
That thei had oftin for the nones
Two heddis in one hode at ones.

Of faire ſhape I deviſed her the,
But pale of face ſometime was ſhe;
That falſe traitoureſſe untrew
Was like that ſalowe horſe of hewe
That in the' Apocalypis is ſhewed,
That ſignifieth tho folke beſhrewed
That ben all full of trecherie,
And pale thorough hypocriſie;
For on that horſe no colour is
But onely dedde and pale iwis:
Of ſoche a colour enlangoured
Was Abſtinence iwis coloured;
Of her eſtate ſhe her repented
Right as her viſage repreſented.

She had a burdoun all of theſe
That Gile had yeve her of his yeſt,
And a ſkrippè of faint diſtreſſe,
That full was of elengeneſſe,
And forthe ſhe walkid ſobirlic.
And Falſe Semblant ſaint, *Je vous die*,
And as it were for ſoche miſtere
Doin on the cope of a frere,
With chere ſimple and full pitous
His loking was not diſdeinous
Ne proudè, but meke and ful peſible.

About his necke he bare a Bible,
And ſquyirly forthe gan he gon,
And for to reſt his limmes upon
He had of trefon a potent;
As he were feble' his waie he went.

But in his ſleve he gan to thring
A raſour ſharpe and well biting,

That was yforgid in a forge
Whiche that men clepin Coupé Gorge.
So long forth ther-waie thei nomin
Till thei to Wickid Tong comin,
That at his gate ywas sitting,
And sawe folke in the waie passing.

The pilgrimis sawe he fast by
That berin 'hem full mekily,
And humbly thei with him ymette;
Dame Abstinence first him ygrette;
And sithe him Falso Semblant salved,
And he 'hem, but he not remeved,
For he ne drede him not a dele,
For whan he sawe ther facis wele
Alwaie in hertè him thought so
He should knowin 'hem bothe two,
For well he knewe Dame Abstinaunce,
But he knewe not Constreinaunce;
He knewe nat that she was constrained,
Ne of her thev'is life yfained,
But wende she come of will all fre,
But she come in othir degree,
And if of gode will she began
That will ywas failid her than.

And Falso Semblant had he faine alfe,
But he knewe nat that he was false;
Yet false was he, but his falsnesse
Ne coud he nat espie nor gesse,
For Semblant was so slie ywrought
That falsenesse he ne espied nought;
But haddest thou knowin him beforne
Thou woldist on a boke have sworne,
Whan thou him sawe in thilke araie,
That he that whilom was so gaie,
And of the daunce Jolie Robin,
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But sothly what so men him call
Frere prechouris ben gode men all;
Ther odir wickidly thei beren
Soche minstrellis if that thei weren.

So ben Augustins and Cordileres,
And Carmis, and eke sackid freres,
And all the freris shode and bare,
Though some of 'hem ben grete and square,
Full holy men as I 'hem deme;
Everiche of hem would gode man seme;
*But shalt thou never of apparence
Sein conclude gode consequence
In any argument iwis,*
If existens all failid is;
For men maie finde alwaie sopheme
The consequence to enveneme,
Who so hath had the subtilte
The double sentence for to se.

Whan the pilgrimis comin were
To Wickid Tong that dwellid there,
Ther harnies nigh 'hem was algate;
By Wickid Tong adoune thei fate,
That badde 'hem nere him for to come,
And of tidingis tell him some,
And saied 'hem, What case makith you
To comin into this place now?

Sir, sayid Strainid Abstinaunce,
We for to dryin our penaunce
With hertis pitous and devout
Are commen as pilgrimes gon about;
Well nigh on fote alwaie we go;
Full doughtie ben our helis two,
And thus bothe we ben ysent
Throughou the worlde that is miswent
To yeve ensample and preche also;
To fishin finfull men we go,
For othir fishing ne fishe we:
And, leve Sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, erbo'rowe we crave;
Your life to amenne Christ it save,
And so it should you not displese
We wouldin, if it were your ese,
A short sermon unto you sain.
And Wickid Tong answered again,

The house (quod he) soche as ye se
Shall nat be wainid you for me:
Saie what you list and I woll here.
Graunt mercie! tho swete Sir dere,
Quod aldirfirst Dame Abstinence,
And thus began she her sentence:

Sir, the first vertue for certaine,
The gretist and most soveraine
That maie be founde in any man
For having or for wit he can
That is his tong for to refrain;
Therto ought every wight him pain,
For it is bettir still to be
Than for to spekin harme parde,
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no gode man sikirly.

And, Sir, abovin all othir sinne
In that art thou most giltie inne;
Thou spake a jape not long ago,

And, Sir, that was right evill doe.
Of a yong man that here repaired,
And never yet this place apaired,
Thou saidest he awaitid nothing
But to disceve Faire Welcoming:
Ye saidin nothing sothe of that,
But, Sir, ye lie, I tell you plat:
He cometh no more ne goeth parde;
I trowe ye shal him never se;
Faire Welcoming in prison is
That ofte hath plaied with you er this
The fairist gamis that he coude
Withoutin filth, or stil or loude;
Now dare he not himselfe solace;
Ye han also the man do chace,
That he dare neither come ne go:
What mevith you to hate him so
But propirly your wickid thought,
That many a false lesing hath thought,
That mevith your foule eloquence,
That janglith evre' in audience,
And on the folke arisith blame,
And doeth 'hem dishonour and shame
For thing that maie have no preving
But likeliness and contriving?

For I dare faine that Refon demeth
It is not al soth thing that semeth;

And it is sinne for to controve
 Any thing that is to reprove;
 This wote ye wele, and Sir, therefore
 Ye arne to blame mochil the more;
 And nathelless he reckith lite
 He yeveth not now thereof a mite,
 For if he thoughtin harme, parfaie
 He would ycome and gone all daie;
 He ne coude not himself abstene;
 Now cometh he not, and that is sene,
 For he ne taketh of it no cure,
 But if it be through avinture,
 And lasse than othir folke algate,
 And though here watchist at the gate
 With spere in thine arest alwaie,
 There muse musarde all the longe daie;
 Thou wakist night and daie for thought;
 Iwis thy traveile is for nought,
 And Jelousie withoutin faile
 Shall nevir quite the thy traveile;
 And skathe is that Faire Welcoming,
 Withoutin any trespassing,
 Shal wrongfully in prison be,
 There wepith and languishith he;
 And though thou nevir yet iwis
 Agiltist man no more but this
 Take not a grefe, it were worthy
 To put the out of this baily,
 And altirwarde in prison lie,
 And fettrid the till that thou die;
 For thou shalt for this finne dwelle
 Right in the devil's arse of helle
 But if that thou repentè the.
 Maifaie thou liest falsely (quod he.)

What, welcome with mischaunce now!
 Have I therefore herberid you
 To saie me shame and eke reprove,
 With sorie happe to your behove?
 And I to day your herbegere?
 Go herbir you els where than here
 That han a lier callid me.
 Two tregetours arte thou and he,
 That in mine hous do me this shame,
 And for my sothesawe ye me blame.
 Is this the sermon that ye me make?
 To all the divils I me take,
 Or ellis God thou me confounde,
 But er men diddin this castill founde
 It passith not ten daies or twelve
 But it was tolde right to my selve,
 And as thei saide right so tolde I;
 He kiste the Rose privily;
 Thus saide I now, and have said yore
 I n'ot where he did any more:
 Why should men saie me suche a thing
 If that it had yben gabbing?
 Right so saide I, and woll saie yet,
 I trowe I lyid not of it;
 And with my bemis I woll blowe
 To allè neighbours arowe
 How he hath bothe comin and gone.

Tho spake Falso Semblant right anone,
 All is nat gossell out of doute
 That men saie in the toune aboute:

Lay no defe ere to my speking,
 I swere you, Sir, it is gabbing
 I trow ye wote well certainly
 That no man lovith him tendirly
 That saith him harme, if he wote it,
 All be he ner so pore of wit;
 And sothe is also sikirly,
 This know ye, Sir, as well as I,
 That lovirs gladly wol visiten
 The placis there ther loavs habiten:
 This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
 This man to servin you laboureth,
 And clepith you his frende so dere,
 And this man makith you gode chere,
 And every where that he you meteth
 He you saleweth and he you greteth;
 He presith not so ofte that ye
 Oughte of his coming encombrid be;
 There ptesin othir folke on you
 Ful oftir than he doith now;
 And if his hert him strainid so
 Unto the Rose for to go,
 Ye should him sene so oftin nede
 That ye should take him with the dede;
 He coude his comming not forbere,
 Though ye him thrillid with a spere;
 It n'ere not than as it is now;
 But trustith well, I swere it you,
 That it is clene out of his thought.

Sir, certis he ne thinkith it nought,
 No more ne doth Faire Welcoming,
 That fore abyith al this thing.
 And if thei were of one assent,
 Full sone ywere the Rose ybent,
 Tho the malgre your's would ybe.

And, Sir, of o thing herkeneth me;
 Sithe ye this man that loveth you
 Han saide such harme and shamè now,
 Wittith well if he gessid it
 Ye maie well demin in your wit
 He ne wolde nothing love you so,
 Ne callin you his frende also,
 But night and daie he wollin wake
 The castill to distroie and take,
 Yf it were sothe as ye devise;
 Or some man in some manir wise
 Might it warnin him every dele,
 Or by himselfe percevin wele,
 For sithe he might not come and gone,
 As he was whilom wonte to done,
 He might it sonè wite and se,
 But now all othirwise wote he.

Than have we, Sir, all uttirly
 Deservid hell, and jolily
 The deth of hellè doutileffe,
 That thrallin folke so giltileffe.

Falso Semblant so provith this thing
 That he ne can none answering,
 And seeth alwaie soche apparaunce
 That nigh he fel in repentaunce,
 And said him; Sir, it maie well be;
 Semblant, a gode man semin ye,
 And Abstinence, ful wise ye seme;
 Of o talent you bothe I deme:

What counsaile wol ye to me yeven?

Right here anon thou shalt be shriven,

And say thy sinne withoutin more;

Of this shalt thou repent the fore,

For I am priest, and have poste

To shrive folk of most dignite

That ben as wide as world maie dure;

Of al this world I have the cure,

And that had nevyr yet perfoun

Ne vicarie' of no manir toun.

And God it wot I have of the

A thousande timis more pite

Than hath thy priest parochiall,

Though he thy frende be speciall.

I have advantage in o wife,

That your prelates ben not so wise

Ne halfe so lettrid as am I;

I am licensid boldily

In divinite for to rede,

And to confession out of drede

Yf that ye wol you now confesse,

And leve your finnis more and lesse,

Without abode knele doune anon

And you shal have absolucion.

TROILUS & CRESEIDE*.

IN FIVE BOKES.

B O K E I.

THE double sorow of Troilus to telle,
That was the King Priamus sonne of Troy,
In loving how his aventuris felle
From wo to wele, and aftir out of joy,
My purpose is er that I partè froly,
Thou Thesiphone! thou helpe me t'endite
This woful verse, that wepin as I write.

To the I clepe, thou goddesse of tourment,
Thou cruil wight, sorowing ay in paine!
Help me, that am the wofull instrument
That helpith lovirs as I can complaine;
For wel fit it, the sothè for to saine,
A woful wight to have a drery fere,
And to a sorowfull tale a fory chere.

For I, that god of Lov'is servauntes serve,
Ne dare to love for mine unlikelineffe,
Prayin for spede, al should I therfore sterue,
So ferre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse;
But nathelesse if this may done gladnesse
To any lovir, and his cause aveile,
Have he the thanke and mine be the traveile.

* In this boke is shewed the fervent love of Troilus to Creseide, whom he enjoyed for a time, and her grete untruth to him againe in giving her self to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her off that she came to grete misery. In whiche discourse Chaucer liberally treteth of the divine purveiance. *Urry.*

But ye lovirs that bathin in gladnesse,
Yf any drope of pite in you be,
Remembrith you of passid hevinesse
That ye have felte, and on the' adversite
Of othir folke, and thinkith how that ye
Han felte that Lovè durst you to displese
Or ye han won him with to gret an ese.

And prayith for 'hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may aftir here
That Love 'hem bring in hevin to solace;
And eke for me prayith to God so dere,
That I have might to shew in some manere
Suche paine and wo as Lov'is folke endure
In Troilus unsely avinture.

And biddith eke for them that ben dispeire
In love, that nevir will recovered be,
And eke for them that falsely ben apeired
Through wickid tongis, be it he or she,
And biddith God for his benigne
So graunt 'hem sone out of this world to pace
That ben dispairid out of Lov'is grace.

And biddith eke for them that ben at ese
That God 'hem graunt in love perseveraunce,
And sende 'hem grace ther lovis for to plesse,
That it to love be worship and plesaunce;
For so hope I my selfe best to avaunce
To pray for them that Lov'is servauntes be,
And write ther wo, and live in charite;

And for to have of them compassioun,
As though I were ther ownè brothir dere.
Now herkenith with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I go streight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double sorowes here
Of Troilus in loving of Creseide,
And how she forfoke him er that she deide.

It is wel wist how that the Grekis strong
In armis with a thousand shippis went
To Troie wardis, and the cite long
Besiegedin, nigh ten yeres ere thei stent,
And how in divers wise and one entent,
The ravishing to wreke of Queine Heleine,
By Paris don, thei wroughtin all their peine.

Now fell it so that in the toun there was
Dwelling a lord of gret authorite,
A gret divine, that clepid was Calcas,
That in that science so' experte was that he
Knew wel that Troie should destroyid be,
By answere of his god, that hight was thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.

So whan this Calcas knew by calculating,
And eke by the' answere of this god Apollo,
That Grekis shoulidin suche a peple bring
Thorow the whiche that Troy must be fordo,
He caste anone out of the toun to go,
For wel he wist by sorte that Troie sholde
Destroyid be, ye, would who so or n'olde;

Wherefore for to departin softly
Toke purpose ful this wight, forknowing, wise,
And to the Grekis host ful privily
He stalle anone, and thei in curteis wise
Didin to him both worship and service,
In trust that he hath conning 'hem to rede
In every peril which that was to drede.

Grete rumour rose whan it was first espied
In al the toun, and opinly was spoken
That Calcas traitour fled was, and alied
To them of Grece; and caste was to be wroken
On him that falsly hath his faith to broken,
And said that he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones.

Now had this Calcas leste in this mischaunce,
Unknowing of this false and wicked dede,
A doughtir whiche that was in grete penaunce,
And of her life she was full sore in drede,
And ne wist nevir what best was to rede;
And as a widowe was she and alone,
And n'ist to whom she might ymake her mone.

Creseide ywas this ladies name aright;
As to my dome in al Troy's cite
Most fairist lady, passing every wight;
So angelike shone her natife beaute
That like a thing immortal semid she,
And therwith was she so parfite a cature
As she had be made in scorning of Nature.
This lady, whiche that al day herde at ere
Her fathir's shame, his falsshed, and traifoun,
Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow' and fere,
In widowe's habit large of samite broun,
Before Hector on knees she fill adoun,
His mercy bad, her selfin excusing
With pitous voice, and tendirly weping.

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorowful begone,
And that she was so faire a cature,
Of his godenesse he gladid her anone,
And saidè, Let your fathir's traifoun gone
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your self in joye
Dwellith with us whilis you list in Troye,

And al the honour men may do you have,
As ferforth as though your fathir dwelt here,
Ye shul have, and your body shul men save,
As fer as I may ought enquire and here.
And she him thankid with ful humble chere,
And oftir wolde and it had been his will,
And toke her leve, went home, and helde her still.

And in her house she' abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was for to holde;
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her estate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her tolde;
But whethir that she childrin had or none
I rede it nat, therefore I let it gone.

The thingis fellin as thei done of werre
Betwixin 'hem of Troie and Grekis ofte,
For some day boughtin thei of Troie it derre,
And eft the Grekis foundin nothing soft
The folk of Troie: and thus fortune aloft
And undir este gan 'hem to whelmin bothe,
Aftir her course, aie while that thei wer wrothe.

But how this toun came to distruccion
Ne fallith not to purpose me to tel;
For why? it were a long digression
Fro my matir, and you to long to dwel;
But the Troyan jestis, all as thei fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who so that can may rede 'hem as thei write.

But though the Grekis them of Troie in shetten
And ther cite besegid al aboute,
Ther olde usagis n'oldin thei not letten,
As to honouren ther goddis ful devoute,
But aldirmost in honour out of doute
Thei had a relicke hight Palladion,
That was ther trust abovin everichon.

And so besel, whan comin was the time
Of Apprilis, whan clothid is the mede
With newè grene, of lusty Ver the prime,
And with swete smelling flouris white and rede
In sondrie wise shewid, as I you rede,
The folke of Troie ther observances olde,
Palladion 'is fest, went for to holde.

Unto the temple in all ther best wise
In general went every manir wight
To herkin of Palladion's service,
And namily many a lusty knight,
And many' a lady fresh and maidin bright
Ful well beseyn the most meynè and lest
Both for the seson and for the hie fest.

Among these othir folke was Creseida,
In widdowe's habite blake; but nathèles
Right as our first lettir is now an A,
In beaute first so stode she makèles;
Her godely loking gladdid all the pres;
N'as nevir sene thing to be praised so derre
Nor undir cloude biake so bright a sterre

As was Creseide, thei saidin everichone
That her beheldin in her blake wede;
And yet she stode ful lowe and stil alone,
Behinde all othir folke, in litil brede,
And nie the dore, aye undir sham'is drede,
Simple of atire, aud debonaire of chere,
With full assurid loking and manere.

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yongè knightis, ledde 'hem up and doune
In thilke large temple on every side,
Beholding aie the ladies of the toun
Now here now there, for no devocioun
Had he to none to revin him his rest,
But gan to praise and lackin whom he lest.

And in his walk ful faste he gan to waiten
If knight or squyir of his company
Gan for to fike, or let his eyin baiten
On any woman that he could espie,
Then he would smile, and hold it a folie,
And say him thus; O Lord! she slepith softe.
For love of the, whan thou tnrnist ful ofte.

I have herde tel pardieux of your living,
Ye lovirs, and of your leude observaunce,
And whiche a labour folke have in winning
Of love, and in the keping whiche doutaunce,
And whan your pray is lost wo and penaunce.
O very folis! blinde and nice be ye,
Ther is not one can ware by othir be.

And with that worde he gan cast up his browe
Ascaunce, lo! is this not wisely ispoken?
At whiche the god of Love gan lokin rowe
Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken;
He kidde anon his bowe was not to broken,
For sodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a pecocke can be pul.

O blindè worlde! o blinde entencioun!
How oftin fallith al th' effecte contraire
Of surquedrie and foule presumption?
For caught is proude and caught is debonaire;
This Troilus is clombin on the staire,
And litil wenith that he mote discende;
But al day failith thing that folis wende.

As proude Bayard beginnith for to skippe
Out of the way (so prickith him his corne)
Till he a lashe have of the longè whippe,
Than thinkith he though I prauce all beforne
First in the traife, full fatte and newe ishorne,
Yet am I but an horse, and hors 'is lawe
I must endure, and with my feris drawe:

So fared it by this fiers and proude knight;
Though he a worthy king 'is sonne were,
And wenid that nothing had had such might
Ayenst his wil that should his herte stere,
Yet with a loke his hert ywoxe on fire,
That he that now was most in pride above
Woxe sodainly moste subject unto love.

Forthy ensample takith of this man
Ye wise, proude, and worthy folkis all,
To skornin Love, whiche that so sonè can
The fredome of your hertis to him thral;
For evir was and evir shall besal
That Love is he that al thingis may binde,
For no man maie fordo the law of kinde

That this be sothe hath previd and doth yet,
For this (trowe I) ye knowin al and some,
Men redin nat that folke han gretir wit
Than thei that han ben most with love inome,
And strengist folke ben therwith ovircome,
The worthyist and gretist of degre;
This was and is, and yet man shal it se.

And truiliche it fitte well to be so,
For aldirwisist han therwith ben plesed,
And thei that han ben aldirmoste in wo
With love han ben comfortid most and esed,
And oft it hath the cruill herte apesed,
And worthy folke made worthyir of name,
And causith most to dredin vice and shame.

Now sith it may nat godely be withstonde,
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde,
Ne grudgith nought to Love for to ben bonde,
Sithe as him selvin list he may you binde;
The yerde is bette that bowin wol and winde
Than that that brest; and therefore I you rede
Folowith him that so well can you lede.

But for to tellin forth in speciall
As of this king 'is sonne of whiche I tolde,
And levin othir thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to holde,
Bothe of his joye and of his caris colde,
And all his werke as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wol therto refere.

Within the temple wente him forth playing
This Troilus with every wight about,
On this lady and now on that loking,
Wherefo she were of toun or of without;
And upon case befil that through a rout
His eye ypercid, and so depe it went
Til on Creseide it smote, and there it stent,

And sodainly for wondir wext astoned,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise;
Omercy, God! thought he, where hast thou wonned,
That arte so faire and godely to devise?
Therwith his hert began to sprede and rise,
And softe he sighid, lest men might him here,
And caught ayen his formir playing chere.

She n'as nat with the leste of her stature,
But al her limmis so wel answering
Werin to womanhode, that creature
Was nevir lassè mannish in seming,
And eke the pure wise of her mening
She shewid wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse.

Tho Troilus right wondir wel withall
Gan for to like her menin and her chere,
Whiche somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke a lite a side, in fuche manere
Ascauncis, what may I nat stondin here?
And astir that her loking gan she light.
That never thought him sene so gode a sight

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So grete desire aud fuche affectioun,
That in his hert 'is bottom gan to sticken
Of her his fixe and depe impressioun;
And though he erst had porid up and down
Than was he glade his hornis in to shrinke;
Unnethis wist he how to loke or winke.

Lo! he that lette him selvin so conding,
And scornid 'hem that lov's painis drien,
Was ful unware that Love had his dwelling
Within the subtil stremis of her eyen,
That sodainly him thought that he felte dien
Right with her loke the spirite in his herte;
Blessid be Love, that thus can folke converte!

She thus in blake loking to Troilus
Ovir al thing he stode for to beholde,
But his desire, ne wherefore he stode thus,
He neithir chere made ne worde thereof tolde,
But from aserre, his manir for to holde,
On othir thing somtime his loke he cast,
And este on her, while that the service last.

And astir this, not fully all awhaped,
Out of the temple esliche he wente,
Repenting him that evir he had japed
Of Lov's folke, lest fully the discente
Of scorne fil on him self; but what he mente
Leste it were wiste on any manir side
His wo he gan dissimulin and hide.

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He streight anone unto his palais turneth;
Right with her loke thorough shottin and darterd,
Al frainith he in luste that he sojourneth,
And all his chere and speche also' he abnormeth,
And aie of Lov's servauntes every while,
Himselfe to wric, at 'hem he gan to smile,

And sayd, Ah, Lord! so ye live all in lust,
Ye lovirs, for the conningist of you,
That servith most ententifeliche and best,
Him tite as oftin harme therof as prow;e;
Your hire is quite ayen, ye, God wote howe,
Not wel for wele, but skorne for gode servise;
In faithe your ordir is ruled in gode wise.

In no certaine ben your observaunces,
But it in a few sely pointis be,
Ne nothing asketh so gret attendaunces
As doth your laie, and that knowin al ye;
But that is not the worst, as mote I the,
But tolde I which were the worst point, I leve,
Al saide I sothe, ye woldin at me greve.

But take this; that ye lovirs ofte eschewe,
Or ellisdone of gode etencion,
Ful ofte thy lady wol it misseconstrewe,
And deme it harme in her opinion,
And yet if she for othir encheson
Be wroth, then shalt thou have a groin anone:
Lorde! wel is him that may bene of you one!

But for al this, whan that he seeth his time,
He held his pees, non othir bote him gained,
For Love began his fethirs so to lime,
That wel unneth unto his folke he fained
That othir befy nedis him distained:
So wo was him that what to done he n'ist,
But bad his folke to gone where as 'hem list.

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune upon his bedd'is fete him sette,
And first he gan to sike and este to grone,
And thought aie on her so withoutin lette,
That as he fatte and woke his spirite mette
That he her saugh and temple', and all the wise
Right of her loke, and gan it newe avise.

Thus gan he make a mirroure of his minde,
In whiche he saugh all wholly her figure,
And that he wel coude in his hert yfinde
It was to him a right gode avinture
To love suche one, and if he did his cure
To servin her yet might he sal in grace,
Or els for one of her servauntes pace:

Imagining that ne travaile nor grame
Ne might for so godely an one be lorne,
As she ne him for his desire no shame,
Al were it wiste, but in prise and upborne
Of allè lovirs, wel more than beforne.
Thus argumentid he in his ginning,
Ful unavifid of his wo comming.

Thus toke he purpose Lov's crafte to sewe,
And thought that he would workin privily,
First for to hide all his desire in mewe,
From every wight iborne all uttirly,
But he might ought recovered ben therby,
Remembring him that *Love to wide iblowe*
Yelt biitir frute, although swete fede be sorwe.

And ore al this ful mokil more he thought
What for to speke and what to holdin inne,
And what to artin her to love he sought,
And on a songe anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his sorowe for to winne;
For with gode hope he gan fully assente
Creseida for to love, and nought repente.

And of his songe not onely his sentence,
(As write mine auctour, callid Lolius)
But plainely, save our tong's difference,
I dare wel say in al that Troilus
Saied in his songe, lo! every word right thus
As I shal faine, and who so list it here
Lo! next this verse he may it findin here.

The songe of Troilus out of Petrarche.

If no love is, o God, what fele I so!
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be gode from whence comith my wo?
If it be wicke a wondir thinkith me,
Whan every turment and adversite
That cometh of him may to me savery thinke,
For aye more thurst I the more that I drinke.

And if that at mine ownè lust I brenne,
From whence comith my wailing and my pleinte
If harme agre me wherto plaine I thenne?
I n'ot nere why unwery that I feinte.
O quickè deth! o swetè harme so queinte!
How may I se in me soche quantite
But if that I consente that it so be?

And if that I consente I wrongfully
Complaine iwis. Thus possid to and fro,
As sterclefs wight is in a bote, am I,
Amidde the se atwixin windis two
That in contrarie stondin evirmo.
Alas! what is this wondir maladie?
For hete of colde, for colde of hete, I die.

And to the god of Love thus sayid he
With pitous voice; O Lorde! now your'is is
My spirite, whiche that ougthin your'is be;
You thonke I, Lord, that han me brought to this;
But whethir goddesse or woman iwis
She be I n'ot whiche, that ye do me serve,
But as her man I wol aie live and sterve,

Ye stondin in her eyin mightily,
As in a place unto your vertue digne,
Wherfore o Lord! if my service or I
May likin you, so bethe me to ben,
For mine estate royal here I resigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere.

Endeth the song.

In him ne deigned to spar in blode royall
The fire of love, wherfro may God me blesse!
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue or his excellent prowesse,
But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondrie wise aie newe,
That sixty times a day he losse his hewe.

So muchill daie fro daie his ownè thought
For luste to her gan quickin and encrese,
That everiche othir charge he sette at nought:
Forthy ful oftin, his hote fire to cese,
To sene her godely loke he gan to prese,
For therby to ben esid wel he wende,
And aie the nere he was the more he brende;

For aie the nere the fire the hottir is,
This (trowe I) knowith al this company;
But were he ferre or nere I dare saie this,
By night or daie, for wisedome or folie,
His herte, whiche that is his brest's eye,
Was aie on her, that fairir was to sene
Than evir was Helein or Polyxene.

Eke of the daie there passid nat an houre
But to himself a thousande times he saide,
God godely, to whom I serve and laboure
As best I can, now would to God, Creseide,
Ye wouldin on me rue er that I diede;
My dere herte, alas! mine hele, and my hewe,
And life, is losse but ye woll on me rewe.

All othir dredis werin from him fledde
Bothe of th' assiege and his salvacion,
Ne' in his desire non othir fancy bredde
But argumentes to this conclusion,
That she on him would han compassion,
And he to ben her man while he maie dure;
Lo here his life, and from his deth his cure.

The sharpe shouris fell of armis preve
That Hector or his othir brethrin didden
Ne made him onely therefore onis meve,
And yet was he, wher so men went or ridden,
Found one the best, and lengist time abiden
There peril was, and eke did suche travail
In armis that to thinke it was mervaille.

But for none hate he to the Grekis had,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armis for to mad,
But onely lo! for this conclusion,
To likin her the bet for his renoun:
Fro daie to daie in armis so he spedde
That all the Grekis as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth the tho rest him love his slepe,
And made his mete his foe, and eke his sorow
Gan multiplie, that who so toke kepe
It shewid in his hewe both even' and morow
Therefore a tittle he gan him to borowe
Of othir sickenesse, lest men of him wende
That the hottesire of cruill love him brende;

And saied he by a sevir fared amis:
But how it was certain I cannot say,
If that his ladie understode nat this,
Or fainid her she n'ist, one of the tweie;
But well rede I that by no manir weie
Ne semid it as if she on him rought,
Or of his paine, what so evir he thought.

But than yfelt this Troilus soche wo
That he was wel nigh wode; for aie his drede
Was this, that she some wight had lovid so
That ner of him she would han takin hede,
For whiche him thought he felt his herte blede;
Ne of his wo ne durst he nought begin
To tellin her for all this worlde to win.

But whan he had a space left from his care,
Thus to himself full oft he gan to plain;
He saied, O sole! now art thou in the snare
That whilom japedist at lov'is pain;
Now art thou hent, now gnaw thin ownè chain:
Thou wert aie woned eche lovir reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst nat the defende.

What woll now every lovir saine of the
If this be wist? but er in thine absence
Laughin in scorne, and sain, Lo! there goth he;
That is the man of so grete sapience,
That helde us lovirs leste in reverence:
Now thanked be God he maie gon on the daunce
Of hem that Love liste feebly to avaunce:

But o thou woful Troilus! God would
(Sithe thou must lovin through thy destine)
That thou beset wer of soche one that should
Know all thy wo, all lackid her pite!
But all so colde in love towardis the
Thy ladie is as frost in wintir mone,
And thou fordon as snowe in fire is sone.

God would I were arivid in the port
Of deth, to which my sorowe woll me lede!
Ah, Lorde! to me it were a grete comfort,
Than were I quite of languishing in drede,
For by my hidde sorowe iblowe in brede
I shall bejapid ben a thousande time
More than that sole of whose foly men rime.

But now helpe God, and yemy swete, for whom
I plaine; icought ye nevir wight so fast:
O mercie, my dere herte! and helpe me from
The deth, for I while that my life maie last
More than my life woll love you to my last;
And with some frendly loke gladith me, swete!
Though nevir nothing more ye me behete.

These wordis and full many' an othir mo
He spake, and callid evir in his pleinte
Her name, to tellin unto her his wo,
Till nigh that he in salte teris was dreinte:
All was for nought; she herd nat his compleintes;
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thousand folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chambir thus alone
A frende of his, that callid was Pandare,
Came onis in unware, and herd him grone,
And saw his frend in soche distresse and care;
Alas! (quod he) who causith all this fare?
O mercie God! what unhap maie this mene?
Han now thus sone the Grekis made you lene?

Or hast thou some remorse of conscience?
And art now fall in some devocioun,
And wailist for thy sinne and thine offence,
And hast for ferde ycought contricioun?
God save 'hem that besiegid han our toun,
That so can laie our jolite on presse,
And bring our lustie folke to holinesse!

These wordis saied he for the nonis all,
That with suche thing he might him angry maken,
And with his angre doen his sorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken;
But well wist he, as ferre as tongis speken,
There n'as a man of gretir hardinesse
Than he, ne more desirid worthinesse.

What cas (quod Troilus) or what avinture
Hath gidid the to sene me languishing,
That am refuse of every creature?
But for the love of God, at my praying,
Go hence awaie, for certis my dying
Woll the disese, and I mote nedis deie,
'Therefore go waie; there n'is no more to seie.

But if thou wene I be thus sicke for drede,
It is nat so, and therefore scorne me nought;
'There is an othir thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekis han yet wrought,
Which cause is of my deth for sorow and thought,
But though that I now tell it the ne leste
Be thou nat wrothe; I hide it for the beste.

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh
Ful oftin saied, Alas! what maie this be?
Now frende, (quod he) if eyir love or trouth
Fiath ben er this betwixin the and me
Ne do thou nevir soche a cruilte
To hidin fro thy frende so grete a care;
Wost thou not well that it am I Pandare?

I woll partake with the of all thy paine;
If it so be I doe the no comfort,
As it is frend'is right, so the for to saine,
To enterpartin wo as glad disport
I have and shall; for true or false report,
In wrong and right, iloved the all my live;
Hide not thy wo from me, but tell it blive.

Than gan this sorowfull Troilus to fike,
And saied him thus; God leve it be my best
To tellin the, for sithe it maie the like
Yet woll I tell it the though my herte brest,
And well wote I thou maiest do me no rest,
But lest thou deme that I trust nat to the:
Now herkin frende, for thus it stant with me.

Love, ayenst the whiche who so defendith
Him selvin moste him aldirlest availeth,
With dispeire so forely me offendith
That streight unto the deth mine hert yfaileth,
Therto desire so brenningly me' assaileth
That to ben slain it were a gretir joie
To me than king of Grece to be and Troie.

Suffisith this, my fully frende Pandare,
That I have saied, for now wotest thou my wo,
And for the love of God my coldè care
So hide it well, I tolde it ner to mo,
For harmis mightin folowen mo than two
If it were wist; but be thou in gladnesse,
And let me sterve unknowe of my distresse.

How hast thou thus unkindely and long
Hid this fro me, thou sole? (quod Pandarus)
Paraventure thou maiest for soche one long
That mine avise anone maie helpin us.
This were a wondir thing, (quod Troilus)
Thou couldist ner in love thy selfin wisse,
How devill maiest thou bringin me to blisse?

Ye, Troilus, now herkin, (quod Pandare.)
Though I be nice, it happith oftin so,
That one that of axis doeth full ill fare
By gode counsaile can kepe his frend therfro;
I have my self yfeine a blinde man go
There as he fell which that could lokin wide:
A sole maie eke a wise man oftin gide.

A whetstone is no kerving instrument,
But yet it makith sharpe kerving tolis;
And if thou wost that I have aught miswent
Eschue thou that, for soche thing to schole is,
Thus oftin wise men ben warin by folis:
If thou so do thy wit is well bewared;
By his contrary' is every thing declared.

For how might evir swetnesse have be know
To him that nevir tastid bittirnesse?
No man ne wot what gladnesse is I trowe
That nevir was in sorowe or some distresse;
Eke white by black, by shame eke worthines;
Eche set by othir more for othir semeth,
As men maie sene, and so the wise it demeth.

Sithe thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that in love so oftin have assayed
Gregauncis ought to connin well the more
Counsailein the of that thou art dismaied,
And eke the ne ought not ben ill apaied,
Though I desirin with the for to bere
Thine hevie charge; it shall the lasse the dere.

I wote well that it farid thus by me
As to my brothir Paris an heirdesse
Whiche that yclepid was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her hevinesse;
Ye saw the lettir that she wrote I gesse.
Naie, nevir yet iwis (quod Troilus.)
Now (quod Pandare) herkinith, it was thus.

Phœbus, that first found art of medicine,
(Quod she) and coud in every wight'is care
Remedy' and rede by herbis he knew fine,
Yet to himself his conning was full bare,
For love had him so boundin in a snare,
All for the daughter of the King Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his sorowe bete.

Right so fare I; unhappily for me
I love one best, and that me smertith sore,
And yet paravinture I can rede the
And nat my self; repreve thou me no more,
I have no cause I wote well for to fore
As doeth an hauke that listith for to plaie,
But to thine helpe yet somewhat can I saie.

And of o thing right fikir maiest thou be,
That certain for to dyin in the pain
That I shall nevir mo discovir the,
Ne by my trouth I kepe nat to restrain
The fro thy love, although it were Helein,
That is thy brothir's wife, if I it wist,
Be what she be, and love her as the list.

Therefore as frendfulliche in me assure,
And tell me platte what is thine encheson
And finall cause of wo that ye endure,
For doubtith nothing mine entencion
N'as nat to you of reprehension

To speke as now, for no wight maie bireve
A man to love till that him list to leve.

And therefore wetith wel that both ben vicis,
Mistrustin all or ellis all beleve;

But well I wote the mene of it no vice is,
As for to trustin some wight is a preve
Of trouth, and forthy would I fain remeve
Thy wrong concept, and do the some wight trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if the lust.

The wise saith, Wo is him that is alone,
For and he fall he hath none helpe to rise;
And sithe thou hast a felowe tell thy mone,
For this ne is nought certain the next wise
To winnin love, as techin us the wise,
To waile and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whose teris yet in marble ben isene.

Let be thy weping and thy drerinesse,
And let us lessin wo with othir speche,
So maie thy wofull time semin the lesse;
Delitith nought in wo thy wo to seche,
As doen these folis that ther sorowes eche
With sorowe whan thei han misavinture,
And lustin nought to sechin othir cure.

Men saine, *To wretche is consolacion
To have an othir felowe in his paine;*
That ought well to ben our opinion,
For we bothe thou and I of love do plain;
So full of sorowe am I, sothe to saine,
That certainly as now no more hard grace
Maie sit on me; for why? there is no space.

Yf God wol thou art nought agast of me
Lest I would of thy lady the begile;
Thou wost thy self whom that I love parde,
As I best can, gon sithin longè while,
And sithe thou wost I do it for no wile,
And sithe I am he that thou trustith most,
Tel me somewhat, sens al my wo thou woste.

Yet Troilus for al this no worde saide,
But long he laie as still as he ded were,
And astir this with siking he abraide,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his ere,
And up his cien cast he; and than in fere
Was Pandarus leste that in a frenseye
He should yfal, or ellis sonè deye;

And said, Awake, full wonderliche and sharpe
What slombriest thou as in a lethargy?
Or art thou like an asse unto the harpe,
That herith soun, whan men the stringis ply,
But in his mind of that no melodie
Maie sinkin him to gladin, for that he
So dull is in his bestialite?

And with this Pandare of his wordis stent,
But Troilus to him no thing answerde;
For why? to tellin was nought his entent
Ner to no man for whom that he so ferde,
For it is said, *Men makin ofte a yerde
With which the makir is himselfe ibetin*
In sondrie manir, as these wise men treten.

And namèliche in his counsaile telling
That touchith love, that ought to ben secre,
For of himselfe it woll inough out spring,
But if that it the bet governid be;
Eke somtime it is crafte to seme to fle
Fro thing which in effecte men huntin faste:
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caste.

But nathèlesse whan he had herde him crie
Awake, he gan to sike wondir fore,
And sayd, My frende, although that still I lie
I n'am not defe; now pece, and crie no more,
For I have herde thy wordis and thy lore,
But suffir me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbis may nought me availen;

Nor othir cure ne canst thou none for me,
Eke I n'il not ben curid; I woll die:
What knowin I of the Quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde ensamplis, I the prey.
No, frende, (quod Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delite of folis to bewepe
Ther wo, but to sekin bote thei ne kepe.

Now know I that there reson in the faileth;
But tellith me, if I wiste what she were
For whome that the al misavinture aileth
Durste thou trust that I tolde it in her ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy selfe for fere,
And her besought on the to han some routh?
Why nay, (quod he) by God and by my trouthe?

What! not as befily (quod Pandarus)
As though mine ownè life lay in this nede?
Why no, parde, Sir, (quod this Troilus.)
And why? For that thou shouldist nevir spede.
Wost thou that well? Ye, that is out of drede,
(Quod Troilus) for all that er ye conne
She wol to no suche wretche as I be womme.

(Quod Pandarus) Alas! what may this be
That thou dispairid art thus causilese?
What! liveth nat thy lady? *Benedicite!*
How wost thou so that thou art gracilese?
Suche evil is not alwaie botelesse;
Why put not thus impossible thy cure,
Sithe thing to come is ofte in avinture?

I grauntin well that thou endurist wo
As sharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
Whose stomake foulis tirin evjr mo
That hightin Vulturis, as bokis tell;
But I may not endurin that thou dwell
In so unskilful an opinion
That of thy wo n'is no curacion;

But onis n'ilt thou for thy cowarde herte,
And for thine ire and folish wilfulnessse,
For wantrust tellin of thy sorowe' smerte,
Ne to thine ownè helpe do besinesse
As moche as speke a worde ye more or lesse,
But lieft as he that of life nothing retche:
What woman living coude love suche a wretche?

What may she demin othir of thy dethe,
Yf thou thus die, and she n'ot why it is,
But that for fere is yoldin up thy brethe
For Grekis han besiegid us iwis?
Lord! which a thanke shalt thou have than of this
Thus wol she saine, and al the tounne atones,
The wretch is ded, the divel have his bones.

Thou maiste alone her wepe, and crie, and knele,
And love a woman that she wote it nought,
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not fele,
Unknow unkist, and lost that is unfought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere abought
Twenty wintir that his lady ne wiste,
That never yet his ladie's mouthe he kiste.

What! should he therefore fallin in dispaire,
Or be recreaunte for his ownè tene,
Or slain himself, all be his ladie faire?
Naie, naie; but er in one be fresh and grene,
To serve and love ay his dere hert's quene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serve
A thousande folde more than he can deserve.

And of that wordè toke hede Troilus,
And thought anone what folie he was in,
And how that sothe him sayid Pandarus,
That for to slaen himself might he not win,
But bothe to doen unmanhode and a sinne,
And of his deth his ladie nought to wite,
For of his wo God wot she knewe full lite.

And with that thought he gan ful fore to like,
And saied, Alas! what is me best to doe?
To whom Pandare answerid, If the like
The best is that thou tell me all thy wo,
And have my trouh but if thou find it so
I be thy bote or that it ben full long
To peeis doe me drawe and sithin hong.

Ye, so saiest thou, (quod Troilus) alas!
But God wot it is naught, the rathir so
Full harde it were to helpin in this caas,
For well finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne all the men that ridin con or go
Maie of her cruill whele the harme withstond,
For as her list she plaieth with fre and bond.

(Quod Pandarus) Than blamist thou Fortune
For thou art wroth ye now at erst I se;
Wost thou not wel that Fortune is commune
To every manir wight in some degre?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo! parde,
That as her joyis motin ovirgone
So mote her sorowes passin everichone.

For if her whele stint any thing to tourne
Than cessith she Fortune anone to be;
Now sith her whele by no waie maie sojourn
What wost thou of her mutabilite?
Right as thy self lust she woll done by the,
Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping,
Paravinture thou hast cause for to sing.

And therefore wost thou what I the beseche?
Let be thy wo and touning to the grounde,
For who so liste have heling of his leche
To him bihovith first unwrie his wounde;
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
Were it eke for my sustir all thy sorowe,
By my gode will she should be thine to morowe.

Loke up I saie, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede.
Know I her aught? for my love tell me this,
Than would I hope the rathir for to spede.
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and woxe all redde for shame.
Aha! (quod Pandare) here beginnith game.

And with that worde he gan him for to shake,
And saied him thus; These, thou shalt her name tell:
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
As though men should han had him into hel,
And saied, Alas! of all my wo the well
Than is my swetè foe callid Creseide;
And well nigh with that word for fere he deide.

And whan that Pandare herd her namè neven,
Lorde! he was glad, and sayid, Frend so dere,
Now fare a right, for Jov's name in heven
Love hath beset the well: be of gode chere,
For of gode name, and wisedom, and manere,
She hath inough, and eke of gentillnesse:
If she be faire thou wost thy self I gesse.

Ne nevir seie I a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne gladdir, ne of speche
A frendlier, ne none more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
In honour to as ferre as she may stretche:
A king's herte semith by her's a wretche.

And forthy loke of gode comforte thou be,
For certainly the firste pointe is this
Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
A man to have pece with himselfe iwis;
So oughtist thou, for nought but gode it is
To lovin wel and in a worthy place;
The ought not to clepin it happe but grace.

And also thinke, and therwith gladdin the,
That sith thy lady vertuous is all,
So soloweth it that there is some pite
Amongis all these othir in generall,
And for thei se that thou in speciall
Requirist nought that is ayen her name,
For Vertue stretchith not himselfe to shame.

But wel is me that evir I was borne
That thou beset art in so gode a place,
For by my trouh in love I durst have sworne
The should nevir have tidde so faire a grace;
And wost you why? for thou were wont to chace
At Love in scorne, and for dispite him call
Saint Idiotè, lord of these folis all.

How oftin hast thou madin thy nice japes?
And saied that Lov's servauntes everichone
Of nicete ben very godd's apes,
And some of them would monche ther mete alone
Ligging a bedde, and make 'hem for to grone,
And some thou saidist had a blaunche severe,
And praidist God thei should nevir kevere:

And some of 'hem toke on 'hem for the cold
More than inough; so saidist thou full oft,
And some han famid oftin time, and tolde
How that thei wakin whan thei slepin soft,
And thus thei would have set 'hem self aloft,
And nathelless were undir at the laste:
Thus saidist thou, and japidist full faste.

Yet saidist thou that for the more part
These lovirs wouldin speke in generall,
And thoughtin that it was a sikir art
For failing for to assayin ovir all:
Now maie I jape of the if that I shall;
But nathelless although that I should die
Thou art none of tho I dare well seie.

Now bete thy brest, and saie to god of Love,
Thy grace, o Lord! for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my self I love;
Thus saie with all thine hert in gode entent.
(Quod Troilus) Ah, Lorde! I me consent,
And praie to the my japis thou foryeve,
And I no more will jape while that I live.

Thou saiest well, (quod Pandare) and now I hope
That thou the godd'is wrath hast al apered;
And sithin thou hast weptin many' a drope,
And said such thing wherwith thy god is plesed,
Now would God nevir but that thou were esed,
And thinke well she of whom rest all thy wo
Hereaftir maie thy comfort ben also.

For thilke ground that berith the wedis wicke
Bereth eke these wholsome herbis as full oft,
And nexte to the foule nettle rough and thicke
The rose ywexith sote, and smothe, and soft,
And next the valey is the hill aloft,
And next the derke night is the glad morowe,
And also joie is next the fine of sorowe.

Now loke that well attempre be thy bridell,
And for the best aie suffre to the tide,
Or ellis all our labour is on idell;
He bastith well that wisely can abide.
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide:
Be lustie, fre: persever in servise,
And all is well if thou werke in this wise:

But he that partid is in every place
Is no where whole, as writin clerkis wise;
What wondir is if soche one have no grace?
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some servise?
As plant a tre or herbe in sondrie wise,
And on the morowe pull it up as blive,
No wondir is though it maie nevir thrive.

And sith the god of Love hath the bestowed
In place digne unto thy worthinesse,
Stonde fast, for to a gode port hast thou rowed,
And of thy self for any hevinesse
Hope alwaie well; for but if drerinesse
Or ovirhast doe our bothe labour shende
I hope of this to makin a gode ende.

And wost thou why? I am the lassie asered
Of this matter with my nece for to trete,
For this have I herd saie of wise and lered,
Was nevir man or woman yet beyete
That was unapt to suffre lov'is hete
Celestiall, or ellis love of kinde;
Forthy some grace I hope in her to finde.

And for to speke of her in speciall,
Her beaute to bethinkin and her youthe,
It fit her nought to ben celestiall
As yet, though that her bothè list and kouthes;
And truily it fit her well right nouthes
A worthie knight to lovin and cherice,
And but she doe I holde it for a vice.

Wherefore I am and woll be aie redy
To painin me to do you this service,
For bothe of you to plesin; this hope I
Hereaftirwardis, for ye ben bothe wise,
And connin counsaile kepe in soche a wise
That no man shall the wisir of it be;
And so we maie ben gladdid allè thre.

And by my trouth I have right now of the
A gode conceit in my wit as I gessie.
And what it is I woll now that thou se;
I think that sithin Love of his godenesse
Hath the convertid out of wickidnesse
That thou shalt ben the bestè post I leve
Of all his laie, and moste his foin greve.

Ensample why, se now these gretè clerkes,
That errin aldirmoste ayen all lawe,
And ben convertid from ther wickid werkes
Through grace of God, that lest'hem to him drawe,
Than arne thei folk that han most God in awe,
And strengist faithid ben I undirstonde,
And con an errour aldirbest withstonde.

Whan Troilus had herde Pandare assented
To ben his helpe in loving of Creside
He wext of wo, as who faith unturmented,
But hottir wext his love; and than he saide
With sobre chere, as though his herte yplaide,
Now blisfull Venus! helpe er that I sterve.
Of the, Pandare, I now some thanke deserve.

But, derè frende, how shal my wo be lesse
Till this be done? and, gode now, tell me this,
How wolt thou saine of me and my distresse,
Lest she be wroth? this drede I most iwis,
Or wol not herin al how that it is:
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her eme she n'il no suche thing here.

(Quod Pandarus) Thou hast a ful grete care
Lest that the chorle may fal out of the mone.
Why, Lorde! I hate of the the nicè fare;
Why entremete of that thou hast to done?
For Godd'is love I bidè the a bone;
So let me' alone, and it shal be thy best.
Why, frende, (quod he) than done right as the lest:

But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I ne wolde
That thou in me wendist so grete folie
That to my lady I desirin sholde
That touchith harme or any vilanie,
For dredileffe me were levir to die
Than she of me aught ellis understode
But that might yfownin into gode.

Tho lough Pandare, and anon answerde,
And I thy borow' ? fie ! no wight doth but so;
I ne raught not although she stode and herde
How that thou saiest; but farewell, I wol go:
Adieu; be glad: God spede us bothè two!
Yeve me this labour and this businesse
And of my spede be thine al the swetnes.

Tho Troilus on knees gan doune to fall,
(And Pandare in his armis hente him fast)
And saide, Nowe fie upon the Grekis all!
Yet parde God shal helpin at the last,
And dredileffe if that my life may last,
And God toforne, lo! some of 'hem shal smerte;
And yet me athinketh that this avaunt m'asterte.

And now, Pandare, I can no more say,
But thou wise, thou wost thou maist: thou art al;
My life, my deth, hole in thine honde I lay,
Helpe me (quod he.) Yes, by my trouth I shal.
God yelde the, frende, and this in special,
(Quod Troilus that thou me recommaunde
To her that may me to the deth commaunde,

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His ful frendè, tho faide in this manere;
Farwel, and thinke I wol thy thanke deserve,
Have here my trowth, and that thou shalt well here:
And went his way thinking on this matere,
And how he best might her beseche of grace,
And find a lesure therto and a place.

For every wight that hath a house to found
He rennith nat the werke for to beginne
With rakel honde, but he wol bide a stound,
And sende his hert'is line out fro within,
Thus aldirfirst his purpose for to winne,
As this Pandarus in his hert'is thought
Did cast his werke full wisely er he wrought.

But Troilus lay tho no lengir down,
But up anon gat upon his stede baie,
And in the felde he playid the lioun;
Wo was that Greke that with him met that daie:
And in the tounè his manir tho forthe aie

So godely was, and gat him so in gràce,
That eche him loved that lokid in his face.

For he becamin the most frendly wight,
The gentilist, and eke the mostè fre,
The trustyist, and one the bestè knight,
That in histime was or ellis might be:
Ded were his japis and his cruilte,
Ded his high porte and all his manir straunge,
And eche of 'hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Now let us stint of Troilus a stounde,
That ferith like a man that hurt is fore,
And is somdele of aking of his wounde
Ylessid wel, but helid no dele more,
And as an esy pacient the lore
Abite of him that goth about his cure,
And thus he drivith forth his avinture.

TROILUS & CRESEIDE.

PROCEMIUM LIBRI SECUNDI.

Out of these blackè wawis let us faile,
O winde, o winde! the wedir ginnith clere,
For in the se the bote hath suche travaile
Of my conning that unneth I it fere:
This se clepe I the tempestous matere
Of depe dispaire that Troilus was in;
But now of hope the kalendis begin.

O lady mine, that callid art Clio!
Thou be my spede fro this forthe, and my Muse,
To rimè wel this Boke til I have do;
Me nedith here none othir art to use;
For why? to every lovir I me' excuse
That of no sentiment I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherefore I n'il have neithir thanke ne blame
Of all this Worke, but praie you mekily
Disblamith me if any worde be lame,
For as mine auctour sayid so say I;
Eke though I speke of love unfeelingly
No wondir is, for it nothings of newe is:
A blinde man can not judgin wel in bewis.

I know eke that in forme of speche is chaunge
Within a thousande yere, and wordis tho
That haddin prife now wondir nice and straunge
Us thinkith 'hem, and yet thei spake 'hem so,
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;

Eke for to winnin love in sondry ages
In sondry londis sondry ben usages.

And forthy if it happe in any wise
That here be any lovir in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol devise,
How Troilus came to his ladie's grace,
And thinkith so n'olde I not love purchase,
Or wondrith on his speche or his doying,
I n'ot, but it is to me no wondring:

For every wight whiche that to Rome ywent
Halt nat o pathe ne alway o manere;
Eke in some londe were al the game yshent
Yf that men farde in love as men don here,
As thus, in opin doying or in chere,
In visiting, in forme, or said our sawes;
For thus men saine, *Eche countre bath his lawes.*

Eke scarcely ben there in this placè thre
That have in love said like and don in al,
For to this purpose this maie likin the,
And the right nought, yet al is done or shal;
Eke some men grave in tre, some in stone wal,
As it betide: but sithe I have begonne,
Mine authour shall I folow as I konne.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

IN May, that mothir is of monethis glade,
That the freshe flouris all, blew, white, and rede,
Ben quicke ayen that wintir ded had made,
And full of baume is fleting every mede,
Whan that Phœbus doth his bright bennis spred
Right in the white Bole, right so it betidde,
As I shal singe, on May is day the thridde,
That Pandarus, for all his wifè speche,
Felte eke his parte of Lov'is shöttis kene,
That coude he ner so well of loving preche
It made his hewe al daie ful oftin grene;
So shope it that him fill that day a tene
In love for whiche in wo to bedde he went,
And made er it were day full many' a went.

The swalow Progne with a sorowful lay,
Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
Why she forshapin was; and ever lay
Pandare abed halfe in a flombering,
Til she so nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her sustir take,
That with the noise of her he gan awake,
And to call, and dreslin him up to rise,
Remembring him his arande was to done
From Troilus, and eke his grete emprisc,
And cast, and knew in gode plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way full sone
Unto his nec'is paleis there beside:

Now Janus, god of Entre, thou him gide!

Whan he was come unto his nec'is place,
Where is my lady, to her folke (quod he?)
And thei him tolde, and he forthe in gan pace,
And founde two othir ladies sit and she
Within a pavid parlour, and thei thre
Herdin a maidin 'hem redin the geste
Of the siege of Thebis whilis 'hem leste.

Madame, quod Pandare, God you save and fe,
With al your boke and al the companie!
Eighe! uncle mine, welcome iwis, (quod she)
And up she rose, and by the honde in hie
She toke him fast, and sayid, This night thrye,
To gode mote it yturne, of you I mette;
And with that word she doun on bench him set.

Ye, nece, ye shullin farin wel the bet,
If God wol, al this yere, (quod Pandarus)
But I am sory that I have you let

To herkin of your boke ye praisin this:
For Godd'is love what saith it? tell it us:
Is it of love? some gode ye may me lere.

Uncle, (quod she) your maistresse is nat here.

With that thei gonnin laugh, and tho she seide,
This romaunce is of Thebis that we rede,
And we have herd how that King Lavis deide
Through Oedipus his sonne, and all the dede;
And here we stintin at these letters rede
How the bishop, as the boke can ytell,
Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell.

(Quod Pandarus) All this know I my selve,
And al th' assiege of Thebis and the care,
For herof ben there makid bokis twelve:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare:
Do' way your barbe, and shew your face bare;
Do' way your boke: rise up and let us daunce,
And let us done to May some observaunce.

Eighe! God forbid! (quod she) What! be ye
mad?

Is that a widowe's life, so God you save?

Parde you makin me right sore adrad;

Ye bene so wilde it semith as ye rave:

It sat me wel bettir aie in a cave

To bide, and rede on holy saintis lives:

Let maidins gon to daunce and yongè wivès,

As evir thrive I (quod this Pandarus)

Yet coude I tel a thing to don you play.

Now uncle dere (quod she) tellith it us

For Godd'is love: is than th' assiege aweie?

I am of Grekis ferde so that I deie.

Nay, nay, (quod he) as evir mote I thrive

It is a thing wel bettir than suche five.

Ye, holy God! (quod she) what thing is that?

What! bettir than suche five? Eighe! nay iwis

For al this world ne can I redin what

It should yben: some jape I trowe it is;

And but your selvin tell us what it is

My wit is for to' arede it al to lene:

As helpe me God I n'ot what that ye mene.

And I your borow; ne ner shal (quod he)

This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thrive.

And why so, uncle mine, why so? (quod she.)

By God (quod he) that wol I tel as blive,

For proudir woman is there none on live,

And ye it wiste, in al the toun of Troie :
I ne jape nat, so evir have I joie.

Tho gan she to wondrin more than before
A thousande folde, and doune her eyin cast,
For nevir sithe the time that she was bore
To knowin thing desirid she so fast,
And with a like she said him at the last,
Now, uncle mine, I n'il you not displese,
Nor askin that that may do you disese.

So aftir this with many wordis glade
And frendly talis, and with mery chere,
Of this and that thei speke, and gonnon wade
In many an unkouth, glad, and depe, matere,
As frendis done whan thei ben met ifere,
Til she gan askin him how Hector ferde,
That was the toun's wall and Grekis yerde.

Ful wel, I thanke it God, saide Pandarus,
Save in his arme he hath a litle wounde;
And eke his freshe brothir Troilus,
To the wise worthy Hector the secounde,
In whom that every vertue liste habounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentilnesse,
Wisedome, honour, fredome, and worthinesse.

In gode faith, eme, (quod she) that likith me
Thei farin wel; God save 'hem bothe two!
For trewliche I holde it a grete deinte
A king's sonne in armis wel to do,
And be of gode condicions therto,
For grete powir and moral vertue here
Is selde ifene in one persone ifere.

In gode faith that is sothe, (quod Pandarus)
But by my trouth the king hath sonnis twey,
That is to mene Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I should ydey
Thei ben as voide of vicis, dare I sey,
As any men that livin undir sonne;
Ther might is wide iknow and what thei conne.

Of Hector nestith nething for to tel;
In all this world there n'is a bettir knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse the wel,
And he wel more of vertue hath than might,
This knowith many' a wise and worthy knight:
And the same prife of Troilus I sey:
God helpe me so I knowe not suche twey.

Parde (quod she) of Hector that is sothe,
And of Troilus the same thing trowe I,
For dredlesse men tellith that he dothe
In armis day by day so worthily,
And berith him here at home gently
To every wight, that al prife hath he
Of them that me were levist praisid be.

Ye say right sothe iwis, (quod Pandarus)
For yesterday who so had with him ben
Mightin have wondrid upon Troilus,
For nevir yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flewe as Grekis from him gannin fleen,
And through the felde in every wight's ere
There was no crie but Troilus is there!

Now here now there he huntid 'hem so fast
There n'as but Grekis blode and Troilus;
Now him he hurt, and him al down he cast;
Aye where he went it was arrayid thus:
He was ther deth, and shelde and life for us,

That as that day ther durst him none withstonde
While that he helde his blody fwerde in honde.

Therto he is the frendlyist man
Of gret estate that er I sawe my live,
And where him liste the best felowship can
To suche as him thinkith able to thrive.
And with that word tho Pandarus as blive
He toke his leve, and said I wol gon hen.
Nay, blame have I, myne uncle, (quod she) then.

What ellith you to be thus wery sone,
And namiliche of women wol ye so?
Naie, sittith doune; parde I have to done
With you to speke of wisedome er ye go;
And every wight that was about 'hem tho
That herdè that gan ferre awaie to stonde.
While thei two had al that 'hem liste on honde.

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estate and of her governaunce,
(Quod Pandarus) Now time is that I wende,
But yet I say Arisith, let us daunce
And caste your widowe's habite to mischaunce;
What liste you thus your selfe to disfigure,
Sithe you is tidde so glad an avinture?

But wel bethought; for love of God (quod she)
Shal I nat wetin what ye mene of this?
No, this thing askith lesir tho quod he)
And eke it me would full muche greve iwis
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis:
Yet were it bette my tonge to holdin stil
Than say a sothe that were ayenst your wil.

For, nece myne, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that makith the thonde'ring,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living,
Withoutin paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothist am to greve,
And that ye wetin wel your selfe I leve.

Iwis, mine uncle, (quod she) graunt mercy!
Your frendship have I foundin evir yet;
I am to no man beholdin trewly
So muche as you, and have so litil quit;
And with the grace of God emforth my wit
As in my gilte I shal you ner offende
And if I have er this I wol amende,

But for the love of God I you beseeche,
As ye be he that I love most and triste,
Let be to me your fremid manir speche,
And saie to me your nece what so you list.
And with that worde her uncle anon her kist,
And sayid, Gladly, my leve nece so dere!
Take it for gode that I shal say you here.

With that she gan her eyin doune to caste,
And Pandarus to coughe began a lite,
And sayid, Nece, alway, lo! to the laste,
How so it be that some 'men hem delite
With subtil art ther talis for t' endite,
Yet for al that in ther entencion
Ther tale is all for some conclusion.

And sithe the end is every tal's strength,
And this matir is so behovily,
What should I paint or drawin it on length
To you that ben my frende so faithfully?
And with that worde he gan right inwardly

Beholdin her, and lokin in her face,
And faide, On fuche a mirrour muche gode grace!

Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Ought harde or make a proceſſe any while,
She ſhal no favour have therin but lite,
And trowe I would her in my wil begile,
For tendir wittis wenin al be wile
Wher as thei con nat plainliche undirſtond;
Forthy her wit to ſounin wol I fonde;

And lokid on hir in a beſy wiſe,
And ſhe was ware that he behelde her ſo:
Ah, Lorde! (quod ſhe) ſo faſte ye me aviſe,
Sawe ye me ner er now? what, ſay ye no?
Yes, yes, (quod he) and bet wol er I go;
But by my trouth I thoughtin nowe if ye
Be fortunate, for now men ſhall it ſe.

For every wight ſome godely avinture
Somtime is ſhape, if he it can receive,
But if that he n'il take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weive,
I.e., neither caſe nor Fortune him deceive,
But right his owne ſlouth and wretchidneſſe;
And fuche a wight is for to blame I geſſe.

Gode avinture, o bellè nece! have ye
Full lightly foundin, and ye conne it take;
And for the love of God and eke of me
Catche it anone, leſt avinture yſlake:
What ſhould I lengir proceſſe of it make?
Yeve me your hond, for in this world is none,
If that you liſt, a wight ſo well begon.

And ſithe I ſpeke of gode entencioun,
As I to you have tolde wel here beforne,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As any cature in the worlde iborne,
By al the othis that I have you ſworne
And ye be wrothe therfore, or wene I lie,
Ne ſhal I never ſene you eſte with eie.

Beth nat agaſte, ne quakith nat; wherto?
Ne chaungith nat for fere ſo your hewe,
For hardily the worſt of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to you newe,
Yet truſt alwaie ye ſhal me findin trewe;
And were it thing that me thought unfitting
To you ne would I no ſuch talis bring.

Nowe, my gode eme, for Godd'is love I pray
(Quod ſhe) come of and tel me what it is,
For bothe I am agaſt what ye wol ſay,
And eke me longith it to wit iwis,
For whethir it be wel or be amis
Say on; let me not in this fere ydwel.
So wol I done: now herkenith I ſhal tel.

Now nece mine, the king'is owne dere ſonne,
The gode, the wiſe, the worthy, freſh and fre,
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne,
The noble Troilus, ſo lovith the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane ybe.
Lo! here is al: what ſhouldin I more ſey?
Doth what you liſt to make him live or dey.

But if ye let him dye I wol ſtervin,
Have here my trouthè, nece, I n'il not lien,
Al ſhould I with this knife my throte kervin:
With that the teris burſt out of his eyen,
And faide, If that ye done us both to dien

Thus giltileſſe, than have ye fiſhid faire;
What mendeth it you though that we both apaire?

Alas! he whiche that is my lorde ſo dere
That trewe man, that noble gentle knight,
That naught deſirith but your frendly chere,
I ſe him dyin, there he goth upright,
And haſtith him with al his fullè might
For to ben ſlaine, if his fortune aſſente:
Alas that God you fuche a beaute ſente!

If it be ſo that ye ſo cruil be
That of his deth you liſtith nought to retch,
That is ſo trewe and worthy as we ſe,
No more than of a japor or a wretch,
If ye be fuche, your beaute may nat ſtretch
To make amendes of ſo cruill a dede:

Aviſement is gode before the nede.

Wo worthe the faire gemme that is vertuleſſe!
Wo worthe that herbe alſo that dothe no bote!
Wo worth the beaute that is routhèleſſe!
Wo worth that wight that trede eche undir fote!
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote,
If therwithal in you ne be no routhè,
Than is it harme ye livin, by my trouthe.

And alſo thinke wel that this is no gaude,
For me were levir thou, and I, and he,
Were hongid than that I ſhould ben his baude,
As high as men might on us al iſe:
I am thine eme; the ſhame were unto me
As wel as the if that I ſhould aſſent
Through mine abet that he thine honour ſhent.

Now undirſtonde, for I you nought require
To binde you to him thorough no beheſt
Save one, that ye makin him bettir chere
Than ye han don er this and more feſte,
So that his life be ſavid at the leſte
This al and ſome is plainly our entente:
God helpe me ſo I nevir othir mente.

Lo! this requere is nought but ſkil iwis,
Ne doute of reſon parde is there none:
I ſet the worſt that ye dredin; this is,
Men would wondir to ſene him come and gone:
Ther ayeniſt anſwere I thus anone,
That every wight, but he be ſole of kinde,
Wol deme it love of frendſhip in his minde.

What! who wol demin though he ſe a man
To temple gon that he th' imagis eteth?
Thinke eke howe wel and wiſely that he can
Governe himſelfe that he nothing foryeteth,
That wher he cometh he pris and thonk him
And eke therto he ſhal come here ſo ſelde [geteth;
What force were it though all the toun behelde?

Suche love of frendes reignith in al this toun:
And wrie you in that mantil evirmo;
And God ſo wiſe be my ſalvacoun
As I have faide your beſt is to do ſo.
But, gode nece, alway for to ſtint his wo
So let your daungir fugrid ben alite.
That of his deth ye be not al to wite.

Creſeidè, which that herde him in this wiſe,
Thought I ſhal ſele what he menith iwis.
Now eme, (quod ſhe) what wouldin ye deviſe?
What is youre rede that I ſhould don of this?
That is wel ſaid, quod he: certaine beſt is

That ye him love aien for his loving,
As love for love is skilful guerdoning.

Thinke eke how elde wastith every hour
In eche of you a part of your beaute,
And therefore er that age doth the devour
Go love, for olde there woll no wight love the.
Let this proverbe a lore' unto you be,
To late iware, quod Beaute, when it passe,
And elde ydauntith daungir at the lasse.

The king's is fole is wont to crie aloude,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
So longè mote ye livin, and all proude,
Til crow'is fete growin undir your cie,
And sende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may se your face a morrowe:
Nece, I bid him wishin you no more sorowe.

With this he stinte, and cast adoune the hed,
And she began to brest and wepe anone,
And faide, Alas for wo! why n'ere I ded?
For of this world the faith is al agone:
Alas! what shuldin straunge unto me done
When he that for my bestè frende I wende
Redith me love who shulde it me defende?

Alas! I would have trustid doutiles
That if that I through my disavinture
Had lovid eithir him or Achilles,
Hector, or any othir manir cature,
Ye n'old have had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwaie had me in repreve:
This false worlde, alas! who may it leve?

What! is this al the joy and al the fest?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful cas?
Is this the very mede of your behest?
Is this al paintid processe said (alas!)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredeful case for me purvey,
For so astonied am I that I dey.

With that she gan ful sorowfully to fike:
Ah! may it be no bet? (Quod Pandarus)
By God I shall no more come here this weke,
And God to-forne, that am mistrustid thus;
I se wel now ye settin lite of us
Or of our deth, alas! I, woful wretche,
Might he yet live of me were nought to retche.

O cruil god of Deth, dispitous Marte!
O Furies thre of hel! on you I crie,
So let me ner out of this house departe
Yf that I ment or harme or vilanie;
But sithe I se my lorde mote nedis die,
And I with him, here I me shrive, and sey,
That wickidly ye done us bothe to dey.

But sithe it likith you that I be ded,
By Neptunus, that god is of the Se,
Fro this forthe shal I nevir etin bred
Til that I mine own hert'is blode maie se,
For certaine I wol die as sone as he:
And up he sterte, and on his way he raught,
Til she againe him by the lappe ycaught.

Creseide, which that wel nigh starfe for fere,
So as she was aye the most ferefull wight
That mightin be, and herde eke with her ere,
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knight,
And in his prayir sawe eke non unright,

And for the harme eke that might fallin more,
She gan to rewe, and dredde her wondir fore:

And thus she thought; unhappis fallin thicke
Al day for love, and in fuche manir caas
As men ben cruill in 'hem selfe and wicke;
And if this man sle here hemselfe, alas!
In my presence, it n'il be no solas:
What men would of it deme I can nat say;
It nedith me full slichly for to play.

And with a sorowful fighe she faide thrie,
Ah, Lorde! me is betidde a fory chaunce,
For mine estate lieth in a jeopardie,
And eke mine em'is life lieth in balaunce;
But nathèlesse with Godd'is govirnaunce
I shal so done mine honour shal I kepe,
And eke his life, and stintin for to wepe.

Of barmis two the lesse is for to chese;
Yet had I levir makin him gode chere
In honour than mine em'is life to lese;
Ye faine ye nothing ellis me requere.
No, wis, (quod he) mine owne nece so dere!
Now wel, (quod she) and I wol don my paine;
I shal mine herte ayen my lust constraine.

But that I n'il nat holdin him honde,
Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
Ayenst my wil, but ellis wol I fonde,
Mine honour save, plese him fro day to day;
Therto n'olde I not onis have faide nay
But that I dredde as in my fantasie;
But *Cesse cause and aie cessith maladic.*

But here I make a protestacion
That in this processe if ye depir go
That certainly for no salvacion
Of you, though that ye stervin bothè two,
Though al the worlde on o day be my fo,
Ne shal I ner on him have othir routhe.
I graunt it wel (quod Pandarus) by my trouthe.

But maie I trustin well to you (quod he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holdin truely unto me?
Ye, doubtiles, quod she, myne uncle dere!
Ne that I shall have cause in this matere
(Quod he) to plain or astir you to prèche?
Why no, parde; what nedith more speche?

Tho fellin thei in othir talis glade,
Till at the last, O gode eme! (quod she tho)
For love of God, whiche that us bothe ymade,
Tell me how first ye wistin of his wo;
Wot non of it but ye? He sayid No.
Can he well speke of love, (quod she) I preie?
Tell me, for I the bet shall me purveie.

Tho Pandarus a litil gan to smile,
And sayid, By my trouth I shall now tell:
This othir daie, nat gon full longè while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I well halfe a daie to dwell,
Right for to spekin of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekis mightin disavaunce:

Sone after that begone we for to lepe
And castin with our dartis to and fro,
Till at the last he sayid he would slepe,
And on the grasse adoune he laied him tho;
And I astir gan romin to and fro,

Till that I herd, as I walkid alone,
How he began ful wofully to grone.

Tho gan I stalke him full softly behinde,
And sikirly, the sothè for to faine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to plain :
He sayid, Lorde, have routh upon my pain;
All have I ben rebell in mine entent,
Now (*mea culpa*) Lorde, I me repent.

O God ! that at thy disposicion
Ledist forth the fine by just purveiaunce
Of every wight, my lowe confession
Accept in gre, and sende me soche penaunce
As likith the; put from me disperaunce,
That maie my ghost departe alwaie fro the :
Thou be my shilde for thy benigrite.

For certis, Lorde, so sore hath she me wounded
That stode in blacke with loking of her eyen,
That to mine hert'is botome it is founded,
Through which I wot that I must nedis dien;
This is the worst, I dare me nought bewrien,
And well the hotir ben the gledis rede
That men 'hem wrien with ashin pale and ded.

With that he smote his hedde adoune anone,
And gan to muttre I nat what truely,
And I with that gan still awaie to gone,
And lete thereof as nothing wist had I,
And come again anon and stode him by,
And saied, Awake, ye slepin all to long;
It semith me nought that Love doth you wrong

That slepin so that no man maie you wake;
Who seie evir er this so dull a man?
Ye, frende, (quod he) doe ye your hedd'is ake
For love, and let me livin as I can:
But though that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce
As though he should have led the newè daunce.

This passid forth till now this othir daie
It fell that I come roming all alone
Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde; but man so fore grone
Ne herd I nevir; and what was his mone
Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
All sodainly he left his complaining,

Of whiche I toke somewhat suspection,
And nere I come, and founde him wepè sore;
And God so wise be my salvacion
As I had nevir routh of nothing more,
For neithir with engine ne with no lore
Unnethis might I fro the deth him kepe,
That yet fele I mine herte for him wepe.

And God wot nevir sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preche,
Ne nevir was to wight so depe ysworne,
Er he me told who might yben his leche;
But not to you rehersin at his speche,
Or all his wofull wordis for to sowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone;

But for to save his life, and ellis nought,
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven;
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth that he and I maie liven.
Now have I plat to you mine herte yshriven,

And sith ye wote that mine entent is clene
Take hede thereof, for none evill I mene.

And right gode thrift I pray to God have ye
That han soche one icaught withoutin net;
And be ye wife, as ye be faire to se;
Well in the ring than is the rubie set:
There werin nevir two so well imet
Whan ye ben his all whole as he is your:
The mighty God us grant to se that hour!

Naie, thereof spake I nat. A ha! (quod she)
As helpe me God ye shendin every dele,
A, mercie, derè nece! anon (quod he)
What so I spake I ment it nought but wele,
By Mars the god that helmid is of stele:
Now beth not wroth, my blode, my nece dere!
Now well (quod she) foryevin be it here.

With this he toke his leve, and home he went;
Ye, Lorde, how he was glad and well bigon!
Creseide arose, no lengir she ne stent,
But streight into her closet went anon,
And set her doune as still as any stone,
And every worde gan up and doune to winde
That he had saied as it came her to minde.

And woxe somedeles astonied in her thought
Right for the newè case; but whan that she
Was full avisid, tho found she right nought
Of perill why that she oughte aferde be,
For man maie love of possibilitie
A woman so that his herte maie to brest
And she nat love ayen but if her left.

But as she sat alone and thoughtè thus,
In field arose a skirmish all without,
And men cried in the strete, Se! Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekis rout:
With that gonne all her meine for to shout
A! go we se; cast up the gatis wide,
For through this strete he mote to paleis ride,

For othir waie is fro the yatis none
Of Dardanus, there opin is the cheine;
With that come he and all his folke anone
And esie pace riding in routis tweine,
Right as his happie daie was (sothe to seine)
For whiche men faith maie not distourbid be
That shal betidin of necessite.

This Troilus sat on his baie stede
All armid save his hedde full richily,
And woundid was his horse, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rode a pace full softly;
But soche a knightly sight, lo! truily
As was on him was nat withoutin faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of Battaile.

So like a man of armis and a knight
He was to sene, fulfilled of high prowesse,
For bothe he had a bodie and a might
To doen that thing as well as hardinesse,
And eke to sene him in his gerè dresse,
So freshe, so yong, so weldy, semid he,
It was an hevin on him for to se

His helme to hewin was in twentie places,
That by a tiffue hong his backe behinde,
His shelde to dashed with swardis and with maces,
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirlid had both horne, and nerse, and rinde;

And aie the peple cried, Here cometh our joie,
And next his brothir holdir up of Troie!

For which he wext a little redde for shame
When he so herd the peple on him crien,
That to beholde it was a noble game
Now sobirliche ne cast adoune his eyen.
Creseide anon gan all his chere espie,
And let it in her herte so softly sinke
That to her self she sayed, Ho! give me drinke.

For of her owne thought she woxe al redde,
Remembring her right thus, lo! this is he
Whiche that mine uncle swereth he mote be dedde
But I on him have mercie and pite:
And with that ilke thought for pure shame she
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
While he and all the peple forth by past:

And gan to cast and rollin up and down
Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estate, and also his renoun,
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse;
But moste her favour was, for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To slaen soche one, if that he mentè trouth.

Now might some envious wight janglin thus,
This was a sodain love; how might it be
That she so lightly lovid Troilus,
Right at the first sight of him? Yea, parde.
Now whofo saied so mote he nevir the,
For every thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought withoutin any drede.

For I saie nat that she so sodenly
Yafe him her love, but that she gan encline
To liken' him tho, and I have told you why;
And astir that his manhode and his pine
Made love within her herte for to mine,
For whiche by processe and by gode service
He wanne her love, and in no sodain wise.

And also blisful Venus wele arayed
Satte in her sevint house of hevin tho
Disposid wele, and with aspectis payed,
To helpin sely Troilus of his wo;
And, sothe to sayne, she n'as nat all a foe
To Troilus in hys natyvyte,
God wote that wele the sonir sped in he.

Now let us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That ridith forth, and let us tourne fast
Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full lowe
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Wheron she would apoinct her at the last,
If it so were her eme ne would ycesse
For Troilus upon her for to presse.

And, Lorde! so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter of whiche I have you told,
And what to doen best were, and what eschue,
That platid she ful oft in many fold;
Now was her herte warme, now was it cold;
And what she thought of somewhat shal I write
As mine auethour listith to me t'endite.

She thought wele first that Troilus person
She knewe by sight, and eke his gentilnesse,
And thus she said, All were it nought to doen
To graunt him love, yet for his worthinesse
It wer honor with plaie and with gladnesse

In honeste with such a lorde to dele
For mine estate and also for his hele.

Eke well wote I my king's sonne is he;
And sith he hath to se me soche delite,
If I would utterliche his sight yflie,
Par'aventure he might have me in dispite,
Thorough whiche I might stond in worse plite;
Now were I not wise me hate to purchase,
Withoutin nede, there I maie stand in grace.

In every thing I wot there lieth mesure;
For though a man forbidith dronkinesse,
He nought forbiddith that every cature
Be drinkileffe for alwaie, as I gesse;
Eke sith I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
Sith it is so he menith in gode wise.

And eke I knowe of longè time agone
His thewis gode, and that he n'is not nice;
No vauntour saine men certain he is none;
To wise is he to doen so grete a vice,
Ne als I n'ill him nevir so cherice
That he shall make a vaunt by justè cause;
He shall me nevir binde in soche a clause.

Now set a case, the hardist is iwis,
Men mightin demin that he lovith me;
What dishonour were it unto me this?
Maie I him let of that? why naie, parde;
I knowe also, and alwaie here and se,
Men lovin women al this toune about;
Be thei the wers? why naie, withoutin doubt;

I thinke eke how he worthy is to have
Of all this noble toune the thriftyist
That woman is, if she her honour save,
For out and out he is the worthyist
Save only Hector, whiche that is the best;
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure;
But soche is love, and eke mine avinture.

Ne me to love a wondir is it nought,
For well wote I my self, so God me spede,
All woll I that no man wist of this thought;
I am one of the fairist out of drede,
And godelyist, who so that takith hede,
And so men saine, in all the toune of Troie;
What wondir is though he of me have joie?

I am mine owne woman, well at ese,
I thanke it God, as astir mine estate,
Right yong, and stond untied in lustie lese,
Withoutin jelousie, and soche debate;
Shall no husbonde saine unto me Checke mate,
For either thei ben full of jelousie,
Or maistirfull, or lovin novelrie.

What shall I doen? to what fine live I thus?
Shall I not love in case if that me lest?
What? pardieux I am not religious;
And though that I mine herte set at rest
Upon this knight, that is the worthiest,
And kepe alwaie mine honor and my name,
By all right it maie doe to me no shame.

But right as whan the sunne shinith bright
In March, that chaungith oftintime his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
Whiche ovirprat the sunne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan through her soule pare

That ovirspradde her brighte thoughtis all,
So that for fere a moste she gan to fall.

That thought was this; Alas! sith I am fre
Should I now love and put in jeopardie
My sikirnesse, and thrallin libertie?
Alas! how durst I thinkin that folie?
Maie I not well in othir folke aspie
Ther dredfull joie, ther constreint and ther pain?
Ther lovith non that ne hath why to plain?

For love is yet the moste stormie life
Right of himself that evir was begonne,
For ever some mistrust or some nice strife
There is in love, some cloud ovir the sunne;
Thereto we wretchid women nothing conne
Whan us is wo but wepe, and sit, and thinke:
Our wretche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

Also these wickid tonguis ben so prest
To speke us harme, eke men ben so untrue,
That right anon as cessid is ther lest
So cessith love, and forth to love anewe:
But *Harme adoe is doen, who so it rue;*
For though these men for love 'hem first to rende,
Full sharp beginning brekith este at ende.

How oftin time hath it yknowin ben
The treson that to women hath be doe!
To what fine is soche love I can not sene,
Or where becomith it whan it is go
There is no wight that wote I trowè so;
Wher it becometh lo no wight on it sporneth;
That erst was nothing into nothing turneth.

How busie (if I love) eke must I be
To plesin 'hem that jangle' of love and deme,
And coyen 'hem that thei saie no harm of me!
For though there be no cause yet 'hem may seme
Al be for harme that folke ther frendis queme;
And who maie stoppin every wickid tong
Or sounne of bellis while that thei ben rong?

And after that her thought gan for to clere,
And saied, *He whiche that nothing undirtaketh*
Nothing achewith, be him loth or dere;
And with an othir thought her hert yquaketh;
Than slepith hope, and astir drede awaketh;
Now hote now cold: but thus betwixin twey
She rist her up and went her for to pley.

Adoune the staire anon right tho she went
Into her gardine, with her necis thre,
And up and down thei madin many' a went
Flexippe' and she, Tarbe' and Antigone,
To playin, that it joie was to se,
And othir of her women a grete rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about.

This yerde was large, and railed al the aleyes,
And shadowed wel with blos'omy bowis grene,
And benchid newe, and fondid all the weyes,
In whiche she walkith arme in arme betwene,
Till at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on a Trojan song to singin clere,
That it an hevin was her voice to here.

She saied, O Love! to whom I have and shal
Ben humble subject, true in mine entent,
As I best can to you, Lorde, yeve I all
For evirmore mine hert'is love to rent,
For nevir yet thy grace to no wight sent

So blisfull cause as me, my life to lede
In allè joie and suretie out of drede.

The blisful God hath me so well beset
In love iwis, that all that berith life
Imagin ne could how to be bet;
For, Lorde, withoutin jelousie or strife
I love one whiche that moste is ententise
To servin well, unwerily' or unfained,
That evir was, and lest with harme distained,
As he that is the well of worthinesse,
Of trouth the ground, mirrour of godelihedde,
Of wit Apollo, stone of sikirnesse,
Of virtue rote, of luste findir and hedde,
Thorough whiche is all sorowe fro me dedde:
Iwis I love him best, so doeth he me;
Now gode thrift have he where so er he be;

Whom should I thankin but you, god of Love,
Of all this blisse in whiche to bathe I ginne?
And thankid be ye, Lorde, for that I love:
This is the righte life that I am inne,
To flemin all manir of vice and finne;
This doeth me so to vertue for to' entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that saith that for to love is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse,
He either is envious or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his shreudenesse
To lovin; for soche manir folke I gesse
Diffamin Love as nothing of him knowe;
They speke of Love, but nevir bent his bowe.

What is the sunne worse of his kinde right
Though that a man for feblesse of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright?
Or love the worse that wretchis on it crien?
No wele is worth that maie no sorowe drien;
And forthy, *Who that bath an bedde of verre*
Fro cast of stonis ware him in the werre.

But I with al mine herte and all my might,
As I have saied, woll love unto my last
My owne dere herte, and all mine ownè knight,
In whiche mine herte ygrowin is so fast,
And his in me, that it shall evir last:
All did I dred at first to love begin
Now wote I well there is no pain therein.

And of her song right with that worde she stent,
And therewithall, Now necè (quod Cresseide)
Who made this song now with so gode entent?
Antigone answerde anon, and saide,
Madame, iwis it was the godelyist maide,
Of grete estate, in all the tounne of Troie,
Who led her life in moste honour and joie.

Forsothe so it ysemith by her song,
Quod tho Cresseide, and gan therwith to fike,
And sayid, Lorde! is there soche blisse emong
These lovirs, as thei can so faire endite?
Ye, wisse, quod freshe Antigone the white,
For all the folke that have or ben on live
Ne couldin well the blisse of love discrive.

But wenin ye that every wretche wote
The parsite blisse of love? why naie, iwis;
Thei wenin all be love if one be hote;
Do' waie, do' waie! thei wote nothing of this:
Men mote askin of sainctis if it is

Ought faire in heven? add why? for thei can tell;
And askin fendes if it be foule in hell?

Creseide unto the purpose nought answerde,
But saied, Iwis it woll be night as faste;
But every worde whiche that she of her herde
She gan to printin in her herte faste,
And aie gan love her lasse for to agaste
Than' it did erst, and linkin in her herte,
That she wax somewhat able to converte.

The day'is honour and the heven'is eye,
The night'is foe, all this clepe I the sonne,
Can westrin fast, and downward for to wrie,
As he that had his day'is course ironne,
And white thingis woxin all dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and sterris for to apere,
That she and all her folke in went isere.

So whan it likid her to gon to reste,
And voidid werin thei that voidin ought,
She sayid, that to slepin well her leste;
Her women sone unto her bedde her brought:
Whan al was hush't, than laie she stil and thought
Of all this thing the manir and the wise;
Reherce it nedith not, for ye ben wise.

A nightingale upon a cedre grene
Undir the chambir wall there as she laie
Full loude yfong ayen the monè shene,
Par'aventure in his bird'is wise a laie
Of love, that made her herte freshe and gaie;
That herkenid she so long in gode entent
Till at the last the dedde slepe her hent.

And as she slept anon right tho her met
How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
Undir her brest his longè clawis set,
And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
And did his herte into her brest to gon,
Of which she nought agrose ne nothing smert,
And forthe he flyith with herte left for hert.

Now let her slepe, and we our talis holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden
Fro the scarmishe of the whiche I have tolde,
And in his chambir fate and hath abidden
Til two or thre of his messangirs yeden
For Pandarus, and soughtin him full fast
Til thei him found, and brought him at the last.

This Pandarus came leping in at ones,
And sayid thus, Who hath ben well ibete
To daie with fwerdis and with slongè stones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?
And gan to jape, and saied, Lorde how ye swete!
But rise and let us soupe and go to reste:
And he answerde him, Doe we as the leste.

With all the hast godely as thei might
Thei sped 'hem fro the soupir and to bedde,
And every wight out at the dore him dight,
And wher' him list upon his waie he sped,
But Troilus thought that his herte bledde
For wo til that he herdè some tiding,
And sayid, Frende, shall I now wepe or sing?

(Quod Pandarus) Be still and let me slepe,
And doe' on thy hode, thine nedis spedde ybe,
And chese if thou wolt sing, or daunce, or lepe:
At short wordis, thou shalt trowe all by me,
For, Sir, my nece woll doin well by the,

And love the best, by God and by my trothe,
But lacke of pursute marre it in thy slothe.

For thus ferforth I have thy werke begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her love of frendship have I to the won,
And therto hath she laid her faith to borow;
Algate o fote is hameled of thy sorowe:
What should I lengir sermon of it holde?
As ye have herd before all he him tolde.

But right as flouris through the cold of night
Iclosid stoupin in ther stalkis lowe,
Redressin 'hem ayen the sunnè bright,
And spredin in ther kindè course by rowe,
Right so gan tho his eyin up to throwe
This Troilus, and saied, O Venus dere!
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here.

And to Pandare he held up both his hondes,
And sayid, Lorde, all thine be that I have,
For I am whole, and brostin ben my bondes:
A thousande Troyis who so that me yave
Eche astir othir, God so wis me save,
Ne might not me so gladin: lo! mine hert
It spredith so for joie it woll to sterte.

But, Lorde, how shall I doen? how shall I liven?
Whan shall I next my own dere herte yse?
How shall this longè time awaie be driven
Til that thou be ayen at her fro me?
Thou maiest answer, Abide, abide; but *He*
That bangith by the necke, the sothe to saine,
In grete disese abidith for the paine.

All esily now, for the love of Marte,
(Quod Pandarus) for every thing hath time,
So long abide till that the night departe,
For all so sikir as thou liest here by' me,
And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke somewhat as I shall saie,
Or on some othir wight this chargè laie.

For parde God wot I have evir yet
Ben redy the to serve, and to this night
Have I not fainid, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might;
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright;
And if thou n'iltè, wite all thy selfe the care:
On me is nought along thine evill fare.

I wote well that thou wisir art than I
A thousande folde; but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I would uttirly
Right of mine ownè honde write to her now
A lettir, in whiche I would telle her how
I farde amisse, and her beseche of routh:
Now helpe thy self, and leve it for no slouth.

And I my self shall therwith to her gon,
And whan thou wost that I am with her there
Worthe thou up on a coursir right anon,
Ye hardily, and that in thy best gere,
And ride forth by the place as naught sie were,
And thou shalt finde us (if I maie) sitting
At some windowe into the strete looking.

And if the list than maiest thou us salve,
And upon me make thou thy countenance,
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought; God shild us fro mischaunce!
Ride forth thy waie and hold thy govirnaunce;

And we shall speke of the somewhat I trow,
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eris glow.

Touching thy lettir, thou art wise enough;
I wot thou n'lte it deigneliche endite
As make it with these argumentis tough,
Ne scriven-like, or craftily it write;
Beblotte it with thy teris eke alite,
And if thou write a godely worde all soft,
Though it be gode reherce it not to oft:

For though that the best harpoure upon live
Would on the best founid jolly harpe
That evir was with all his fingirs five
Touche aie o string, or aie o warble harpe,
Were his naillis poinctid nevir so sharpe,
It shuldè makin every wight to dull
To here his gle and of his strokis full.

Ne jombre no discordaunt thing isere,
As thus, to usin termis of phisike;
In lov'is termis holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like;
For if a p'aintir would ypainte a pike
With ass'is fete, and heddid as an ape,
It cordith not, so were it but a jape.

This counsaile likid well to Troilus,
But as a dredfull lovir he saied this;
Alas! my derè brothir Pandarus!
I am ashamid for to write iwis,
Lest of mine ignorance I saied amis,
Or that she n'olde it for dispite receive;
Than wer I ded, there might it nothing weve.

To that Pandare answerid, If the lest
Doe that I saie, and let me therewith gon,
For, by that Lorde that formid est and west,
I hope of it to bring answere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou n'lte non
Let be, and forie mote he ben his live
Ayenst thy lust that helpith the to thrive.

(Quod Troilus) Depardieux I assent;
Sithe that the liste I woll arise and write,
And blisfull God praie I with gode entent.
The viage and lettir I shall endite
So spede it, and thou Minerva the White
Yeve thou me witte my lettir to devise;
And set him down, and wrote right in this wise.

First he gan her his right ladiè to call,
His hert'is life, his lust, his sorowe's leche,
His blisse, and eche these othir termis all
That in soche case ye lovirs allè seche,
And in full humble wise, as in his speche,
He gan him recommaunde unto her grace;
To tell all how it askith mokill space.

And astir this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That love it made, or ellis must he die,
And pitously gan mercie for to crie;
And astir that he saied (and lied full loude)
Himself was little worthe, and lasse he coude,

And that she would have his conning excused,
That litil was; and eke he dradde her so,
And his unworthinesse aie he accused;
And astir that than gan he tel his wo;
But that was endeleffe withoutin ho;

And said, he would in trouth alway him holde,
And redde it ovre', and gan the lettre folde:

And with his saltè teris gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wexe delivirliche and rathe,
Therwith a thousande timis er he lette
He kiste the lettre whan he had it shette,
And saide, Lettre, a blisful destine
The shapin is; my lady shal the se!

This Pandare toke the lettre, and betime
A morowe to his nec'is paleis sterte,
And fast he swore that it was passid prime,
And gan to jape, and saide, Iwis mine herte
So freshe it is (although it fore smerte)
I maie nat slepe nevir a May'is morowe,
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorowe.

Creseide, whan that she her uncle herde,
With dredeful herte, and desirous to here
The cause of his comming, right thus answerde;
Now by your faith, mine uncle (quod she) dere!
What manir windis gidith you now here?
Tell us your joly wo and your penaunce;
How serforth be ye put in lov'is daunce?

By God (quod he) I hop alwaie behinde,
And she to laugh as though her herte to breste.
(Quod Pandarus) Loke alwaie that ye finde
Game in mine hode, but herkeneth if you lest;
Ther is right now come to the tounce a gest,
A Greke espie, and tellith newe thinges,
For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges.

Into the gardin go we', and ye shal here
Al privily of this a long sermoun.
With that thei wentin arme in arme isere
Into the gardin fro the chambre down;
And what that he so ferre was that the soun
Of that which he spake no man herin might
He said her thus, and out the lettir plight:

Lo! he that is al wholly your'is fre
Him recommaundith lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this letter here by me;
Avisth you on it whan ye han space,
And of some godely answere you purchase,
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to faine,
He maie not longè livin for his paine.

Ful dredefully tho gan she stondin stil,
And toke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaungin, and said, Scribe nor bil,
For love of God, that touchith such matere,
Ne bring me none; and also, uncle dere!
To mine estate have more regarde I pray
Than to his lust: what shouldin I more say?

And lokith now if this be reso'nable,
And lettith not for favour ne for slouth;
To faine a sothe, now is it convenable
To mine estate, by God and by my trouthe,
To take it, or to havin of him routhe
In harming of my selfe or in repreve?
Beare it ayen for him that ye on leve.

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,
And sayid, Now is this the gretist wonder
That evir I sawe; let be this nice fare:
To dethè mote I smittin be with thonder
Yf for the cite whiche that stondith yonder

Would I a lettir to you bring or take
To harme of you : what list you thus it make ?

But thus ye farin well nigh all and some,
That he that most desirith you to serve
Of him ye retchin lest where he become,
And whethir that he live or ellis sterue;
But for al that, that er I maie deserve
Refuse it not, (quod he) and hente her fast,
And in her bosome doune the lettir thrust,

And said her, Now cast it awaie anon
That folke maie sene and gaurin on us twey.
(Quod she) I can abide till thei be gon;
And gan to smile, and said him, Eme, I pray
Suche answere as you list your selfe purvey,
For truily I wol no lettir write.

No, than wol I, (quod he) so ye endite.

Therwith she lough, and sayid, Go we dine;
And he gan at himselfe to japiu faste,
And sayid, Nece, I have so gret a pine
For love, that everiche othir daie I faste;
And gan his bestè japis forth to caste,
And made her so to laugh at his folie
That she for laughtir wenid for to die.

And whan that she was comen' into the hall
Now eme, (quod she) we wol go dine anon;
And gan some of her women to her call,
And streight into her chambre gan she gone;
But of her besineffis this was one
Amongis othir thingis, out of drede
Ful privily this lettir for to rede.

Avifid word by word in every line,
And founde no lacke; she thought he coude his
And put it up, and went her in to dine; [gode,
And Pandarus, that in a studie stode,
Er he was ware she toke him by the hode,
And sayid, Ye were caught er that ye wiste.
I vouchsafe, (quod he) do whatere you liste.

Tho within thei, and set 'hem doune and ete;
And astir none ful slyghly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the windowe nie the strete,
And sayid, Nece, who hath arayid thus
The yondir house that stante aforyene us?
Which house? (quod she) and gan for to beholde,
And knewe it wel, and whose it was him tolde:

And fellin forth in speche of thingis smale,
And sat in the windowe bothè twey.
Whan Pandarus sawe time unto his tale,
And sawe well that her folke wer al away,
Now, nece mine, tel on (quod he) I prey;
How likith you the lettre that ye wot?
Can he thereon? for by my trouth I n'ot.

Therwith al rosy hewid tho woxe she,
And gan to hum, and sayid, So I trowe.
Aquite him wel for Godd'is love (quod he)
My selfe tomedis woll the lettre sowe,
And helde his hondis up, and fell on knowe.
Nowe gode nece, be it nevir so lite,
Yeve me the labour it to sowe and plite.

Ye, for I can so writin (quod she) tho,
And eke I n'ot what I should to him say.
Naie, nece, quod Pandarus, saie you not so,
Yet at the lest ythonkith him I pray
Of his gode will. O doth him not to dey!

Now for the love of me, my nece dere!
Refusith not at this time my praiere.

Depardieux! (quod she) God leve al be wele;
God helpe me so this is the first lettre
That er I wrote, ye al or any deie;
And into' a closet for to' avise her bettre
She went alone, and gan her herte unfettere
Out of Disdain'is prison but a lite,
And set her doun and gan a lettre write,

Of whiche to tel in shorte is mine entent
Th' effecte as ferre as I can undirstonde:
She thonkid him of al that he wel ment
Towardis her, but holdin him in honde
She n'olde not, ne makin her selvin bonde
In love, but as his sustir him to plese
She would aie faine to done his hert an ese.

She shette it, and to Pandare in gan gon
There as he sat and lokid into strete,
And doun she set her by him on a stone
Of jaspere, upon a quishen of golde ibete,
And said, As wisely helpe me God the grete
I nevir did a thing with more paine
Than write this, to the which ye me constraine.

And toke it him: he thonkid her, and seide,
God wot of thing ful oftin lothe begonne
Comith ende gode: and nece mine Creseide,
That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yondir sonne;
For why? men faine *Impressionis light*
Ful lightly ben aie redy to the flight.

But ye han plaid the tiraunt al to longe,
And harde was it your herte for to grave;
Now stinte, that ye no longir on it honge,
Al woldin ye the forme of daungir save,
But hastith you to done him joye to have,
For trustith wel, *To long idone bardnesse*
Causith dispite ful oftin for distresse.

And right as thei declarid this matere
Lo! Troilus right at the stret'is ende
Came riding with his tenthè somme isere
Al softly, and thidirwarde gan bende
There as they fate, as was his waie to wende
To paleis warde, and Pandare him aspide,
And said, Nece, ise who comith here ride!

O flie not in! he sethe us I suppose,
Lest he may thinkin that ye him eschue.
Nay, nay, (quod she) and woxe as redde as rose;
With that he gan her humbly to falee
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewis muc,
And up his loke debonairly he cast,
And beckid on Pandare and forth by past.

God wot if he sat on his horse aright,
Or godely was besene that ilkè day;
God wot where he were like a manly knight;
What should I dretche, or tel of his aray?
Creseide, which that al these thingis sey,
To tell in shorte, her likid al isere,
His person, his aray, his loke, his chere,

His godely manir and his gentilnesse,
So well, that never sithe that she was borne
Ne haddin she suche routhe of his distresse;
And howe so she hath hard ben here before
To God hope I she hath now caught a thorne,

She shal nat pul it out this nexte wike;
God sende her mo such thornis on to pike!

Pandarus, whiche that stode her faste by,
Felte iron hotte, and he began to smite,
And seide, Nece, I praye you hertilie
Tel me that I shal askin you alite;
A woman that were of his deth to wite,
Withouten his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
Were it wel done? (quod she) Naie, by my trouth.

God help me so, (quod he) ye say me sothe,
Ye felin wel your selfe that I nought lie.
Lo! yonde he rideth, (quod she) ye, so he dothe.
Wel, quod Pandare, as I have tolde you thrie,
Let be your nicete and your folie,
And speke with him in esing of his herte:
Let nicete nat do you bothe smerte.

But theron was to hevin and to done,
Considiring al thing it maie nat be,
And why? for shame; and it were eke to sone
To grauntin him so gret a liberte,
For plainly her entent (as sayid she)
Was for to love him unwist if she might,
And guerdon him with nothing but with sight.

But Pandarus thought it shal nat be so;
If that I maie this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holdin fully yeristwo;
What should I make of this a longe sermon?
He must assent on that conclusion
As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve.

And on his way full fast homewarde he spedde,
And right for joy he felte his hert to daunce,
And Troilus he founde alone abedde,
That laie as done these lovirs, in a traunce,
Betwixin hope and derke disesperaunce;
But Pandarus right at his in comning
He song, as who saith, Lo! somewhat I bring;

And saide, Who is in his bedde so sone
Yburied thus? It am I, frende, (quod he.)
Who? Troilus! naie, helpe me so the mone,
(Quod Pandarus.) Thou shalt up rise and se
A charme that was ysent right now to the,
The whiche can helin the of thine axesse,
If thou do forthwith all thy besinesse.

Ye, through the might of God (quod Troilus.)
And Pandarus gan him the lettir take,
And saide, Parde God hath yholpin us:
Have here a light, and loke on all these blake.
But oftin gan the hert to glad and quake
Of Troilus while he it gan to rede,
So as the wordis yave him hope or drede.

But, finally, he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote, for somewhat he becheide
On which he thought he might his herte rest,
Al covired she the wordis undir shelde;
Thus to the more worthy part he him helde,
That what for hope and Pandarus becheide
His gret wo foryede he at the leste.

But as we maie al daie ourselvin se
Through more wode or cole kindlith the more fire,
Right so encrese of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful oft encrefith eke desire,
Or as an oke comith of a litil spire,

So through this lettir which that she him sent
Encrefin gan desire, of whiche he brent.

Wherefore I say alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to desirin more
Then he did erst through hope, and did his might
To presin on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writin to her of his sorowes fore
Fro day to day: he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he somewhat wrot or seide;

And did also his othir observaunces
That till a lovir longith in this caas,
And astir that his dice turnid on chaunces
So was he eithir glad, or saide Alas!
And held astir his gestis aie his pans,
And after suche answeris as he hadde
So werin his daies sory othir gladde.

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitoufly gan aie to him to plaine,
And him besought of rede and some socours;
And Pandarus, that sawe his wode paine,
Wext well nigh ded for routh, sothe for to faine,
And besely with al his hert gan caste
Some of his wo to fleen, and that as faste;

And saide, Lorde, and frende, and brothir dere!
God wot that thy disese ydothe me wo,
But wolt thou stintin al this woful chere,
And by my trouth er it be dayis two,
And God toforne, yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come into a certaine place
There as thou maiest thy selfe praien her of grace.

And certainly I n'ot if thou it woste,
But thei that ben experte in love it say,
It is one of these thingis fortherith most
A man to have a leisir for to praie,
And sikir place his wo for to bewraie,
For in gode hert it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the gittlesse in distresse.

Par'aventure thinkist thou though it be so
That Kinde would her ydone for to beginne
To have a manir routh upon my wo,
Saith Daungir Nay, thou shalt me nevir win;
So rulith she her hert is goste within
That though she bendin yet she stonte on rote;
What in effect is this unto my bote?

Thinke here ayen whan that the sturdy oke,
On which men hackith oftin for the nones,
Recevid hath the happy falling stroke,
The grete sweight makith it fall all at ones,
As done these grete rockis or these milnestones;
For swifstir course cometh thing that is of wight,
Whan it discendith, than done thingis light.

But rede that bowith doune for every blast
Ful lightly cessith winde it wol arise,
But so n'il not an oke whan it is cast,
It nedith me nought longe the for to vise;
Men shall rejoyfin of a grete emprise
Atchevid wel, and stout withoutin dout,
Al have men ben the lengir there about.

But, Troilus, now tel me if the lest
A thing whiche that I shal askin of the;
Whiche is thy brothir that thou lovist best
As in thy very hert is privite?
Iwis my brothir Deiphobus, (quod he.)

Now, (quod Pandare) er hour's twise twelve
He shal the ese unwist of it himselve.

Now let me' alone, and workin as I may,
(Quod he) and to Deiphobus went he tho,
Which had his lord and gretè frend ben aie;
Save Troilus no man he lovid so:

To tel in shorte, withoutin wordis mo,
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cause whiche that ytouchith me.

Yes, parde, (quod Deiphobus) wel thou wost
Al that evir I may, and God tofore,
Al n'ere it but for the man I love most,
My brothir Troilus; but say wherfore
It is, for sithe the day that I was bore
I n'as, ne nevir more to ben I thinke,
Ayenst a thing that mightin the forthinke.

Pandarus gan him thanke, and to him seide,
Lo! Sir, I have a lady in this toun
That is my nece, and callid is Creseide,
To whiche some men would done oppressioun,
And wrongfully have her possessioun,
Wherfore I of your lordship you besече
To ben our frende withoutin more speche.

Deiphobus him answerde, O! is nat this
That thou spekest of to me thus straungely
Creseide, my frende? Pandarus said him Yes.
Than nedith (quod Deiphobus) hardily
No more of this, for trustith wel that I
Wol be her champion with spere and yerde;
I ne rought nat though all her foes it herde.

But telle me, thou that wost all this matere,
How might I best availin now? let se.
(Quod Pandarus) If ye, my lorde so dere,
Woldin as now do this honour to me
To prayin her to morowe, lo, that she
Came unto you her plaintis to devise
Her adversaries would of it agrise.

And if I more durst prayin you as now,
And chargin you to have so grete travaile,
To have some of your brethrin here with you,
That mightin to her cause bettir availe;
Than wote I wel she mightin nevir faile
For to ben holpin, what at your instance,
What with her othir frendis govinaunce.

Deiphobus, whiche that comin was of kinde
To al honour and bounte to consente,
Answerde, It shal be done; and I can finde
Yet greater helpe to this in mine entente:
What woldest thou saine if for Helen I sent
To speke of this? I trowe it be the best,
For she may ledin Paris as her left.

Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
It nedith nat to praie him frende to be,
For I have herde him, o time and eke other,
Spekin of Creseide suche honour that he
Maie saine no bet: such hap to him hath she
It nedith nat his helpis more to crave;
He shal be suche right as we wol him have.

Speke thou thy selfe also to Troilus
On my behalfe, and praie him with us dine.
Sir, al this shal be done, (quod Pandarus)
And toke his leve, and nevir gan to fine,
But to his nec'is house as streight as line

He came, and found her fro the mete arise,
And set him down, and spake right in this wise;

He saide, O very God so have I ronne,
Lo! necè mine, se ye nat how I swete?
I n'ot whethir ye the more thanke me conne;
Be ye not ware how that false Poliphete
Is now about estsonis for to plete,
And bringin on you advocacies newe?
I? no, (quod she) and chaungid al her hewe.

What! is he more about me for to dretche,
And done me wrong? what shal I don? alas!
Yet of him selfin nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Æneas,
That ben his frendis in such manir caas;
But for the love of God, mine uncle dere!
No force of that, let him have al ifere,

Withoutin that I have inough for us.
Nay, (quod Pandare) it shal nothing be so,
For I have ben right now at Deiphobus,
At Hector, and mine othir lordis mo,
And shortly makid eche of hem his so,
That by my thrifte he shal it nevir winne
For aught he can, whan so that he beginne.

And as thei castin what was best to done
Deiphobus, of his owne curtisie,
Came her to praye in his propir persone
To holde him on the morowe companie
At dinir, whiche she ne wolde not denie,
But godely gan to his prayere obeie:
He thonkid her, and went upon his wey.

Whan this was don this Pandarus anone,
(To tellin in shorte) forth he gan to wende
To Troilus as stil as any stone,
And al this thing he tolde him orde and ende,
And how that he Deiphobus gan to blende,
And saide him, Now is time of that ye conne
To bere the belle to morow', and all is wonne.

Now speke, now pray, now pitously complaine,
Let nat for nicè shame, for drede or flouth;
Somtime a man mote tel his ownè paine;
Beleve it, and she wol have on the routh;
Thou shalt ben savid by thy faith and trouth:
But well wot I thou now art in a drede,
And what it is I lay I can arede:

Thou thinkist now how should I don al this
For by my cheris mostin folke espie
That for her love is that I fare amis,
Yet had I levre' unwist for sorow die:
Nowe thinke nat so, for thou dost gret folie,
For I right now have foundin a manere
Of sleight for to coverin al thy chere.

Thou shalt gon ovirnight, and that as blive,
Unto Deiphobus house as the to plaie,
Thy malady awaie the bette to drive;
For why? thou semist fike, the sothe to saie;
Sone after that doune in thy bedde the laie,
And saie thou maist no lengir up endure,
And lie right there and bide thine avinture.

Say that the fevir is wont the to take
The same time, and lastin till a morowe;
And let se now how well thou canst it make,
For parde fike is he that is in sorowe:
Go now, farewell, and Venus here to borowe

I hope and thou this purpose holdè ferme
Thy grace she shal the fully there conferme.

(Quod Troilus) Iwis thou alle nedelesse

Consailist me that sikeliche I me faine,

For I am like in ernest doutelèsse,

So that wel nigh I stervin for the paine.

(Quod Pandarus) Thou shalt the better plaine,

And hast the lesse nede for to counterfete,

For *Him men demin bote that men se swete.*

Lo! holde the at thy tristè close, and I

Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe ydrive:

Therwith he took his leve all softly,

And Troilus to his paleis went blive,

So glad ne was he ner in all his live,

And to Pandarus rede gan al assent,

And to Deiphobus house at night he went.

What nedith it to tellin all the chere

That Deiphobus unto his brothir made,

Or his axis, or his sikeliche manere

How men gon him with clothis for to lade

When he was laid, and how men would him glade?

But all for nought; he helde forth aie the wise

That ye han herde Pandare ere this devise.

But certaine is er Troilus him leide,

Deiphobus had praied him ovrnight

To ben a frende and helping to Creseide;

God wot that he that grauntid anon right

To ben her fullè frend with all his might:

But such a nede was it to praien him thenne

As for to biddin a wode man to renne.

The morowe came, and nighin gan the time

Of mealtide, whan that the faire Quene Helen

Shope her to ben an hour astir the prime

With Deiphobus, to whom she n'olde faine,

But as his sustir homely, sothe to faine,

She came to dinir in her plaine entent,

But God and Pandare wist al what this ment.

Came eke Creseide all innocent of this,

Antigone her nece and Tarbe also:

But flie we now prolixite best is,

For love of God, and let us fast ygo

Right to the effecte withoutin talis mo,

Why al this folke assemblid in this place,

And let us of ther saluingis pace.

Gret honour did hem Deiphobus certaine,

And fedde him wel with all that might hem like,

But evirmo, alas! was his refraine,

My godè brothir, Troilus the like,

Lithe yet; and therwithal he gan to fike,

And after that he painid him to glade

Hem as he might, and chere gode he made.

Complainid eke Helen of his sikenesse

So faithfully, that pity was to here,

And every wight gan wexin for axes

A leche anon, and saide, In this manere

Men curin folke, this charme I wol the lere;

But there sat one, al list her nat to teche,

That thought, yet best couldin I ben his leche.

Astir complaint him gonnin thei to preise,

As folke don yet whan some wight hath begon

To preise a man, and up with preise him reise

A thousande folde yet higher than the son;

He is, he can, that fewe othir lordes kon;

And Pandarus of that thei would asserme

He nought forgate ther praising to conferme.

Herde all this thing feire Creseide wel inough,

And every worde gan for to notifie,

For whiche with sobre chere her hertè lough,

For who is that ne would her glorifie

To mowin suche a knight done live or die?

But al passe I; lest ye to longe ydwell;

But for o fine is al that er I tell.

The time came fro dinir for to rise,

And as hem ought arisin everichone,

And gon a while of this and that devise;

But Pandarus brake al this speche anon,

And said to Deiphobus, Wol ye gon,

If it your will be, as I erst you prayde,

To spekin of the nedis of Creseide?

Helen, which that by the hondè her helde,

Toke first the tale, and saide, Go we blive;

And godely on Creseide she behelde,

And sayid, Jovis, let him nevir thrive

That doth you harm, and reve him sone of live,

And yeve me sorowe but he shal it rue

If that I may, and allè folke be true.

Tel thou thy nec'is case, (quod Deiphobus

To Pandarus) for thou canst best it tell.

My Lordis and my, Ladies, it stant thus;

What should I lengir (quod he) do you dwell?

He ronge hem out a proces like a bell

Upon her foe, that hight was Polyphete,

So heinous that men mightin on it spete.

Answerde of this eche worse of hem than other,

And Polyphete thei gonnin thus to warien,

And honged be suche one were he my brother,

And so he shal, for it ne maie nought varien:

What should I lengir in this tale tarien?

Plainliche al at onis thei her highten

To ben her frende in all that er thei mighten.

Spake than Helen, and said to Pandarus,

Wot aught my lord my brothir of this matere,

I mene Hector, or wote it Troilus?

He saide her Ye; but wol ye me now here?

Me thinketh thus, fith that Troilus is here

It were gode if that ye wouldin assent

She tolde him her selfe al this er she went;

For he wol have the more her grefe at herte,

Bicause lo, she a worthy lady is,

And by your wil I wol but in right sterte,

And do you wete, and that anon iwis,

If that he slepe or wol aught here of this:

And in he lept, and said him in his ere,

God have thy soule! for brought have I thy bere.

To smilin of this gan tho Troilus;

And Pandarus withoutin rekining

Out went to Helen and Deiphobus,

And said hem, So there be no tarying,

Ne more prese; he wol well that ye bring

Creseide my lady that is now here

And as he maie enduren he wol her here.

But wel ye wote the chambre is but lite,

And fewe folke may lightly make it warme;

Now lo!hith ye, for I wol have no wite.

To bring in prese that might I ydon him harme,

Or him disselin for my better arme;

Wher' it be bet she abide till eftsonis
Now lokith ye, that knowin what to don is.

I fay for me best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wendè but ye twey,
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherse her case unlike that she can sey,
And aftir this she may onis him prey
To ben gode lorde in short, and take her leve;
This may not mokill of his ese him reve.

And eke for she is straunge he woll forbere
His ese, whiche that him darin nat for you;
Eke othir thing that touchith nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it well right now,
That secrete is, and for the town's prow:
And thei, that knew nothing of his entente,
Without more to Troilus in thei wente.

Helene in all her godely softly wise
Gan him salve and womanly to plaie,
And saied, Iwis ye mote algate arise;
Now, faire brothir, be all whole I praie;
And her arme right over' his shuldir laie,
And him with all her wit to recomfort;
As she best could she gan him to disport.

So after this (quod she) We you besake,
My dere brothir! Deiphobus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To ben gode lorde and frende right hertily
Unto Creseide, whiche that certainly
Receivid wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare.

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
And all her case reherce, and that anone:
Whan it was saied, sone aftir in a while
(Quod Troilus) As sone as I maie gone
I woll right fain with all my might ben one,
Have God my trowth, her cause for to susteine:
Now good thrift have ye (quod Helen the Quene.)

(Quod Pandarus) And it your will ybe
That she maie take her leve er that she go.
O, ellis God forbid it! (tho quod he)
If that she vouchsafin for to doe so.
And with that worde (quod Troilus) Ye two,
Deiphobus and my suster lefe and dere,
To you have I to speke of a matere,

To ben avised by your rede the better;
And found (as hap was) at his bedd'is hedde
The copie of a tretise and a letter
That Hector had him sent to askin redde
If soche a man was worthy to ben dedde?
Wote I naught who, but in a griffly wise
He prayid 'hem anone on it avise.

Deiphobus gan this letter for to unfold
In ernest grete, so did Helen the Quene,
And roming outward fast it gonne beholde,

Dounward a steire, into an herber grene;
This ilke thing thei reddin 'hem betwene,
And largely the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to redin and to poure.

Now let 'hem rede, and tournè we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full faste prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the grete chambir, and that in hie,
And sayid, God save all this companie!
Come, necè mine, my ladie Quene Helen,
Abidith you, and eke my lordis twene.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardily;
The lasse presse the bettir: come forth with me,
And lokith that ye thonkin humbily
Them all thre, and whan ye maie godily
Your time ifee takith of them your leve,
Lest we to long his restis him bireve.

All innocent of Pandarus entent,
Quod tho Creseide, Go we, uncle dere!
And arme in arme inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordis and her chere;
And Pandarus in ernestfull manere
Sayid, All folke, for Godd'is love I praie,
Stinteth right here, and softly you plaie.

Avisth you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amende!
And inward thus full softly begin;
Nece, I conjure and highly you defende,
On his behalfe whiche that soule us all sende,
And in the vertue of corounis twaine,
Slea nat this man that hath for you this paine.

Fie on the devill! thinke whiche one he is,
And in what plite he lieth; come of anone;
Thinke all soche taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye bothè saine whan ye ben one;
And secondly, there yet devinith none
Upon you two, come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo! all the time is wonne.

In titiring, and pursute, and delaies,
The folke devine at wegging of a stre,
And though ye would han aftir merie daies
Than dare ye nat; and why? for she and she
Spake soche a worde; thus lokid he and he:
Lest time be losse I dare nat with you dele,
Come of therfore, and bringith him to hele.

But now to you, ye lovirs that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a carkedort,
That laie and might the whispring of 'hem here,
And thought, o Lorde! right now rennith my fort
Fully to die or have anone comfort,
And was the first time that he should her praie
Of love; o mightie God! what shall he sale?

TROILUS & CRESEIDE.

PROÆMIUM LIBRI TERTII.

O BLISSFULL light ! of whiche the bemis clere
Adornith allè the third hevin faire,
O sonn'is life ! o Jov'is doughtir dere !
Plefaunce of love ! o godely debonaire !
In gentle hertes aie redy to repaire,
O very cause of hie and of gladnesse,
Iheried be thy might and thy godenesse !

In heven and hell, in yerth and the salt se,
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne,
As man, brid, beste, fishe, herbe, and grenè tre,
Thei sele in timis with vapour eterne :
God lovith, and to love he woll naught werne ;
And in this worldè no liv'is creture
Withoutin love is wroucht or maie endure.

Ye, Jovis, first to thilke affectis glade,
Through whiche that thingis livin all and be,
Commendidin and amorous him made
On mortall thing, and as ye list aie ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversite,
And in a thousande formis doune him sent
For love in yerth, and whom you list he hent.

Ye fiers Mars, apesin of his ire,
And as you list ye makin hertes digne,
Algatis them that ye woll set a fire
Thei dredin shame, and vicis thei resigne ;
Ye doen 'hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne,

And hie or lowe afir a wight entendeth
The joyis that he hath your might it sendeth.

Ye holdin reigne and house in unite,
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also ;
Ye knowin all thilke covered qualite
Of thingis whiche that folke on wondrin so
Whan thei can nat construe how it maie go
She loveth him, or why he lovith here,
As why this fishe nat that comith to were.

Ye folke a lawe have set in universe,
And this knowe I by them that lovirs be,
That who so strivith with you hath the werse ;
Now ladie bright, for thy benignite,
At reverence of them that servin the,
Whose clerke I am, so techith me divide
Some joie of that is felt in thy service :

Ye in my nakid hert'is sentiment
Inhilde, and doe me shewe of thy swetenesse,
Caliope ! thy voice be now present,
For now is nede ; seest thou nat my distresse
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus to Venus herying ?
To whiche gladnesse who nede hath God him bring !

INCIPT LIBER TERTIUS.

L^AIE all this mene while this sad Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere,
Maseie, thought he, thus woll I saie and thus,
Thus woll I plain unto my ladie dere,
That worde is gode, and this shall be my chere,
This n'ill I nat foryetin in no wise:
God leve him werkin as he can devise.

And, Lorde! so that his herte began to quappe
Hering her come, and short gan for to fike;
And Pandaraus, that led her by the lappe,
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And saied, God doe bote on all that are fike!
Se who is here you comin to visite;
Lo! here is she that is your deth to wite.

Therwith it semid as he wept almoste.
A! a! quod Troilus, so routhfully,
Where me be wo o mightie God! thou woste;
Who is all there I se nat truily.
Sir, (quod Creseide) it is Pandare and I.
Ye, swete herte, alas! I maie nat rise
To knele, and do your honour in some wise.

And dresid him upward; and she right tho
Gan both her hondis soft upon him leic.
O, for the love of God doe ye not so
To me! (quod she.) Ey, what is this to sei!
Sir, comen' am I to you for causis tweie,
First you to thonke, and of your lordshipe eke
Continuaunce I woulde you besেকে.

This Troilus, that herd his ladie praie
Of lordship, him wox neithir quick ne dedde,
Ne might o worde for shame unto it saie,
Although, men shouldin smitin of his hedde,
But, Lorde! so he woxe sodainliche alle redde;
And, Sir, his lesson that he wende conne
To prayin her is through his wit ironne.

Creseide all this espyid well inough,
For she was wise, and loved him ner the lesse,
All n'ere he' in all aparte, or made it tough,
Or was to bolde to sing a fol'is masse;
But whan his shame began somewhat to passe
His reasons, as I maie my rimis holde,
I woll you tell as techin bokis olde.

In chaungid voice, right for his very drede,
Whiche voice eke quoke, and therto his manere
Godelie abash't, and now his hewis rede
Now pale, unto Creseide his ladie dere,
With loke doune cast and humble yoldin chere,
Lo the aldirfirst worde that him asterte
Was twyis, Mercie, mercie, my dere herte!

And stint a while, and whan he might out bring
The nexte word, was, God wote for I have
As faithfully as I have had konning
Ben your'is all, God so my soule save,
And strall, till that I wofull wight be grave,
And though I dare ne can unto you plain
Iwis I suffir not the lasse pain.

Thus moche, as now, ah womanliche wife!
I maie out bring, and if this you displese
That shall I wreke upon mine owne life
Right sone I trowe, and doe your herte an ese,
If with my deth your hert I maie aperse,
But sens that ye han herd me somewhat sey
Now retche I nevir how sone that I deie.

Therwith his manly sorowe to beholde
It might have made an herte of stone to rew,
And Pandare wept as he to watir would,
And pokid evir his nece newe and newe,
And sayid, Wo begon ben hertis true;
For love of God make of this thing an ende,
Or flea us bothe at ones er that ye wende.

I, what? (quod she,) By God and by my trouth
I n'ot nevir what ye wilne that I seie.
Eie! what? (quod he) that ye have on him routh
For Godd'is love, and doeth him nat to deie.
Now than thus, (quod she) I wollin him preie
To tellin me the fine of his entente;
Yet wist I nevir well what that he mente.

What that I mene, o my swete herte dere!
(Quod Troilus) o godely freshe and fre!
That with the streamis of your eyin clere
Ye wouldin somtime frendly on me se,
And than agrein that I maie ben he
Withoufin braunche of vice on any wise
In trouthe alwaie to do you my servise,

As to my ladie right, and chefe resort,
With all my witte and all my diligence,
And I to have right as you list comfort,
Under your yerde egall to mine offence,
As deth, if that I brekin your defence,
And that ye digne me so mochil honour
Me to commaundin aught in any hour,

And I to ben your very humble, true,
Secrete, and in my painis pacient,
And evir to desirin freshly newe
To servin, and ben aie like diligent,
And with gode herte all wholly your talent
Recevin, in gre, how fore that me smerte;
Lo, this mene I, o mine owne swete herte!

(Quod Pandarus) Lo! here an hard request,
And reso'nable a ladie for to werne;
Now necè mine, by Natall Jov'is fest,
Were I a god ye shouldin sterve as yerne,
That herin well this man wol nothing yerne
But your honor, and sene him almoſte ſterve,
And ben so lothe to suffre' him you to serve.

With that she gan her eyin on him cast
Full esily and full debonairly,
Avising her, and hied her not to fast
With ner a worde, but saied him softly,
Mine honour safe I woll well truily,
And in soche forme as ye can now devise,
Recevin him fully to my servise;

Beseching him, for Godd'is love, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillnesse,
As I well mene, eke menie well to me.
And mine honour with wit and businesse
Aie kepe; and if I maie doen him gladnesse
From hennisforthe iwis I n'ill not faine:
Now bethe all whole, no lengir ye ne plain.

But nathèlesse this warne I you, (quod she)
A king'is sonne although ye be iwis,
Yet ye shall no more have soverainte
Of me in love than right in that case is,
Ne n'ill I forbere if ye doen amis
To wrathin you, and while that ye me serve
Cherishe you right astir that ye deserve.

And shortly, dere herte, and all my knight!
Beth glad, and drawith you to lustinesse,
And I shall truely, with all my full might,
Your bittir tourin all to swetinesse,
If I be she that maie do you gladnesse
For every wo ye shall recovir blisse.

And him in armis toke, and gan him kisse.

Fill Pandarus on knees, and up his eyen
To hevin threwe, and helde his hondis hie;
Immortall god! (quod he) that maieſt not dien
Cupide, of this thou maist the glorifie,
And Venus, thou maist makin melodie:
Withoutin honde me semith that in tounne
For this miracle I here eche bell soune.

But ho! no more now of this ilke matere;
For why? this folke woll comin up anone
That have the lettir redde: lo! I hem here;
But I conjure the Creseide anone,
And thou to Troilus, whan thou maist gone,
That at mine house ye ben at my warning,
For I full well shall shapin your comming;

And esith there your hertis right inough,
And let se whiche of you shall bere the bell
To speke of love, and right therwith he lough,
For there have ye a leisir for to tell.

(Quod Troilus) How long shall I here dwell
Er this be doen? Quod he, Whan thou maieſt rise
This thing shall be right as you list devise.

With that Helen and also Deiphobus
Tho comin upward, right at the staire's ende,
And, Lorde! so tho gan gronin Troilus,
His brothir and his sullir for to blende.

(Quod Pandarus) It time is that we wende;
Take, necè mine, your leve at them all thre,
And let hem speke, and comith forth with me.

She toke her leve at hem full thriftily,
As she well could, and thei her reverence
Unto the full ydiddin hertily,
And wondir well spekin in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence,
Her govirnaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendidin, that it joie was to here.

Now let her wende unto her ownè place,
And tournin we to Troilus againe,
That gan full lightly of the lettir pace
That Deiphobus had in the gardine faine,
And of Helen and of him he would feine
Delivirid ben, and saied that him left
To slepe, and astir talis have a rest.

Helen him kist, and toke her leve as blive,
Deiphobus eke, and home went every wight,
And Pandarus as faste as he maie drive
To Troilus tho came as linè right,
And on a paillet all that glade night,
By Troilus he laie with merie chere,
And well was them that thei werein yfere.

Whan every wight was voided but thei two,
And all the doris werin fast ishet,
To tell in short, withoutin wordis mo,
This Pandarus withoutin any let
Up rose, and on his bedd'is side him set,
And gan to spekin in a sobir wise
To Troilus as I shall you devise.

Mine aldirlevist Lorde, and brothir dere!
God wot and thou that it fate me so fore
Whan I the sawe so languishing to yere
For love, of whiche thy wo woxe alwaie more,
That I with all my might and all my lore
Have ever sithin doen my businesse
To bringin the to joie out of distresse;

And have it brought to soche plite as thou wost,
So that through me thou stondist now in waie
To farin well, I saie it for no boſt;
And wost thou why? but shame it is to saie,
For the have I begon a game to plaie
Whiche that I nevir doen shall eft for other,
Altho he were a thousande fold my brother;

That is to saie, for the am I become,
Betwixin game and earnest, soche a mene
As makin women unto men to come,
All saie I nat, thou wost well what I mene,
For the have I my nece, of vicis clene,
So fully made thy gentillnesse to trist
That all shall ben right as thy selfin list.

But God, that all wotteth, take I to witnesse
That never this for covetise I wrought,
But onely for to abredge that distresse
For whiche well nie thou deydift, as me thought;
But, gode brothir, doith now as the ought
For Godd'is love, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wise, and save alwaie her name:

For wel thou woste the name as yet of her
Emonges the peple as (who saith) halowed is,
For that man is unbore, I dare well swere,
That ever wist that she yet did amis:
But wo is me that I that cause all this
Maie thinkin that she is my necè dere,
And I her eme, and traitour eke ifere.

And wer it wist that I through mine engine
Had in my nece iput this fantasie
To doen thy lust, and wholly to be thine,
Why, all the worlde wouldin upon it crie,
And sayin that I the worst trecherie
Did in this case that evir was begon,
And she fordon, and thou right nought iwom.

Wherefore er I woll ferthir gone or paas
Yet este I the beseche and fully saie
That privite go with us in this caas,
That is to saine, that thou us never wraie;
And be not wrothe though I the oftin praie
To holdin secre soche an high matter,
For skilfull is, thou woste well, my praier.

And thinke what wo there hath betid er this
For making of avauntis, as men rede,
And what mischaunce in this worlde yet there is
Fro daie to daie right for that wickid dede,
For whiche these wise clerkis that ben dede
Have evir this proverbid to us young,
That *The first vertue is to kepe the tounge.*

And n'ere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speche, I could almoſte
A thousande oldè stories the aledge
Of women losse through false and fol'is boſte;
Proverbis canst thy self inow, and woste
Ayenist that vice for to ben a blabbe
All saied men sothe, as often as thei gabbe.

O tongue, alas! so oftin here before
Hast thou made many a ladie bright of hewe
Saied, Welawaie the daie that I was bore!
And many' a maidins sorrowe for to newe;
And for the more parte all is but untrue
That men of yelp and it wer brought to preve;
Of kindè none avauntour is to leve.

Avauntour and a lier all is one,
As thus; I suppose a woman graunt me
Her love, and saith that othir woll she none,
And I am sworne to holdin it secre,
And astir I goe tell it two or thre;
I wis I am a vauntour at the lest,
And lier eke, for I breke my behest.

Now lokith than if thei be not to blame
Soche manir folk, what shal I clepe 'hem, what?
That 'hem avaunt of women, and by name,
That yet behight 'hem nevir this ne that,
Ne knowin 'hem no more than mine olde hat:
No wondir is, so God me sendin hele,
Though women dredin with us men to dele.

I saie nat this for no mistrust of you,
Ne for no wise men, but for folis nice,
And for the harme that in the worlde is now
As well for folie oft as for malice,
For well wote I that in wise folk that vice
No woman drat, if she be well avised,
For *Wise men ben by folis harme chastised.*

But now to purpose, leve brothir dere!
Have all this thing that I have saied in minde,
And kepe the close, and be now of gode chere,
For all thy daies thou shalt me true yfinde;
I shall thy processe set in soche a kinde,
And God toſorne, that it shall the suffise,
For it shall be right as thou wolt devise.

For well I wote thou menist well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully undirtake;
Thou wost eke what thy ladie grauntid the,
And daie is set the charteris to make:
Have now gode night, I maie no lengir wake,
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me sende deth or ſonè liſſe.

Who might ytellin halfe the joie or feste
Whiche that the ſoule of Troilus tho ſelte!
Hering the' effect of Pandarus beheſte
His oldè wo, that made his herte to ſwelt,
Gan tho for joie to waſtin and to melt,
And all the reheting of his ſikes ſore
At onis fled, he felt of 'hem no more;

But right ſo as theſe holtes and theſe hayis
That han in wintir dedde yben and drie
Reveſtin 'hem in grene whan that Maie is,
Whan every luſtie beſte liſtith to pleie,
Right in that ſelfin wiſe, ſothe for to ſeie,
Woxe ſodainly his hertè full of joie,
That gladdir was there nevir man in Troie;

And gan his loke on Pandarus up caſt
Full ſobirly, and frendly on to ſe,
And ſayid, Frende, in Aprilis the laſt,
As well thou wost, if it remembir the,
How nigh the deth for wo thou founde me,
And how thou diddiſt all thy buſineſſe
To knowe of me the cauſe of my diſtreſſe;

Thou wost how long I it forbare to ſaie
To the that art the man that I beſt triſt,
And perill none was to the to bewraie,
That wiſt I well; but tell me if the liſt,
Sith I ſo lothe was that thy ſelf it wiſt,
How durſt I mo tellin of this matere
That quake now tho no wight maie us here?

But natheleſſe, by that God I the ſwere,
That as him liſt maie all this world governe,
And if I lie Achillis with his ſpere
Mine hertè cleve, all were my life eterne,
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewraie, or durſt, or ſhould, or conne,
For all the gode that God made undir ſonne;

That rathir die I would and determine,
As thinkith me now, ſtockid in priſoun,
In wretchidneſſe, in filthe, and in vermine,
Captiſe to cruill King Agamemnoun;
And this in all the templis of this toun,
Upon the goddis all, I woll the ſwere,
To morowe daie, if that the likith here.

And that thou haſt ſo moche idoen for me
That I ne maie it nevirmore deſerve
This knowe I well, all might I now for the
A thousande timis on a morowe ſterve;
I can no more but that I woll the ſerve
Right as thine own ſlave, whithir ſo thou wende,
For evirmore unto my liv'is ende.

But here with al mine herte I the beſeche
That nevir in me thou deme ſoche folie,
As I ſhall ſainè, me thought by thy ſpeche,
That this whiche thou me doeſt for companie
I ſhould wenin it were a bauderie;
I am not wode all if I leude ybe:
It is nat ſo, that wote I well parde.

But he that goeth for gold or for richesse
On soche messagis, call him what ye list,
And this that thou doest, call it gentilnesse,
Compassion, and felowship, and trift,
Departin it so, for widewhere is wist
How that there is diversite requered
Betwixin thingis like, as I have lered.

And that thou knowe I ne thinke not ne wene
That this service a shame be or a jape,
I have my faire sustir Polyxene,
Cassandra, Helen, or any of the frape,
Be she never so faire or well ishape,
Tell me whiche thou wilt of everichone
To have for thine, and let me than alone.

But sith that thou hast doen me this service
My life to save, and for non hope of mede,
So for the love of God this grete emprise
Performe it out, for now is the moste nede;
For high and lowe, withoutin any drede,
I woll alwaie thine heftis allè kepe:
Have now gode night, and let us bothè slepe.

Thus held 'hem eche of othir well apaid,
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende;
And on the morowe, whan thei were araied
Eche to his ownè nedis gan entende;
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For sharpe desire of hope and of plesaunce,
He not forgate his gode wise govirnaunce;

But in himself with manhode gan restrain
Eche rakill dede and eche unbridlid chere,
That all tho that livin, sothe for to saine,
Ne should have wiste by worde or by manere
What that he ment as touching this matere,
From every wight as ferre as is the cloud,
He was so wise, and well dissimu'len coud.

And all the while whiche that I now devise
This was his life, with all his fullè might,
By daie he was in Mart's high service,
That is to saine, in armis as a knight,
And fore the more part all the longè night
He lay and thought how that he might yserve
His ladie beste, her thanke for to deserve.

N'ill I not swerin, although he laie soft,
That in his thought he n'as somewhat disefed,
Ne that he tournid on his pillowes oft,
And would of that him missid have ben esed;
But in soche case men be nat alwaie plesed
For aught I wotè, no more than was he,
That can I deme of possibilite.

But certain is, to purpose for to go,
That in this while, as written is in geste,
He sawe his ladie sometime, and also
She with him spake when that she durst and leste,
And by ther both avise, as was the beste,
Appoinctidin full warely in this nede,
So as thei durst, how they wouldin procede.

But it was spokin in so short a wise,
In soche awaite alwaie, and in soche fere,
Lest any wight divinin or divise
Would of 'hem two, or to it laie an ere,
That all this worlde so leste to 'hem ne were
As that Cupido would 'hem his gracefende
To makin of ther purpose right an ende.

But thilkè little that thei spake or wrought
His wise ghozte toke aie of all soche hede,
It semid her he wistè what she thought
Withoutin worde, so that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen or aught forbede,
For which she thought that love, al come it late,
Of allè joie had openid her the yate.

And shortly to this processe for to pace,
So well his werke and wordis he beset
That he so full stode in his ladie's grace
That twentie thousande timis er she let
She thonkid God she evir with him met;
So could he him governe in soche service
That all the worlde ne might it bet devise:

For why? she founde him so discrete in all,
So secrete, and eke of such obeisaunce,
That well she felt he was to her a wall
Of Steele, and shelde from every displeaunce,
That to yben in his gode govirnaunce,
So wise he was, she was no more aferd,
I mene as fere as it ought ben requered.

And Pandarus to quicke alwaie the fire
Was evir ilike prest and diligent;
To ese his frende was set al his desire;
He shove aie on; he to and fro was sent,
He lettirs bare whan Troilus was absent,
That nevir man as in his frend's nede
Ne bare him bet than he withoutin drede.

But now para'venture some man waitin wold
That every worde or fonde, or loke or chere,
Of Troilus that I rehercin shold,
In al this while unto his lady dere,
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,
Or of what wight that stonte in suche distointe
His wordis al or every loke to pointe.

Forsothe I have not herde it done er this
In storie none, ne no man here I wene,
And though I would yet I could not iwis,
For there was some epistel 'hem betwene
That would (as faith min auctor) wel contene
Nie halfe this boke, of which him list not write;
How should I than a line of it endite?

But to the gret effecte than saie I thus,
That stonding in concorde and in quiete
This ilke two, Creseide and Troilus,
As I have tolde, and in this timè swete,
Save onely ofte mightin thei not mete,
Ne leisir have ther spechis to fulfell,
That it besil right as I shal you tell,

That Pandarus, that evir did his might
Right for the fine that I shal speke of here,
As for to bringin to his house some night
His faire nece and Troilus ifere,
Where as at leisir al this high matere
Touching her love were at the ful up bounde,
Had out of doute a time to it yfounde;

For he with grete deliberacion,
Had every thing that therto might availle
Forne cast, and put in execution,
And neithir leste for coste ne for travaile;
Come if 'hem liste 'hem shouldè nothing faile
And for to ben in aught espyid there
That wiste he wel an impossible were.

And dreddeſſe it clere was in the winde
Of every pie and every letgame,
Now al is wel, for al the world is blinde
In this matir bothè fremid and tame;
This timber is al redy up to frame;
Us lackith naught but that we wetin wold
A certaine houre in whiche ſhe comin ſhold,

And Troilus, that al this purveiaunce
Knew at the ful, and waited on it aie,
And hereupon eke made gret ordinaunce,
And founde his cauſe and therwith his aray,
Yf that he were ymiſſid night or day,
There while he was aboutin this ſervice,
That he was gon to don his ſacrifice,

And muſte at ſuche a temple alone wake,
Answerid of Apollo for to be,
And firſt to ſene the holy laurir quake
Er that Apollo ſpake out of the tre,
To tellin him whan Grekis next ſhould fle;
And forthy let him no man, God forbede!
But praie Apollo helpin in this nede.

Now is there litill more for to be done
But Pandare up, and, ſhortly for to ſaine,
Right ſone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightleſſe is the world a night or twaine,
And that the welkin ſhope him for to raine,
He ſtreight amorowe unto his nece went,
Ye have wel herde the ſine of his entente.

Whan he was comen' he gan anon to plaie,
As he was wont, and of himſelfe to jape,
And finally he ſwore, and gan her ſaie
By this and that, ſhe ſhould him not eſcape,
No lengir done him aſtir her to cape,
But certainly that ſhe muſt, by her leve,
Come ſoupin in his houſe with him at eve.

At which ſhe lough, and gan her firſt excuſe,
And ſaid, It rainith, lo! how ſhould I gone?
Let be, (quod he) ne ſtonde not thus to muſe;
This mote be don, ye ſhal come there anone,
So at the laſt herof thei fel at one,
Or ellis ſoft he ſwore her in her ere
He n'olde nevir comin there ſhe were.

Sone aſtir this ſhe unto him gan rowne,
And aſkid him if Troilus were there?
He ſwore her Nay, for he was out of towne,
And ſaid, What, nece, I poſe that he were there,
You durſt nevir thereof have the more fere?
For rathir than men might him there aſpie
Me levir were a thouſande folde to die.

Naught liſt mine auſtour fully to declare
What that ſhe thought whan that he ſaid her ſo,
That Troilus was out of toune ifare,
And if he ſaidè therof ſoth or no,
But that without awaite with him to go
She grauntid him, ſithe he her that beſought,
And as his nece obeyid as her ought.

But nathèleſſe yet gan ſhe him beſeche,
Although with him to gone it was no fere,
For to beware of goſiſhe peplis ſpeche,
That dremin thingis whiche that nevir were,
And well aviſin him whom he brought there;
And ſaid him, Eme, ſens I muſt on you triſt
Loke al be wel; I do now as you liſt,

He ſwore her this by ſtockis and by ſtones,
And by the goddis that in hevin dwell,
Or ellis were him levir ſoule and bones
With Pluto King as depè ben in hell
As Tantalus: what ſhouldin I more tell?

Whan al was wel he roſe and toke his leve,
And ſhe to ſoupir came whan it was eve,

With a certaine numbere of her owne men,
And with her fayir nece Antigone,
And othir of her women nine or ten;
But who was glad nowe, who, as trowyin ye?
But Troilus, that ſtode and might it ſe
Throughout a litil window in a ſtewe,
Ther he beſhet till midnight was in mewe,

Unwiſt of every wight but of Pandare.
But to the point. Now whan that ſhe was come
With al joie, and all her frendis in fare,
Her eme anone in armis hath her nome,
And aſtir to the ſoupir al and ſome,
Whan as time was, ful ſofte thei 'hem yſet,
God wot there was no deinte ferre to ſet.

And aſtir ſoupir gonnin thei to riſe,
At eſe wel, with hertis full freſh and glade,
And wel was him that coudè beſt deviſe
To likin her, or that her laughin made:
He ſonge, ſhe plaide; he tolde a tale of Wade;
But at the laſt, as every thing hath ende,
She toke her leve, and nedis would thenſ wende.

But, o Fortune! executrice of wierdes,
O influencis of theſe hevins hie!
Soth is that undir God ye ben our hierdes;
Though to us beſtis ben the cauſis wrie;
This mene I now, for ſhe gan homward hie;
But execute was al beſide her leve
The goddis wil, for whiche ſhe muſt bileve.

The bentè mone with her hornis all pale,
Saturn and Jove, in Cancro joynid were,
That ſuche a raine from hevin gan availe
That every manir woman that was there
Had of that ſmoky raine a very fere,
At the which Pandare tho lough, and ſaid thenne,
Now were it time a lady to gone henne?

But, gode nece, if that I might evir pleſe
You any thing, than pray I you (quod he)
To don mine hert as now ſo gret an eſe
As for to dwell here al this night with me;
For why? this is your ownè houſe parde,
For by my trouthe, I ſay it nat in game,
To wende as nowè it were to me a ſhame.

Creſeide, which that could as mokil gode
As halfe a world, toke hede of his prayere,
And ſens it rained, and al was in a flode,
She thought as gode chepe may I dwellin here,
And graunt it gladly with a frend'is chere,
And have a thonke, as grutche and than abide,
For home to gon it may nat well betide.

I wel, (quod ſhe) mine uncle leſe and dere!
Sens that you liſt; it ſkil is to be ſo;
I am right glad with you to dwellin here;
I ſeidè but in game that I wolde goe.
Iwis graunt mercy! necé, (quod he) tho;
Were it a game or no, the ſothe to tell,
Now am I glad ſens that you liſt to dwell.

Thus al is wel; but tho began aright
The newe joy, and al the fest againe;
But Pandarus, if godely had he might,
He would have hyid her to bedde full faine,
And said, O Lorde! this is an hugè raine,
This were a wethir for to slepin in,
And that I rede us sonè to begin:

And, necè, wot ye where I wol you laie?
For that we shul nat liggin ferre asonder,
And for ye neithir shullin, dare I saie,
Herin the noise of rainis ne of thonder,
By God right in my litil closet yonder,
And I wol in that uttir house alone
Ben wardain of your women everichone;

And in this middle chambre that ye se
Shal all your women slepin wel and softe,
And there I sayid shal your selvin be.
And if ye liggin wel to night come ofte,
And carith not what wethir is alofte.
Goth in anone, and whan so that ye lest
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the best.

There n'is no morè, but here astir sone
Thei drank, voidid, and curtins drew anone;
Gan evèry wight that hadde nought to done
More in the place out of the chambre gone;
And evir more so sternèliche it rone,
And blewe therwith so wonderlichè loude,
That wel nigh no man herin othir coude,

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought,
With women suche as were her most aboute,
Ful glad unto her bedd'is side her brought,
And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe to loute,
And said, Here at this closet dore withoute
Right ovirthwart your women liggin all,
That whom ye list of 'hem ye maie sone call.

So whan that she was in the closet laide,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde werin, there as I have ysaide,
There n'as no more to skippin nor to prauunce
But bodin go to beddè with mischaunce,
If any wight stering were any where,
And let 'hem slepin that abedde ywere.

But Pandarus, that wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and evèry point therin,
Whan that he wistè that all thing was wele,
He thought he wolde upon his werke begin,
And gan the stewè dore all soft unpin
As stil as stone, withoutin lengir lette;
By Troilus adoun right he him sette.

And, shortly to the pointe right for to gone,
Of al this werke he told him orde and ende,
And sayid, Make the redy right anone,
For thou shalt into hevin blisse ywende.
Now blisful Venus! thou me grace yfende,
(Quod Troilus) for nevir yet no nede
Had I er now, ne halfindele the drede.

(Quod Pandarus) Ne drede the ner a dele,
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire;
So thrive I this night shal I make it wele,
Or castin all the gruil in the fire.
Yet, blisful Venus! this night thou me' enspire,
(Quod Troilus) as wis as I the serve,
And evir bet and bet shal til I sterve,

And if I had, o Venus ful of mirth!
Aspectis badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thou Combuste, or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray I al thilke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad aien maie turne,
For love of him thou lovidest in the shawe,
I mene Adon, that with the bore was slawe:

O Jove! eke for the love of faire Europe,
The which in form of bulle awaie thou set;
Now helpe, o Mars! that with thy bloody cope,
For love of Cypria, thou me nought ne let;
O Phœbus! thinke when Daphne her selve shet
Undir the barke, and laurir woxe for drede,
Yet for her love o helpe me at this nede!

O Mercurie! for the love of her eke
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrothe
Now helpe; and eke Diane! I the beseke
That this viage ne be nat to the lothe;
O Fatall Sustin! whiche or any clothe
Me shapin was my destine me sponne,
So helpith to this werke that is begonne!

(Quod Pandarus) Thou wretchid moun'is hert,
Art thou agast so that she wol the bite?
Why, do on this furred cloke upon thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol have the wite,
But bide, and let me gon before alite;
And with that worde he gan undone a trappe,
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe.

The sternè winde so loude began to route
That no wight other'is noise might yhere,
And thei that layin at the dore without
Full sikirly thei sleptin all ifere;
And Pandarus with a ful sobre chere
Goth to the dore anon withoutin lette
There as thei lay, and softly it shette;

And as he came ayenwarde privily
His nece awoke, and askith, Who goeth there?
Mine ownè dere nece! (quod he) it am I,
Ne wondrith not, ne have of it no fere;
And nere he came, and said her in her ere,
No worde for love of God I you beseche,
Let no wight rise and herin of our speche.

What! whiche waie be ye comen? *Benedicite!*
(Quod she) and how thus unwiste of 'hem all?
Here at this secret trappè dore (quod he.)
(Quod tho Creseide) Let me some wight call.
Eigh! God forbid that it should so befall
(Quod Pandarus) that ye suche foly wrought!
Thei might demin thing that thei nevir thought.

It is nat gode a sleeping bounde to wake.
Ne yeve a wight a cause for to divine;
Your women slepin al I undirtake,
So that for them the house men mightin mine,
And slepin wollen till the sunnè shine,
And when my tale ybrought is to an ende
U. wist right as I came so wol I wende.

Now, necè mine, ye shul well undirstonde,
(Quod he) so as ye women demin all,
That for to holde in love a man in honde,
And him her lese and her dere hert to call,
And makin him an how above a call,
I mene, as love an othir in mene while,
She doth her selfe a shame and him a gile.

Now wherby that I tellin you al this
Ye wote your selfe as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully grauntid is
To Troilus, that is the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth iplight,
That but it were on him alonge ye n'olde
Him nevir falsin while ye levin sholde.

Now stonde it thus, that sith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to seine,
Is through a guttir by a privy went
Into my chambre come in al this reine,
Unwist of every manir wight certaine
Save of my selfe, as wisely have I joie,
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troie :

And he is come in suche paine and distresse
That but he be all fully wode by this
He sodainly mote fall into wodenesse
But if God helpe : and the cause why is this,
He saith him told is of a frende of his
How that ye should love one that hight Horast,
For sorow of which this night shal be his last.

Creseide, whiche that al this wondir herde,
Gan sodainly aboute her hert to colde,
And with a sigh she sorowfully answerd;
Alas ! I wende whofoere talis tolde,
My dere hert, certis, eme, would me nat holde
So lightly faulse : alas ! conceitis wrong
What harme thei done ! for now live I to long.

Horaste, alas ! and falsin Troilus !
I knowe him not, God helpe me so ! (quod she.)
Alas ! what wickid spirite tolde him thus ?
Now certis, eme, to morow' and I him se
I shal therof as full excusin me
As evir did woman, if that him like,
And with that worde she gan full fore to fike.

O God ! (quod she) so worldly felinesse,
Whiche clerkis callin false felicite,
Ymedlid is with many' a bitternesse
Ful anguishous, that is, God wote, (quod she)
Condicion of veine prosperite,
For eithir joyis comin nat ifere,
Or ellis no wight hath 'hem alwaie here.

O brotil wele of mann'is joie unstable !
With what wight so thou be, or how thou playe,
Eithir he wote that thou joie art mutable,
Or wote it nate, it mote been one of twaie :
Now if he wote it nat how maie he saie
That he hath very joie and filinesse
That is of ignoraunce aie in darkenesse ?

Now if he wote that joy is transitory,
(As every joie of worldly thing mote flie)
Than every time he that hath in memory
The drede of lesing makith him that he
May in no parfite likernesse ybe,
And if to lese his joie he set a mite
Than semith it that joy is worth ful lite.

Wherfore I wol define in this matere,
That truily for aught I can espie
There is no very wele in this world here ;
But o thou wickid serpent Jealousie !
Thou misbelevid, envious folie,
Why hast thou Troilus made me to untrist,
That nevir yet agilde him that I wiste ?

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(Quod Pandarus) Thus fallin is this caas.
Why, uncle mine, (quod she) who tolde him this ?
And why doth my dere hertè thus alas !
Ye wote, ye, nece min, (quod he) what it is ;
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,
For ye maie quenche al this if that you lest ;
And doeth right so ; I holde it for the best.

So shal I do to morow', iwis, (quod she)
And God toforne, so that it shal suffice.
To morow, alas ! that were faire (quod he.)
Nay, nay, it maie nat stonde in this wise,
For, nece mine, thus writin clerkis wise,
That *Peril is with dretching in ydrawe* ;
Nay, suche abodis ben nat worthe an hawe.

Nece, allè thing hath time, I dare avowe,
For whan a chambre' a fire is or an hall,
Wel more nede is it sodainly rescowe
Than to dispute and aske amongis all
How is this candil in the strawe yfall ?
Ah, *benedicite* ! for al among that fare
The harme is done, and farwel feldesfare.

And, nece mine, ne take it nat agrese
If that ye suffre' him al night in this wo ;
God helpe me so ye had him nevir lese ;
What dare I sain, now there is but we two,
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do,
Ye ben to wise to don so gret folie,
To put his life al night in jeopardie.

Had I him nevir lese ? by God I wene
Ye ne had nevir thing so lese, (quod she.)
Now by my thrifte (quod he) that shal be sene ;
For sithe ye make this ensample of me,
If I al night would him in sorowe se
For al the tresour in the toun of Troie,
I bidde God that I nevir mote have joie.

Now loken than if ye that ben his love
Should put his life all night in jeopardy
For thing of nought : now by that God above
Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
But of malice, if that I should nat lie :
What ! platly and ye suffre' him in distresse
Ye neithir bounte done ne gentilnesse.

(Quod tho Creseide) Wol ye done o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disese,
Have here and berith him this blewè ring,
For there is nothing might him bettir plesse
Save I myselfe, ne more his hert apese ;
And saie, my derè herte ! that his sorowe
Is causelesse, that shal he sene to morowe.

A ringe ! (quod he) ye hasilwodis shaken !
Ye, nece mine, that ring must have a stonie,
A stonie which that might ded men alive maken,
And suche a ring trowe I that ye have none :
Discrecion out of your hed is gone,
That fele I now, (quod he) and that is routhe ;
O time ilost, wel maist thou cursin flouthe !

Wote ye not wel that noble and hie corage
Ne soroweth nat, ne stintith eke for lite,
But if a fole were in a jelous rage
I n'olde settin at his sorowe a mite,
But feste him with a fewè wordis white
An othir deie, whan that I might him finde ;
But this thing stant al in anothir kinde ;

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This is so gentle' and so tendir of herte
That with his deth he wol his sorowes wreke,
For trust it wel how sore so that him smerte
He wol to you no jelous wordis speke;
And forthy, nece, er that his hert to breke,
So speke your selfe to him of this matere,
For with a worde ye maie his hertè ftere.

Now have I tolde what peril he is in,
And his coming unwist to every wight,
Ne parde harme maie there be none ne sin,
I wol my self be with you al this night;
Ye know eke how it is your ownè knight,
And by that right ye must upon him triste,
And I al prest to fette him when you list.

This accident so pitous was to here,
And eke so like a sothe, at primè face,
And Troilus her knight, to her so dere,
His prive comming, and the sikir place,
That though she thought she did him than a grace,
Confidirid all thingis as they stode,
No wondir is, fens he did al for gode.

Creseide answerde, As wisely God at rest
My foulè bring as me is for him wo,
And, eme, iwis faine would I don the best,
If that I a grace had for to do so;
But whethir that ye dwel or for him go
I am, til God me bettir mindè sende,
At Dulcarnon, right at my witt'is ende.

(Quod Pandarus) Ye, nece, wol ye here,
Dulcarnon clepid is fleming of wretches,
It semith hard, for wretchis wol nought lere
For very flouthe, or othir wilfull tetches,
This said is by them that ben't worth two fetches;
But ye ben wise, and that ye han on honde
N'is neithir harde ne skilful to withstonde.

Than, eme, (quod she) doeth hereof as you list,
But er he come I wol up first arise,
And for the love of God, fens al my trift
Is on you two, and ye beth bothè wise,
So werkith now, in so discrete a wise,
That I honour maie have and he plesauce,
For I am here al in your govirnaunce.

That is wel said, (quod he) my nece dere!
There gode thrifte on that wise gentill herte;
But liggith still, and takith him right here,
It nedith nat no ferthir for him fterte;
And eche of you ese othir sorowes smert,
For love of God and Venus I the herie,
For sone hope I that we shullin ben merie.

This Troilus full sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrelly right by her bedd'is hed,
And in his beste wise his lady grette;
But Lord! so she woxe sodainliche all red,
And thought anone how that she shulde be dedde;
She coulde nat o worde aright out bringe,
So sodainly for his sodaine cominge.

But Pandarus, that so wel could fete
In every thing, to plaie anon began,
And sayid, Nece, se how this lord gan knele,
Now for your trouthe se this gentil man;
And with that worde he for a quishin ran,
And said, Knelith now whilis that thou leste,
There God your hertis bring sone to reste.

Can I naught sain, for she bad him nat rise,
If sorowe' it put out of her remembraunce,
Or ellis that she toke it in the wise
Of duetic as for his observaunce;
But well finde I she did him this plesauce,
That she him kist, although she sikid sore,
And bad him sit adoun withoutin more.

(Quod Pandarus) Now wol ye well begin,
Now doth him sittin doune, gode nece dere!
Upon your bedd'is side, al there within,
That eche of you the bet maie othir here;
And with that worde he drew him to the fere,
And toke a light, and found his countinaunce
As for to loke upon an old romaunce.

Creseide, that was Troilus lady right,
And clere stode in a grounde of sikirnesse,
All thought she that her servaunt and her knight
Ne shulde of trouthe none unright of her gesse,
Yet nathelless, confidirid his distresse,
And that love is in cause of suche folie,
Thus to him spake she of his jelousie:

Lo, hertè mine! as would the excellence
Of love, aienst the whiche that no man maie,
Ne ought eke godely makin resistence,
And eke bicause I feltè wel and faie
Your grete trouthe and service every daie,
And that your hert al mine was, soth to faine,
This drove me for to rewe upon your paine;

And your godenes have I founden' alway yet,
Of whiche my dere hert, and al my knight!
I thanke it you, as ferre as I have wit,
Al can I nat as much as it were right;
And I emforth my conning and my might
Have, and aie shal, how fore so that me smert,
Ben to you trewe and whole with all mine hert;

And dredileffe that shal be founde at preve:
But, hertè mine! what al this is to faine
Shal well be told, so that ye nought you greve,
Though I to you right on your self complaine,
For therewith mene I finally the paine
That halt your hert and mine in hevinesse
Fully to flaine, and every wrong redresse.

My gode hert mine! n'ot I for why ne how
That Jelousy, alas! that wicked wivere,
Thus causelesse is cropin into you,
The harme of whiche I would sain deliver:
Alas! that he all whole or of him flivere
Should have his refute in so digne a place!
Than Jove him sone out of your herte erace!

But o thou Jove! o auctour of nature!
Is this an honour to thy dignite
That folke ungilty suffrin here injure,
And who that gilty is al quite goeth he?
O were it lefull for to plaine of the,
That undeservid suffrist jelousie,
Of that I would upon the plaine and crie.

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now use
To faine right thus; Ye, jelousie is love,
And would a bushil of venim excusen,
For that a grane of love is on it shove,
But that wote high Jove that sittin above
If it be likir love, or hate, or grame,
And astir that it ought to bere his name.

But certaine is some manir jelousie
Is excusable more than some iwis,
As whan cause is and some suche fantasie,
With pite that so wel expressid is
That it unnethis doeth or faith amis,
But godely drinkith up al his distresse,
And that excuse I for the gentillesse.

And some so ful of fury is and dispite
That it surmountith his repressioun;
But, herte mine! ye be nat in that plite,
That shonke I God, for whiche your passion
I wol nat cal it but illusion

Of haboundaunce of love and besy cure,
That doth your herte this disese endure;

Of which I am right fory but nat wrothe,
But for my devoir and your hert'is reste.

Where so you list, by ordal or by othe,
By sorte, or in what wise so that you leste,
For love of God let preve it for the beste,
And if that I be gilty do me die;

Alas! what might I more or done or seie?

And tho with that a fewe bright teris newe
Out of her eyin fel, and thus she seide;
Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede untrewed
To Troilus was never yet Creseide;

With that her hed down in the bed she leide,
And with the shete it wrie, and sighid sore,
And held her pece; nat a word spake she more.

But now helpe God to quench al this sorow,
So hope I that he shal, for he beste may,

For I have sene of a ful misty morow

Folowen ful oft a mery somer's day,

And Astir twintir foloweth grene May;

Men sene all day, and redin eke in stories,

That Astir sharpe stouris ben victories.

This Troilus, when he her wordis herde,
Have ye no care him list nat to slepe,
For it thought him no strokis of a yerde
To here or se Creseide his lady wepe,
But wel he felte about his herte crepe,
For every tere whiche that Creseide asterte,
The crampe of deth to straine him by the herte.

And in his minde he gan the time accurse
That he came there, and that he was yborne,
For now his wicke ytournid into worse,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne
He wende it lost, he thought it n'as but lorne:
O Pandarus! thought he, alas! thy wile
Servith of nought, so welawaie the while!

And therewith all he hing adoune his hedde,
And fell on knees, and sorowfully sight:
What might he sain? he felt he n'as but dedde,
For wroth was she that should his sorowes light;
But nathelesse whan that he spekin might,
Than said he thus; God wote that of this game
Whan all is wist than am I nat to blame.

Therwith the sorowe in hert so shet
That from his eyin fell there nat a tere,
And every spirite his vigour in knet,
So thei astonied and oppressid were;
The feling of his sorowe or his fere,
Or of aught ellis, fledde were out of tounce;
Adoune he fell all sodainly in swoune.

This was no little sorowe for to se,
But all was hush't, and Pandare up as fast;
O nece! pece, or we be lost (quod he);
Bethe nat agast; but certain at the last
For this or that he into bedde him cast,
And saide, O thefe! is this a mann'is herte?
And of he rent all to his bare sherte,

And sayid, Nece, but and ye helpe us now,
Alas! your ownè Troilus is lorne.

Iwis so would I, and I wiste how,
Full fain, (quod she,) Alas that I was borne!

Ye, nece; woll ye pullin out the thorne
That stiketh in his herte (quod Pandare?)

Saie all foryeve, and stint is all this fare.

Ye, that to me (quod she) full levir were
Than all the gode the sunne about ygoeth;

And therewithall she swore him in his ere,
Iwis, my derè herte! I am not wrothe,

Have here my trouth, and many' an othir othe.
Now speke to me, for it am I Creseide;

But all for naught; yet might he not abreide.

Therwith his poulce and paumis of his hondes
Thei gan to frote, and wete his templis twain,

And to delivir him fro bittir bondes
She oft him kist; and, shortly for to sain,

Him to rewakin she did all her pain;
And at the last he gan his breth to drawe,

And of his swough sone astir that adawe,
And gan bet minde and reson to him take;

But wondir fore he was abashed iwis,
And with a sigh whan he gan bet awake

He saied, O mercie, God! what thing is this?
Why doe ye with your selvin thus amis?

(Quod tho Creseide) is this a mann'is game?
What, Troilus! woll ye do thus for shame?

And therewithall her arme ovre him she laide,
And all foryave, and oft in time him kest:

He thonkid her, and to her spake and saied
As fill to purpose for his hert'is rest;

And she to that answerde him as her lest,
And with her godelie wordis him disport

She gan, and oft his sorowes to comfort.
(Quod Pandarus) For aught I can aspien

This light nor I ne serving here of naught,
Light is nat gode for sike folkis eyen;

But for the love of God, sens ye ben brought
In this gode plite, let now non hevye thought

Ben hangid in the hertis of you tway;
And bare the candle towards the chimney.

Sone after this, though it no nede ywere,
Whan she soche othis as her list devise

Had of him takin, her thought tho no fere
Ne cause eke none to bid him thennis rise;

Yet lesse thing than othis maie suffice
In many' a case, for every wight I gesse

That lovith well menith but gentillesse.
But in effect she would ywete anon

Of what man, and eke where, and also why,
He jelous was, sens there was cause non,

And eke the signe whiche that he toke it by,
She bade him that to tell her busily,

Or ellis certain she bare him on honde
That this was doen of malice, her to fonder

Withoutin more, shortly for to fain,
He must obeie unto his ladie's hest,
And for the lasse harme he must somewhat fain;
He saied her, Whan she was at soche a fest
She might on him have lokid at the lest;
N'ot I nat what (all dere inough a rishe)
As he that nedis must a cause out fishe.

And she answerde, Swete hert! all were it so,
What harme was that, since I non evill mene?
For by that God that wrought us bothè two
In all manir thing is mine entent clene;
Soche argumentes ne be nat worthe a bene:
Woll ye the childish jelous counterfete?
Now were it worthy that ye were ibete.

Tho Troilus gan sorowfully sike,
Lest she be wrothe him thought his hertè deide,
And saied, Alas! upon my sorowe's sike
Have mercie, o swete hertè mine, Creseide!
And if that in tho wordis that I seide
Be any wrong, I woll no more trespase;
Doeth what you list; I am all in your grace.

And she answerde, Of gilt misericorde,
That is to faine, that I foryeve all this,
And evirmore on this night you recorde,
And bethe well ware ye doe no more amis.
Naie, dere hert mine! no more (quod he) iwis.
And now (quod she) that I have you doe smerte
Foryeve it to me, mine owne swetè herte!

This Troilus with blisse of that supprised
Put all in Godd's hande, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and sodainly avised
He her in his armis fast to him hent;
And Pandarus with a full gode entent
Laied him to slepe, and saied, If ye be wise
Sownith not now, lest more folke arise.

What might or maie the sely larkè saie
When that the sparhauke hath him in his fote?
I can no more but of these ilkè twaie,
(To whom this tale sugre be or fote)
Though I tary a yere, sometime I mote
After mine auethour tellin ther gladnesse,
As well as I have tolde ther hevinesse.

Creseide, whiche that felt her thus itake,
(As writin clerkis in ther bokis old)
Right as an aspin lese she gan to quake
Whan she him felt her in his armis fold;
But Troilus all whole of caris cold
Gan thankin tho the blisfull goddis seven.
Thus *Sondry painis bringin folk to beven.*

This Troilus in armis gan her straine,
And sayid, Swete! as evir mote I gone
Now be ye caught; now here is but we twaine;
Now yeldith you, for othir bote is none.
To that Creseide answerid thus anone,
Ne had I er now, my swete hertè dere!
Ben yoldin, iwis I were now not here.

O soth is saied, that helid for to be
Of a fevir or othir grete siknesse
Men must drinkin, as we may oftin se,
Full bittir drinke, and for to have gladnesse
Men drinkin oft in pain and in distresse;
I mene it here, as for this avinture,
That through a pain hath foundin al his cure.

And now swetnesse ysemith ferre more swete
That bittirnesse assayid was bisorne,
For out of wo in blisse now thei flete;
Non soche thei feltin sithins thei were borne;
Now is this bettir than bothe two be lorne:
For love of God take every woman hede
To werkin thus if it come to the nede.

Creseide all quite from every drede and tene,
As she that justè cause had him to trist,
Made him soche fest it joie was for to sene,
Whan she his trouth and clene entent ywist;
And as about a tre with many' a twist
Bitrent and writhin is the swete wodbinde
Gan eche of 'hem in armis othir winde.

And as the newe abashid nightingale,
That stintith first, whan she beginnith sing,
Whan that she herith any herd's tale,
Or in the hedgis any wight stering,
And astir sikir doeth her voice out ring,
Right so Creseide, whan that her drede stent,
Opened her hert, and told him her entent.

And right as he that seeth his deth ishapen,
And dyin mote, in aught that he maie gesse,
And sodainly rescous doeth him escapen,
And from his deth is brought in sikirnesse,
For al this worlde in soche present gladnesse
Was Troilus and hath his lady swete;
With no worse hap God let us nevir mete!

Her armis small, her back both streight and soft,
Her sidis long, and fleshy, smothe, and white,
He gan to stroke, and gode thrift bad full oft,
Her snow-white throte, her brestis round and lite;
Thus in this heaven' he gan him to delite,
And therwithall a thousande times her kist,
That what to doen for joie unneth he wist.

Than saied he thus, O Love! o Charite!
Thy mothir eke, Citherea the swete!
Astir thy self next heryid be she,
Venus I mene, the wellwilly planete,
And next that Hymenæus! I the grete,
For nevir man was to you goddis hold
As I, whiche ye have brought fro caris cold.

Benigne Love! thou holy bond of thinges,
Who so woll grace, and list the not honoure,
Lo! his desire woll flie withoutin winges,
For n'oldist thou of bountie 'hem soeoure
That servin best, and mozte alwaie laboure,
Yet were all lost, that dare I well fain certes,
But if thy grace ypassid our desertes.

And for thou me, that lest thonke coud deserve
Of them that nombred ben unto thy grace,
Hast holpin there I likely was to sterve,
And me bestowid in so high a place
That thilkè boundis maie no blisse surpace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence.

And therwithall Creseide anon he kist,
Of whiche certain she ne felt no difese,
And thus saied he, Now wold to God I wist,
Mine hertè swete! how I you best might please
What man (quod he) was evir thus at ese
As I, on whiche the fairist and the best
That er I seie deinith her hert to rest?

Here maie ye sene that mercie passith right,
The' experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight;
But harte mine! of your benignite
So thinkith, that though I unworthy be
Yet mote I nede amending in some wise
Right through the vertue of your hie service.

And for the love of God, my lady dere!
Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serve,
As thus I mene, that ye wolle be my fere
To do me live, if that you list, or sterue;
So techith me how that I maie deserve
Your thonke, so that I through min ignoraunce
Ne doe nothing that you be displeaunce:

For certis, freshe and womanliche wife!
This dare I saie, that trouthe and diligence,
That shall ye findin in me all my life,
Ne I wolle not certain breke your defence,
And if I doe, present or in absence,
For love of God let flea me with the dede,
If that it like unto your womanhede.

Iwis, (quod she) mine ownè herte's lust!
My ground of ese, and al mine herte dere!
Graunt mercie! for on that is all my trust;
But let us fall awaie fro this mattere,
For it suffisith this that said is here,
And at o worde, withoutin repentaunce,
Welcome my knight, my pece, my suffisaunce!

Of ther delite or joies one of the lest
Were impossible to my wit to saie,
But judgith ye that have ben at the fest
Of soche gladnesse, if that him list to plaie,
I can no more but thus, these ilke twaie
That night, betwixin drede and sikirnesse,
Feltin in love the gretist worthinesse.

O blisfull night! of them so long isoaght,
How blithe unto 'hem bothe two thou were!
Why ne' had I soche fest with my soule ibought,
Ye, or but the lest joie which that was there?
Awaie thou soule daungir and thou fere!
And let 'hem in this hevin blisse ydwell,
That is so high that all ne can I tell.

But sothe is, though I can not tellin all,
As can mine aucthour of his excellence,
Yet have I saied, and God tofornè shall,
In every thing all wholly his sentence,
And if that I at Lov's reverence
Have any worde in echid for the best,
Doeth therewithall right as your selvin lest;

For all my wordis here, and every part,
I speke 'hem all undir correction
Of you that feling have in lov's art,
And put it all in your discrecion,
To encrese or make diminicion
Of my langage, and that I you besече:

But now to purpose of my rathir speche.
These ilke two, that ben in armis last,
So lothe to 'hem asondir gon it were,
That eche from othir wending ben biraft,
Or ellis, lo! this was ther mostè fere,
That al this thing but nice dremis were,
For whiche full oft eche of 'hem said, O swete!
Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete?

And, Lorde! so he gan godelic on her se,
That nevir his loke ne blent from her face,
And saied, O my dere herte! maie it be
That it be sothe that ye ben in this place?
Ye, herte mine! God thanke I of his grace,
(Quod tho Creseide) and therewithall him kist,
That where here spirite was for joie she n'ist.

This Troilus full oft her eyin two
Gan for to kisse, and saied, O eyin clere!
It werin ye that wrought me sochè wo,
Ye humble nettis of my lady dere,
Though there be mercie writtin in your chere,
God wote the text full harde is for to finde;
How couldin ye withoutin bonde me binde?

Therwith he gan her fast in armistake,
And well an hundrid timis gan he like,
Not soche sorowfull sighis as men make
For wo, or ellis whan that folke be like,
But esie sighis, soche as ben to like,
That shewid his affection within;
Of soche manir sighis could he not blin.

Sone aftir this thei spake of sondrie thinges,
As fill to purpose of this avinture,
And playin enterchaungidin ther ringes,
Of whiche I can not tellin no scripture,
But well wot a broche of gold and azure,
In whiche a rubie set was like an hert,
Creseide him yave, and stacke it on his sherte.

Lorde! trowè ye that a covetous wretche
That blamith love, and halte of it dispite,
That of tho pens that he can muckre' and ketchen
Was evir yet yeve to him soche delite,
As is in love in o poinct in some plite?
Naie, doubtilese, for all so God me save
So parfite joie ne maie no nigard have.

Thei wolle saie Yes, but Lorde that so thei lie!
Tho busie wretchis full of wo and drede
That callin love a wodenesse or folie;
But it shall fall 'hem as I shall you rede,
Thei shall forgon the white and eke the rede,
And live in wo, there God yeve 'hem mischaunce,
And every lovir in his trouthe avaunce.

As would to God tho wretchis that dispise
Service of love had eris all so long
As had Midas, all full of covetise,
And therto dronkin had as hotte and strong
As Cyrus did for his affectis wrong,
To techin 'hem that thei ben in the vice,
And lovirs not, although thei hold 'hem nice.

These ilke two of whom that I you saie,
Whan that ther hertis well assurid were,
The gonnin thei to spekin and to plaie,
And eke rehercin how, and whan, and where,
Thei knewin first, and every wo or fere
That passid was; but all soche hevinesse,
Ithonkid God, was tournid to gladnesse.

And evirmore whan that 'hem fell to speke
Of any thing of soche a time agone
With kissing all that tale should ybreke,
And fallin into a newe joie anone,
And diddin all ther might, sens thei were one,
For to recoveren blisse and ben at ese,
And paisid wo with joyis counterpaise.

Reason woll not that I spekin of slepe,
For it accordith not to my mattere;
God wote thei toke of it full little kepe,
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne should in vaine escape in no manere
It was biset in joie and businesse
Of all that founth into gentilnesse.

But whan the cocke, commune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete and astir crowe,
And Lucifer, the day's messenger,
Gan for to rise, and out his bemis throwe,
And eastward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major, than anone Creseide
With herte fore to Troilus thus seide:

Mine hert'is life, my trust, al my plesaunce!
That I was borne, alas! that me is wo,
That daie of us mote make disceveraunce,
For time it is to rise and hennis go,
Or ellis I am lost for evirmo.

O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou ore us hove
As long as whan Alcmena laie by Jove?

O blacke Night! as folke in bokis rede,
That shapin art by God this worlde to hide
At certain timis with thy derke wede,
That undir that men might in rest abide,
Wel oughtin bestes to plain and folke to chide,
That thereas daie with labor would us brest,
That thou us fliest and deinist us not rest.

Thou doest, alas! so shortly thine office,
Thou racle Night, that God makir of kinde
The for thine hast, and thine unkinde vice
So fast aie to our hemisphere binde,
That nevirmore undir the ground thou winde,
For through thy racle hying out of Troie
Have I forgone thus hastily my joie.

This Troilus, that with tho wordis felt,
As thought him tho, for piteous distresse
The blodie teris from his herte melt,
As he that yet nevir soche hevinesse
Assayid had out of so grete gladnesse,
Gan therewithall Creseide his lady dere
In armis strain, and said in this manere:

O cruill Daie! accuser of the joie
That Night and Love hath stole and fast iwrie,
Accursid be thy comming into Troie!
For every bowre hath one of thy bright eyen:
Envious Daie! what list the so to spien?
What hast thou lost? why sekist thou this place?
There God thy light so quenche for his grace!

Alas! what have these lovirs the agilt?
Dispitous Daie! thine be the paine of hell,
For many' a lovir hast thou slain and wilt;
Thy poring in woll no where let hem dwell:
What! profrist thou thy light here for to sel?
Go, sell it them that smale selis grave;
We woll the not; us nedith no daie have.

And eke the sonne Titan gan he chide,
And said, O sole! well maie men the dispise,
That hast all night the Dauning by thy side,
And suffrist her so sone up fro the rise,
For to disese us lovirs in this wise;
What! hold your bed there thou and thy Merow;
I biddè God so yeve you both sorowe.

Therwith full fore he fighed, and thus he seide:
My lady bright, and of my wele or wo
The well and rote! o godely mine, Creseide!
And shall I rise, alas! and shall I goe?
Now fele I that mine herte mote a two;
And how should I my life an houre save
Sens that with you is all the life I have?

What shall I doen? for certis I n'ot how,
Ne whan, alas! I shal the time se
That in this plite I maie ben est with you,
And of my life God wote how shall that be,
Sens that desire right now so blith me
That I am dede anon but I retourne:

How should I long, alas! fro you sojourne:
But nathelasse, mine owne ladie bright!
Yet were it so that I wist uttirly
That I your humble servaunt and your knight
Were in your herte iset so fermly
As ye in mine, the whiche thing truely
Me levir were than have these worldis twain,
Yet should I bet endurin all my pain.

To that Creseide answerid right anon,
And with a sigh she saied, O herte dere!
The game iwis so ferforth now is gon
That first shall Phœbus fallin from the sphere,
And everiche egle ben the dov'is fere,
And every rocke out of his place asterte,
Er Troilus go out of Creseide's herte.

Ye ben so depe within mine herte ygrave,
That tho I would it turne out of my thought,
As wisely very God my soule save,
To dyin in the pain I couldè nought;
And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain none othir fantasie
So crepin, that it cause me to die.

And that ye me would have as fast in minde
As I have you, that would I you besече,
And if I wist sothily that to finde,
God might not o point of my joyis eche.
But, herte mine! withoutin more speche,
Bethe to me true, or ellis were it routhel.
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe.

Bethe glad forthy, and live in sikirnesse,
Thus saied I ner er this, ne shall to mo;
And if to you it were a grete gladnesse
To tourne ayen sone astir that ye go,
As faine would I as ye that it were so,
As wisely God mine herte bring to reste,
And him in armis toke, and ofte keste.

Ayent his will, lithe it mote nedis be,
This Troilus up rose, and fast him cled,
And in his armis toke his lady fre
An hundrid times, and on his waie him sped,
And with soche wordis as his herte ybled
He seide, Farith wel, my dere herte swete!
That God us graunte sound and sone to mete.

To whiche no worde for sorowe she answerd,
So fore gan his parting her to distrain,
And Troilus unto his paleis ferd,
As wo bigon as she was, sothe to faine,
So harde him wrong of sharpe desire the pain;
For to ben este there he was in plesaunce,
That it may nere out of his remembraunce.

Retournid to his roiall paleis sone
He soft unto his bedde gan for to shrinke,
To slepe long, as he was wont to doen;
But all for naught; he maie wel ligge and winke,
But slepe maie there none in his hertè sinke,
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brende,
A M. folde was worth more than he wende.

And in his thought gan up and doune to wende
Her wordis all, and every continuaunce,
And fermly impressin in his minde
The lestè pointè that to him was plesaunce,
And verily of thilkè remembraunce
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Can more than erst, and yet toke he non hede.

Creseide also right in the samè wise
Of Troilus gan in her hertè shet,
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedis wife,
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met,
Thonking Love that he so well her beset,
Desiring oft to have her hertè dere
In soche a place as she durst make him chere.

Pandare a morowe which that commin was
Unto his necè gan her faire to grete,
And saied, All this night so rained it alas!
That all my drede is that ye, necè swete!
Have little leisir had to slepe and mete:
All night (quod he) hath rain so do me wake
That some of us I trowe ther heddis ake.

And nere he came, and saied, How stant it now,
This merie morowe? nece, how can ye fare?
Creseide answerde, Nevir the bet for you,
Foxe that ye ben, God yeve your hertè care;
God helpe me so ye causid all this fare,
Trowe I, (quod she) for all your wordis white:
O who so seeth you knowith you full lite!

With that she began her face for to wrie
With the shetè, and woxe for shame all redde,
And Pandarus gan undir for to prie,
And sayid, Nece, if that I shall ben dedde
Have here a fwerde and smitith of my hedde:
With that his arme all sodainly he thrifte
Undir her necke, and at the last her kiste.

I passe al that, which chargith naught to say:
What! God foryave his deth, and she also
Foryave; and with her uncle gan to plaie,
For othir cause ne was there none than so:
But of this thing right to th' effect to go,
Whan time ywas home to her house she went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent.

Now tournè we ayen to Troilus,
That restlesse full long a bedde ylaie,
And privily sent astir Pandarus,
To him to come in all the hast he maie:
He come anon, not onis saied he naie,
And Troilus full sobirly he grete,
And doune upon the bedd'is side him sete.

This Troilus with all th' affectioun
Of frendly love that hertè maie devise
To Pandarus on kneis fill adoune,
And er that he would of the place arise
He gan him thankin on his bestè wife;
An hundrid time he gan the timè blesse
That he was borne, to bring him fro distresse.

He saied, O frend of frendes! the aldirbest
That evir was, the sothe for to tell,
Thou hast in heven ibrought my soule at rest
Fro Plegethon, the fire flode of hell,
That though I might a thousande timis sel
Upon a daie my life in thy service,
It ne might not a mote in that suffice.

The sonnè, whiche that al the worlde maie se,
Sawe nevir yet (my life that dare I leie)
So joily, faite, and godely, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie;
And that I thus am her's, dare I wel seie,
That thankid be the highè worthinesse
Of Love, and eke thy kindè businesse.

Thus hast thou me no little thing iyeve;
For why? to the obligid be for aie
My life; and why? for through thine helpe I live,
Or els dedde had I ben many a daie:
And with that worde doune in his bed he laie,
And Pandarus full sobirly him herde
Till all was saied, and than he him answerde.

My derè frende! if I have doen for the
In any case, God wote it is me lese,
And am as glad as man maie of it be,
God helpe me so; but take now not agrese
That I shall saine; beware of this mischese,
That there as now thou brought art to thy blisse
That thou thy self ne cause it not to misse:

For of Fortun'is sharpe adversite
The worstè kinde of infortune is this,
A man to have ben in prosperite,
And it remembir whan it passid is:
Thou' art wise inough, forthy doe nat amis;
But not to rakill though thou sittè warme,
For if thou be certain it woll the harme.

Thou art at ese, and hold the well therin,
For all so sure as redde is every fire
As grete a craste is to kepe well as winne:
Bridle alwaie thy spech and thy desire,
For Worldly joie boketh not but by a wire,
That previth well, it brest al daie so ofte,
Forthy nede is to werkin with it softe.

(Quod Troilus) I hope, and God toforne,
My derè frende! that I shall so me bere
That in my gilt there shall nothing ben lorne,
Ne I n'ill rake for to grevin her;
It nedeth not this mattir oft to tere,
For wistist thou mine hertè wel, Pandare,
God wote of this thou wouldist litil care.

Tho gan he tell him of his glade night,
And whereof first his hert ydradde and how,
And sayid, Frende, as I am a true knight,
And by that faithe I owe to God and you,
I had it nevir half so hot as now,
And evir the more that desire me biteth
To love her best the more it me deliteth.

I n'ot my self not wisely what it is,
But now I felin a new qualite,
Ye, all anothir than I did er this.
Pandare answerid and saied thus, that he
That onis maie in hevin blisse ybe
He felith othir wayis, dare I saie,
Than thilkè time he first herd of it saie.

This is a worde for al, that Troilus
Was nevir ful to speke of this matere,
And for to praisin unto Pandarus
The bounte of his bright lady so dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and makin chere :
This tale was aie span newe to beginne
Till that the night departid 'hem atwinne.

Sone aftir this, for that Fortune it would,
Icomin was the blisful timè swete
That Troilus was warnid that he should
There he was erft Creseide his lady mete,
For whiche he felte his herte in joie flete;
And faithfully gan all the goddis hery;
And let se now if that he can be mery.

And holdin was the forme and al the gife
Of her comming, and eke of his also,
As it was erft, whiche nedith nought devise;
But plainly to th' effecte right for to go,
In joie and surete Pandarus 'hem two
A bedde ybrought whan that 'hem bothè left,
And thus thei ben in quiete and in rest.

Naught nedith it to you, sithe thei ben met,
To aske at me if that thei blithe ywere?
For if it erft was well tho was it bet
A thousande folde, this nedith not enquire;
Ago was every sorow' and every fere,
And bothe iwis thei had, and so thei wende,
As mochil joie as herte maie comprehende.

This n'is no litil thing of for to sey,
This passith every wit for to devise,
For eche of 'hem gan othir's lust obey;
Felicite, whiche that these clerkis wif
Commendin so, ne may not here suffise;
This joye ne maie not writtin be with inke;
This passith al that any hert maie thinke.

But cruil day, so welaway the stounde!
Gan for to' aproche, as thei by signis knewe,
For whiche 'hem thought thei felin deth'is wounde:
So wo was 'hem that chaungin gan ther hewe,
And day thei gonin to dispise al newe,
Calling it traitour, envious, and worse,
And bittirly the day'is light thei corse.

(Quod Troilus) Alas! now am I ware
That Pyrois, and tho swifte stedis thre
Whiche that ydrawin forth the Sunn'is chare
Han gon some bypathe in dispite of me,
And makith it so sone day to be,
And for the Sunne him hastith thus to rise
Ne shall I nevir don him sacrificise.

But nedis daie departin 'hem must sone;
And whan ther spechè don was and ther chere
Thei twin anon, as thei were wont to done,
And settin time of meting este isere,
And many' a night thei wrought in this manere:
And thus Fortune a time yladde in joie
Creseide and eke this king'is son of Troie.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges,
This Troilus gan al his life to lede;
He spendith, justith, and makith festinges;
He gevith frely ofte, and chaungith wede;
He helde about him alwaie out of drede
A worlde of folke, as come him well of kinde,
The freshest and the best that he could finde.

That suche a voice was of him and a steven
Throughout the world of honour and largesse
That it up ronge unto the yate of heven;
And as in love he was in suche gladnesse
That in his hert he demid as I gesse
That there n'is lovir in this world at ese
So wel as he, and thus gan love him plese.

The godelihede or beaute whiche that Kinde
In any othir lady had isette
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat unbinde
About his hert of al Creseid'is nette;
He was so narowe' imaskid and iknette
That is undon in any manir side
That n'il nat ben for aught that maie betide.

And by the honde ful oftin he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And suche a fest and suche a processe make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withoutin drede
It was an heven his wordis for to here,
And than he wouldè sing in this manere:

Love, that of erthe and se hath govirnaunce,
Love, that his heftis hath in hevin hie,
Love, that with a right wholsome aliaunce
Halte peple joynid as him liste 'hem gie,
Love, that yknittith lawe and companie,
And couplis doth in vertue for to dwel,
Binde this accorde that I have tolde and tel.

That that the world with faith, whiche that is
Diversith so his stoundis according, [stable,
That elementis that bethe discordable
Holdin a bonde perpetually during,
That Phœbus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And that the mone hath lordship ore the nightes,
Al this doeth Love; aie heried be his mightes!

That that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
Constrainith to a certaine endè so
His flodis, that so fierfly thei ne growen
To drenchin erthe and al for evirmo,
And if that Love aught let his bridil go
Al that now lovith asondir should lepe,
And lost were al that Love halt now to hepe.

So would to God, that author is of kinde,
That with his bonde Love of his vertue list
To serchin hertis al, and fast to binde,
That from his bonde no wight the wey out wist,
And hertis colde them wold I that he twist
To make 'hem love, and that list him aie rewe
On hertis sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe.

In allè nedis for the toun'is werre
He was, and aie the first in armis dight,
And certainly, but if that bokis erre,
Save Hector most idradde of any wight;
And this encrese of hardinesse and might
Come him of love, his ladies thanke to win,
That altirid his spirite so within.

In time of truce on hauking would he ride,
Or ellis hunt the bore, beare, or lioun,
The smalè bestis let he gon beside;
And whan that he come riding into' the toun
Ful oft his lady from her window down,
As fresh as faucon comin out of mue,
Ful redy was him godely to salve.

And most of love and vertue was his speche,
And in dispite had he al wretchidnesse;
And doutlesse no nede was him to beseche
To honourin them that had worthinesse,
And esin 'hem that werin in distresse;
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde
That lovir was whan he it wist or herde.

For, soth to faine, he lost helde every wight
But if he were in Lov's high service,
I menè folke that aught it ben of right;
And ore al this so wel coude he devise
Of sentiment, and in so uncouth wise
Al his array, that every lovir thought
That al was well what so he said or wrought.

And though that he become of blode royal,
Him list of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to eche in general,
For which he gate him thanke in every place:
Thus wouldè Love, iheried be his grace!

That pride and ire, envie and avarice,
He gan to flie, and every othir vice.

Thou lady bright, the doughtir of Dione!
Thy blinde and wingid sonne eke, Dan Cupide!
Ye Sustrin Nine eke! that by Helicone
In hil Parnassio listin for to abide,
That ye thus ferre han deinid me to gide
I can no more, but sens that ye wol wende
Ye beried ben for aie withoutin ende!

Through you have I said fully in my song
Th' effecte and joie of Troilus service,
Al be that there was some disese among,
As mine auctour to listith to devise:
My 'thirde Boke now ende I in this wise,
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Creseide, his owne ladie swete.

TROILUS & CRESEIDE.

PROCEMIUM LIBRI QUARTI.

BUT all to litill, welaway the while!
Lastith fuche joie, ithonkid be Fortune,
That semith trewist whan she woll begile,
And can to folis so her songe entune
That she 'hem hent and blent, traitour commune,
And whan a wight is from her whele ithrowe
Than laughith she, and makith him the mowe.
From Troilus she gan her brightè face
Away to writhe, and toke of him non hede,
And caste him clene out of his ladie's grace,
And on her whele she set up Diomede,
For which min hert right now ginnith to blede;
And now my pen, alas! with which I write,
Quakith for drede of that I must endite:

For how Creseidè Troilus forfoke,
Or at the lest how that she was unkinde,
Mote hennisforth ben matir of my Boke,
As writin folke through which it is in minde;
Alas! that thei should evir causè finde
To speke her harme! and if thei on her lie
Iwis them selfe should have the vilanie.
O ye Erinnyes! Night'is doughtirs thre,
That endeleffe complaine evir in paine,
Megæra, Alecto, and Tyfiphone,
Thou cruil Mars eke! fathir of Quirine,
This ilke Fourth Boke helpith me for to fine,
So that the loos of love and life isere
Of Troilus be fully shewid here.

INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS.

LYGGING in host, as I have saide er this,
The Grekis strong aboutin Troie toun,
Bifell that whan that Phœbus shining is
Upon the breste of Hercules Lioun
That Hector with many a bold boroun
Cast on a daie with Grekis for to fight,
As he was wont, to greve 'hem what he might.

N'ot I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpose and that day thei fightin mente;
But on a daie wel armid bright and shene
Hector and many' a worthy knight out wente
With spere in honde, and with bigge bowis bente,
And in the berde, withoutin lengir lette,
Ther fomen in the felde anon 'hem mette.

The longè day with speris sharpe igrounde,
With arowes, dartis, swerdes, and macis fel,
Thei fight, and bringin horse and man to grounde,
And with ther axis out the brainis quel;
But in the last shoure, the sothe for to tel,
The folke of Troie 'hem selvin so misleden
That with the worse at night homeward thei fleden.

At whichè day was takin Antenor,
Polydamas, and also Menestes,
Xantippe, Sarpedon, Polystenor,
Polite, or the Trojan, Dan Ruphes,
And othir lessè folke, as Phebuses,
So that for harme that daie the folke of Troie
Dredin to lese a grete parte of ther joie.

Of Priamus was yeve, at Grekes request,
A time of truce, and tho thei gonnin trete
Ther prisoners to chaungin most and lest,
And for the surplus yevin sommis grete;
This thing anon was couthe in every strete,
Bothe in th' asslege, in toun, and every where,
And with the first it came to Calchas ere.

When Calchas knew this tretise should yholde,
In consistorie amonge the Grekis sone,
He gan in thringe forthè with the lordis olde,
And set him there as he was wont to done,
And with a chaungid face 'hem bade a bone,
For love of God, to done that reverence
To stintin noise, and yeve him audience.

Than said he thus, Lo! Lordis mine, I was
Trojan, as it is knowin out of drede,
And if that you remembre I am Calchas,
That aldirfirst yave comfort to your nede,
And toldè wel howe that you shildin spede,

For dredèlesse through you shal in a stounde
Ben Troie ibrent, and betin down to grounde.

And in what forme or in what manir wise
This toun to shende, and al your lust atcheve,
Ye have er this wel berde me you devise;
This knowin ye, my Lordis, as I leve,
And for the Grekis werin me so leve,
I came my selfe in my propir persone
To teche in this how you was best to done.

Having unto my trefour ne my rent
Right no regarde in respecte of your ese,
Thus al my gode I leste and to you went,
Wening in this you, Lordis, for to plesse;
But al that losse ne doth me no disese;
I vouchsafe do, as wisely have I joi,
For you to lese al that I have in Troie,
Save of a doughtir that I leste, alas!
Sleping at home when out of Troie I stert:
O sterne, o cruil fathir that I was!
Howe might I have in that so hard an hert?
Alas that I ne' had brought her my shert!
For sorow' of which I wol nat live to morow
But if ye, Lordis, rewe upon my sorow.

For bicause that I sawe no time er now
Her to delivre' I holdin have my pees,
But now or nevir, if that it like you,
I may her have right sonè nowè doubtles:
O helpe and grace amongis al this pees!
Rewe on this oldè caitife in distresse,
Sith I through you have all this heviness.

Ye have now caught and fettrid in prison
Troyans inowè, and if your willis be
My childe with one may have redemption;
Now for the love of God and of bounte
One of so fele, alas! so yefe him me:
What nede were it this prayir for to wernie,
Sith ye shul have both folke and toun as yernè.

On peril of my life I shal nat lie,
Apollo hath me toldè ful faithfully;
I have eke foundin by astronomy,
By sort, end eke by augury, trewely,
And dare wel saie the time is fastè by
That fire and flambe on al the toun shal sprede,
And thus shal Troie yturne to ashin dede.

For certaine Phœbus and Neptunus bothe,
That makidin the wallis of the toun,
Ben with the folke of Troie alwaie so wroth

That thei wol bring it to confusioun;
Right in dispite of King Laomedoun,
Bicause he n'olde payin 'hem ther hire,
The toun of Troie shal ben set on fire.

Telling his tale alway this oldè grey,
Humble in speche and in his loking eke,
The faltà terris from his eyin twey
Ful fast yronnin down by eithir cheke;
So long he gan of focour 'hem beseke
That for to hele him of his sorowes fore
Thei gave him Antenor withoutin more.

But who was glad inough but Calchas tho?
And of this thing ful sone his nedis leide
On them that sholdin for the tretise go,
And them for Antenor ful oftè preide
To bringin home King Thoas and Creseide;
And whan Priam his safe conduct sent,
Th' embassadours to Troie streight they went.

The cause i-tolde of ther comming, the olde
Priam the King ful sone in generall
Gan hereupon his parliment to holde,
Of whiche th' effecte rehercin you I shall:
Th' embassadours ben answerde for finall
The eschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
'Hem likith wel, and forth in thei procede.

This Troilus was present in the place
Whan askid was for Antenor Creseide,
For whiche ful sone to chaungin gan his face,
As he that with tho wordis wel nigh deide;
But nathèlesse he no worde to it seide,
Lest men should his affection espie;
With mann'is hert he gan his sorowes drie.

And ful of anguish and of gresly drede
Abode what othir lordes would to it sey,
And if that thei would graunt, as God forbede!
Th' eschaunge of her; then thought he thinges
First how to save her honor, and what wey [twey
He mightè best th' eschaunge of her withstonde;
Ful fast he cast how allè this might stonde.

Love him made allè prest to done her bide,
And rathir dyin than that she should go,
But Reason said him on that othir side
Withoutin assent of her do nat so,
Lest for thy werkè she would be thy foe,
And sain, that through thy meddling is iblowe
Your bothè love ther it was erst not knowe.

For whiche he gan deliberen for the beste,
And though the lordis wouldin that she went
He wouldè suffir them graunt what 'hem lest,
And tel his lady first what that thei ment;
And when that she had said him her entent,
Theraftir would he werkin all so blive
Tho al the world ayen it would ystrive.

Hector with that full wel the Grekis herde
For Antenor how thei would have Creseide,
Gan it withstonde, and sobirly answerde;
Sirs, she ne is no prisoner (he seide);
I n'ot en you who that this chargè leide,
But on my parte ye maie eftsones 'hem tell
We usi n here no women for to sell.

The noise of peple upstert then atones
As brimme as blase of strawe iset on fire,
For infortune it wouldè for the nones

Thei sholdin ther confusion desire.

Hector, (quod thei) what gost may you enspire
This woman thus to shilde, and done us lese
Dan Antenor? a wrong waie now ye chese

That is so wise, and eke so bolde baroun,
And we have nede of folke, as men may se;
He is one of the gretist of this toun:

O Hector! lette suche thy fantasies be;
O King Priam! (quod thei) thus seggè we,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,
And to delivir Antenor thei preide.

O Juvenal, Lorde! trewe is thy sentence,
That litil wenin folke what is to yerne,
That thei ne findin' in ther desire offence,
For cloude of errour ne lette 'hem discerne
What best is; and lo! here ensample' as yerne;
These folke desirin now deliviraunce
Of Antenor, that brought 'hem to mischaunce:

For he was aftir traitour to the toun
Of Troy, alas! thei quitte him out to rathe:
O nicè world, lo thy discrecion!
Creseide, which that nevir did 'hem scathe,
Shal nowe no lengir in her blisse bathe,
But Antenor he shal come home to toun,
And she shal out: thus said both heere and houn,

For which delibered was by parliment
For Antenor to yeldin out Creseide,
And it pronouncid by the President,
Although that Hector nay ful oftè praide;
And finally, what wight that it withsaide
It was for naught; it must yben and should,
For substance of the parliment it would.

Departid out o' th' parliment echone,
This Troilus, withoutin wordis mo,
Unto his chambre spedde him fast alone,
But if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he bad out fastè for to go,
Bicause that he would slepin, as he faide,
And hastily upon his bedde him laide.

And as in wintir levis ben birafte
Eche aftir othir til the trees be bare,
So that there n'is but barke and braunche ilafte,
Lithe Troilus biraft of eche welfare,
Iboundin in the blackè barke of care,
Disposid wode out of his witte to breide,
So sore him fate the chaunging of Creseide.

He rist him up and every dore he shette
And window eke, and tho this wofull man
Upon his bedd'is side adoune him sette,
Ful like a ded image, both pale and wan,
And in his brest the hepid wo began
Out brust, and he to workin in this wise,
In his wodenesse, as I shal you devise.

Right as the wildè bulle beginnith spring |
Now here now there, idartid to the herte,
And of his deth rorith in complaining,
Right so gan he about the chambre sterte,
Smiting his brest aie with his fistis smerte;
His hed to the wall, his body to the grounde,
Ful oftè he swapte, him selvin to confounde.

His eyin two for pite of his herte
Out stremidin as swifte as wellis twey;
The highè sobbis of his sorowes smerte

His speche him reſte; unnethis might he ſey
O Deth, alas! why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Acurſid be that day which that Nature
Yſhope me to ben a liv'is cature!

But aſtir, whan the fury' and al the rage
Whiche that his herte twiſt and faſtè threſt
By length of time ſomewhat gan aſwage,
Upon his bedde he laide him down to reſt;
But tho begon his teres more out to breſt,
That wondir is the body maie ſuffiſe
To halſe this wo which that I you deviſe.

Than ſaide he thus; Fortune, alas the while!
What have I done? what have I the agilt?
How mightiſt thou for routh thus me begile?
Is there no grace? and ſhal I thus be ſpilt?
Shal thus Creſeide away for that thou wilt?
Alas! how mightiſt thou in thine hert finde
To ben to me thus cruil and unkinde?

Have I the nat honourid al my live,
As thou well woteſt, above the goddis all?
Why wilt thou then of this joie me deprive?
O Troilus! what may men now the call
But wretche of wretchis, out of honour ſal
Into miſe'ry? in whiche I wol bewaile
Creſeide, alas! til that the brethe me faile.

Alas, Fortune! if that my life in joie
Diſpleſid had unto thy ſoule envie,
Why ne' haddiſt thou my fathir King of Troy
Biraſte the life, or done my brethrin die,
Or ſlaine my ſelfe, that thus complaine and crie?
I combre world that maie of nothing ſerve,
But evir die and never fully ſterve.

If that Creſeide alone werin me laſte
Naught raught I whidir thou woldiſt me ſtere,
And her, alas! than haſt thou me biraſte:
But evirmore, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that moſte is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gierfull violence;
Thus am I loſt, there helpith no defence.

O very Lorde! o Love, o god! alas!
That knowiſt beſt min hert and al my thought,
What ſhal my ſorowfull life done in this caas
If I forgo that I ſo dere have bought?
Sens ye Creſeide and me have fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertis ſeled,
How maie ye ſuffre', alas! it be repeled?

What I may done I ſhal, while I may dure
On live, in turment and in cruill paine;
This infortune and this diſavinture
Alone as I was borne I wol complaine,
Ne nevir wol I ſene it ſhine or raine,
But ende I wol as Edippe in derkneſſe
My wofull life, and dying in diſtreſſe.

O wery ghooſt! that errith to and fro,
Why n'ilt thou ſlien out of the wofulleſt
Body that evir might on grounde ygo?
O ſoule! lurking in this woful neſte,
Flee forth anon, and do mine herte to breſte,
And ſolowe Creſeide thy lady dere;
Thy right place is no lengir to ben here.

O woful eyin two! ſens your diſporte
Was al to ſene Creſeid's eyin bright,
What ſhal ye done, but for my diſcomforte

Stondin for naught and wepin out your ſight,
Sens ſhe is queint that wont was you to light?
In veine from this forth have I eyin twey
If formid, ſens your vertue is away.

O my Creſeide! o lady ſoveraine!
Of this ſorowfull ſoule that thus crieth
Who ſhall now yevin comfort to thy paine?
Alas! no wight; but whan mine hert ydieth
My ſpirite, whiche that ſo unto you hieth,
Receve in gre, for that ſhal aie you ſerve;
Forthy no force is tho the body ſterve.

O ye lovirs! that high upon the whele
Ben ſette of Fortune, in gode avinture
God lene that ye aie findin love of ſtele,
And longe mote your life in joy endure,
But when ye comin by my ſepulture
Remembrith that your ſelowes reſlieth there,
For I lovid eke, though I unworthy were.

O olde unwholſome and miſlivid man,
Calchas I mene! alas! what eild the
To ben a Greke ſens thou art borne Trojan?
O Calchas! whiche that wolt my banè be,
In curſid time was thou borne for me;
As woulde bliſſfull Jove for his joye
That I the had where that I would in Troie!

A thouſande ſighis hottir than the gleden
Out of his breſt eche aſtir othir wente,
Medlid with plaintis newe, his wo to fede,
For whiche his woful teris nevir ſtente;
And, ſhortly, ſo his ſorowes him to rente,
He woxe ſo mate that ne joy nor penaunce
He ſelith none, but lyith in a traunce.

Pandarus, whiche that in the parliment
Had herde what every lord and burgeis ſeid,
And how ſul grauntid was by one aſſent
For Antenor to yeldin out Creſeide,
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wit to breide,
So that for wo he ne wiſt what he mente,
But in a rage to Troilus he wente.

A certaine knight that for the time kepte
The chambre dore undid it him anone,
And Pandarus, that ſul tendirly wepte,
Into the derke chambre as ſtil as ſtone
Towarde the bedde gan ſoftly ſor to gone,
So confuſe that he ne wiſt what to ſay;
For very wo his witte was nigh away.

And with his chere and loking al to torne
For wo of this, and with his armis folden,
He ſtode this woful Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden;
But Lord! ſo oftin gan his hert to colden,
Seying his frende in wo, whoſe hevineſſe
His herte ſlough, as thought him, for diſtreſſe.

This woful wight, this Troilus, that ſelte
His frende Pandare icomin him to ſe,
Gan as the ſnow ayenſt the ſunne to melte,
For whiche this woful Pandare of pite
Gan ſor to wepe as tendirly as he;
And ſpecheleſſe thus ben theſe ilke twey,
That neithir might for ſorow o worde ſey.

But at the laſt this wofull Troilus,
Nigh did for ſmert, gan breſtin out to rore,
And with a ſorowful noiſe he ſaid thus,

Amonges his sobbis and his sighis fore;
Lo! Pandare, I am ded, withoutin more;
Hast thou nat herde at parliment, he seide,
For Antenor how losse is my Creseide?

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerid, and saide Yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trewe
That I have herde, and wote all how it is!
O mercy, God! who would have trowid this?
Who would have wende that in so lite a throw
Fortune our joye would havin ovirthrow?

For o! in this world there is no cature,
As to my dome, that evir sawe ruine
Straungir then this through case or avinture;
But who may al eschue or al devine?
Suche is this world. Forthy I thus define,
Ne trustith no wight to finde in Fortune
Aie propertie; her yestis ben commune.

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad,
To sorowen thus why listest thou in this wise,
Sens thy desire al wholly hast thou had,
So that by right it ought inough suffice?
But I, that never felte in my service
A frendly chere or loking of an eye,
Let me thus wepe and wailin til I dye.

And ore al this, as thou wel wost thy selve,
This toun is ful of ladies al aboute,
And to my dome fairir than suchè twelve
As er she was shall I finde in a route,
Ye, one or twey, withoutin any doute:
Forthy be glade, mine ownè derè brother!
If she be lost we shal recovre' an other.

What! God forbid alway that eche plesaunce
In o thing were, and in non othir wight;
If one can finge, anothir can wel daunce,
If this be godely she is glad and light,
And this is faire and that can gode aright;
Eche for his vertue holdin is full dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivere.

And eke, as writ Zanis, that was full wise,
The newè love out chasith oft the old,
And upon newe case lyith newe avise;
Thinke eke thy self to savin thou art hold;
Soche fire by processe shall of kindè cold,
For sens it is but casuell plesaunce
Some case shal put it out of remembraunce.

For all so sure as daie cometh astir night
The newè love, labour, or othir wo,
Or ellis feldè seing of a wight,
Doen old affections all ovir go;
And for thy part thou shalt have one of tho
To abredge with thy bittir painis smerte;
Absence of her shall drive her out of herte.

These wordis saied, he for the nonis all
To helpe his frende, lest he for sorowe deide,
For doubtlesse to doen his wo to fall
He ne raught nat what unthrift that he seide;
But Troilus, that nigh for sorowe deide,
Toke little hede of all what ere he ment;
One ere it herd, at the othir out it went.

But at the last he answerde, and said, Frend,
This lechcraft, or yhelid thus to be,
Were well sitting if that I were a fend,

To traifin her that true is unto me;
I praie God let this counsaill never the,
But doe me rathir sterve anon right here
Er I thus doen as thou me wouldist lere.

She that I serve iwis, what so thou seie,
To whom mine herte enhabite is by right,
Shall have me wholly her's till that I deie;
For, Pandarus, sens I have trouth her hight,
I woll nat ben untrue for any wight,
But as her man I woll aie live and sterve,
And never wolle non othir cature serve.

And there thou saiest thou shalt as faire yfind
As she, let be; make no comparifon
To a cature iformid here by Kinde;
O leve, Pandarus! thy conclusion;
I woll nat ben of thine opinion
Touching all this, for whiche I the beseeche
So holde thy pece; thou slaest me with thy speche.

Thou biddist me that I should love another
All freshly newe, and let Creseide go;
It lithe nat in my powir, levè brother,
And though I might yet would I nat doe so:
But canst thou playin raket to and fro,
Nettle' in Docks out, now this now that, Pandare?
Now fould fall her for thy wo that care!

Thou farist eke by nte, thou Pandarus,
As he that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him apace and saith right thus,
Thinke not on smert and thou shalt fèlè none.
Thou maiest me first transmewin in a stone,
And reve me of my passionis all,
Or thou so lightly do my wo to fall.

The deth maie well out of my brest depart
The life, so long maie last this sorowe mine,
But fro my fould shall Creseid's dart
Out nevirmore, but doune with Proserpine,
Whan I am dedde, I woll go won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinnid be we twain.

Thou hast here made an argument full fine,
How that it shouldin lassè pain ybe
Creseide to forgon, for she was mine,
And lived in ese and in felicity:
Why gabbist thou, that saidist erst to me
That him is wors that is fro wele ithrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele iknowe?

But tel me now, sens that the thinketh so light
To chaungin so in love aie to and fro,
Why hast thou nat doen busily thy might
To chaungin her that doeth the al thy wo?
Why n'ilt thou let her fro thine herte go?
Why n'ilt thou love anothir lady swete,
That maie thine hertè settin in quiete?

If thou hast had in love aie yet mischaunce,
And canst it not out of thine hertè drive,
I that have lived in lust and in plesaunce
With her, as moche as any wight on live,
How should I that foryet, and that so blive?
O! where hast thou ben hid so long in mewe
That canst so well and formeliche argewe?

Naie, Pandarus, naught worth is all thy rede,
But douteless for ought that may befall,
Withoutin wordis mo, I woll ben dede.

O Deth ! that endir art of sorowes all,
Come now, sens I so oft astir the call,
For sely is that deth, soth for to fain,
That oft iclepid cometh and endith pain.

Well wote I, while my life was in quiete,
Er thou me slue I would have yevin hire,
But now thy coming is to me so swete
That in this worlde I nothing so desire :
O Deth ! sens with this sorowe I' am asire,
Thou eithir doe me' anon in teris drenche
Or with thy coldè stroke mine hertè quenche.

Sens that thou slaest so sele in sondry wise
Aycnst ther will, unprayid, daie and night,
Doe me at my requestè this service,
Deliver now the worlde, so doest thou right,
Of me, that am the sorowfullist wight
That evir was, for time is that I sterve
Sens in this world of right naught do I serve.

This Troilus in teris gan distill,
Aslicour out of a limbeck full fast,
And Pandarus gan holde his tongè still,
And to the ground his eyin doune he cast,
But nathèlesse thus thought he at the last ;
What ! parde rathir than my felowe deie
Yet shall I somewhat more unto him seie.

And sayid, Frend, sens thou hast soche distresse,
And sens the list mine argumentis blame,
Why n'ilt thou thy selvin helpe doen redresse,
And with thy manhode lettin all this game ?
Go ravishe her, ne canst thou not for shame ?
And eithir let her out of tounè fare
Or hold her still, and leve thy nicè fare.

Art thou in Troie and hast non hardiment
To take a woman whiche that lovith the,
And would her selvin ben of thine assent ?
Now is nat this a nicè vanite ?
Rise up anon and let this weping be,
And kith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll ben dedde or she shall bein our.

To this answerde him Troilus full soft,
And saied, Iwis, my leve brothir dere !
All this have I my self yet thought full oft,
And more thingis than thou devisist here,
But why this thing is last thou shalt well here,
And whan thou hast me yevin audience
Theraftir maiest thou tell all thy sentence.

First, sin thou wost this toun hath all this werre
For ravishing of women so by might,
It should not ben ysuffrid me to erre,
As it stont now, ne doen so grete unright ;
I should have also blame of every wight
My fathir's graunt if that I so withstode,
Sens she is chaungid for the toun's gode.

I have eke thought, so it were her assent,
To aske her of my fathir of his grace,
Than thinke I this were her accusèment,
Sens well I wot I maie her not purchase ;
For sens my fathir in so high a place
As parliment hath her eschaunge enseled
He n'ill for me his lettis be repeled.

Yet drede I moste her hertè to perturbe
With violence, if I doe soche a game,
For if I would it opynly disturbe

It must be disclaundre unto her name,
And me were levir die than her diffame,
As n'oldè God, but if that I should have
Her honour levir than my life to save,

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can se,
For certain is that sith I am her knight
I must her honour levir have than me
In every case, as lovir ought of right :
Thus am I with desire and reson twight,
Desire for to distourbin her me redeth,
And reson n'ill not, so mine hertè dredeth.

Thus weping, that he ne could nevir cese,
He saied, Alas ! how shall I wretchè fare ?
For well sele I alwaie my love encrese,
And hope is lasse and lasse alway, Pandare ;
Encrefin eke the causis of my care ;
So welawaie ! why n'ill mine hertè brest ?
For why ? in love there is but little rest.

Pandare answerid, Frend, thou maiest for me
Doen as the list, but had I it so hote,
And thine estate, she should ygo with me ;
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
I n'oldè set all that noise at a grote,
For whan men have well cried than woll thei roun
Eke wondir last but ix daies nere in toun.

Devinith not in reson aie so depe,
Ne curtisly, but helpe thy self anon ;
Bet is that othir than thy selvin wepe,
And namily sens ye two ben all one :
Rise up, for by mine hedde she shall not gone,
And rathir ben in blame a little found
Than sterve here as a guat withoutin wound.

It is no shame unto you ne no vice
Her to withholdin that the lovith moste :
Paravinture she might holde the for nice
To lette her go thus to the Grekis hoste :
Thinke eke *Fortune*, as well thy selvin woste,
Helpith the bardie man to his emprise,
And weivith wretchis for ther cowardise.

And though thy lady would alite her greve,
Thou shalt thy self thy pece hereaftir make ;
But as to me certain I can not leve
That she would it as now for evill take,
Why shouldè than for fere thine hertè quake ?
Thinke how that Paris hath, that is thy brother,
A love, and why shal thou not have another ?

And, Troilus, o thing I dare the swere,
That if Creseidè, whiche that is thy lese,
Now lovith the as well as thou doest here,
God helpe me so, she n'ill not take agrese
Though thou do bote anon in this mischese ;
And if she wilnith fro the for to passe
Than is she falsè, so love her well the lasse.

Forthy take hert, and thinke right as a knight
Through love is brokin al daie every lawe ;
Kith now somewhat thy corage and thy might ;
Have mercie on thy self ; for any awe
Let not this wretchid wo thine hert ygnawe,
But manly set the worlde on fixe and seven,
And if thou die a martyr go to heven.

I woll my self ben with the at this dede,
Though I and all my kin upon a stound
Should in a strete as doggis liggin dede.

Through-girt with many a wide blodie wound;
In every case I wolle a frend be found;
And if the liste here steruyn as a wretche
Adieu, the devill speðe him that retche!

This Troilus gan with tho wordis quicke,
And sayid, Frend, graunt mercie! I assent,
But certainly thou maieft nat so me pricke,
Ne paine none ne maie me so tourment,
That for no case, it is not mine entent,
At short wordis, though that I dyin should,
To ravish her but if her self it would.

Why, so mene I (quod Pandare) al this day;
But tell me than, hast thou her well assaied
That sorowest thus? and he answerde him Naie.
Whereof art thou (quod Pandare) than dismaied,
That n'oste not that she wol ben il apaied
To ravish her, fens thou hast not ben there,
But if that Jove the tolde it in thine ere?

Forthy rise up, as naught ne were, anon,
And washe thy face, and to the king thou wend,
Or he maie wondrin whidir thou art gon;
Thou must with wisedome him and othir blend,
Or upon case he maie astir the send
Of thou be ware: and, shortly, brothir dere!
Be glad, and let me werke in this mattere;

For I shall shape it so that sikirly
Thou shalt this night somtime in some manere
Come spekin with thy ladie privily,
And by her wordis, eke as by her chere,
Thou shalt full sone aperceve and well here
Of her entent, and in this case the best;
And fare now well, for in this point I rest.

The swiftè Fame, whiche that fals thingis
Equall reportith like the thingis true,
Was throughout Troie isled with prest wingis
Fro man to man, and made his tale all newe,
How Calchas doughtir with her brightè hewe
At parliment, withoutin wordis more,
Igrauntid was in chaunge of Antenore.

The whiche tale anon right as Creseide
Had herd, she, whiche that of her fathir rought
(As in this case) right naught, ne whan he deide,
Full busily to Jupiter besought
Yeve him mischaunce that this tretis brought:
But, shortly, lest these talis sothe were
She durst at no wight askin it for fere.

As she that had her hert and all her minde
On Troilus iset so wondir fast
That all this world ne might her love unbind,
Ne Troilus out of her herte cast,
She would ben his while that her life maie last;
And she thus brennith bothe in love and drede
So that she ne wist what was best to rede.

But as men sene in toune and all about,
That women use ther frendis to visite,
So to Creseide of women came a rout
For pitous joie, and wendin her delite,
And with ther talis, dere inough a mite,
These women, whiche that in the cite dwell,
Thei set 'hem doune, and saied as I shall tell.

(Quod first that one) I am glad truely
Bicause of you, that shall your fathir se.
Anothir saied, I wis so am not I,

For all to little hath she with us be.
(Quod tho the thirde) I hope iwis that she
Shall bringin us the pece on every side,
That whan she goth Almightye God her gide!

Tho wordis and tho womannishe thingis
She herd 'hem right as though she thennis were,
For God it wote her herte on othir thing is;
Although the body sat emong 'hem there
Her advertence is alwaie ellis where;
For Troilus full fast her soule fought;
Withoutin worde on him alwaie she thought.

These women that thus wendin her to plesse
Aboutin naught gon all ther talis spende;
Soche vanite ne can deen her none ese,
As she that all this mene while brende
Of othir passion than thei ywende,
So that she felte almoste her herte die
For wo, and werie of that companie.

For whiche might she no lengir restrain
Her teris, thei ganin so up to well,
That gavin signis of her bittir pain
In whiche her spirite was and must ydwell,
Remembring her from heven unto which hel
She fallin was fens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sight.

And thilkè folis sitting her about
Wendin that she had wept and sighid sore,
Bicause that she shouldin out of the rout
Departin, and nevir plaie with 'hem more;
And thei that haddin knowin her of yore
Se her so wepe, and thought it was kindnesse,
And eche of 'hem wept eke for her distresse.

And busilie thei gonnin her comforte
On thing God wot on which she little thought,
And with ther talis wendin her disporte,
And to be glad thei oftin her besought;
But soche an ese therwith thei in her wrought
Right as a man is esid for to fele
For ache of hedde to clawen him on his hele.

But astir all this nice vanite
Thei toke ther leve, and home thei wentin all;
Creseide, full of sorowful pite,
Into her chambre up went out of the hall,
And on her bedde she gan for dedde to fall,
In purpose nevir thennis for to rise,
And thus she wrought, as I shall you devise.

Her owndid heer, that sonnyshe was of hewe,
She rent, and eke her fingirs long and smale
She wrong ful oft, and bade God on her rue,
And with the death to doe bote on her bale;
Her hewe, whilom bright, that tho was pale,
Bare witnesse of her wo and her constreint,
And thus she spake, sobbing in her compleint:

Alas! (quod she) out of this regioun
I, wofull wretche and infortunid wight,
And borne in cursid constellacioun,
Mote gon, and thus departin fro my knight!
Wo worthe, alas! that ilkè day is light
On which I sawe him first with eyin twain
That causith me and I him all this pain!

Therwith the teris from her eyin two
Doune fell as showris full in Aprill swithe,
Her white brest she bet, and for the wo

Aftir the deth ſhe cried a thouſande ſithe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lith
She mote forgon, for whiche diſavinture
She helde her ſelfin a forloſt cature.

She ſaied, How ſhall he doen and I alſo !
How ſhould I live if that I from him twin !
O derè herte eke, that I love ſo,
Who ſhall that ſorowe ſlaen that ye ben in !
O Calchas, fathir ! thine be all this fin !
O mothir mine, that clepid were Argive,
Wo worth that daie that thou me bare on live !

To what fine ſhould I live and ſorowen thus ?
How ſhould a fiſhe withoutin watir dure ?
What is Creſeide worth from Troilus ?
How ſhould a plant or' any othir cature
Livin withoute his kindly noriture ?
For whiche full oft a byword here I ſeie,
'That erthèleſs mote grene medis ſone deye.

I ſhall doen thus, ſens neither ſwerd ne dart
Dare I none handle for the cruilte,
'That ilke daie that I fro you depart,
If ſorowe of that n'ill nat my bane be,
'Than ſhall no mete ne drinke yeomie in me
'Till I my ſoule out of my brest unſheth,
And thus my ſelvin woll I doen to deth.

And, Troilus, my clothis everichone
Shull blackè ben, in tokining, herte ſwete !
'That I am as out of this worlde agone,
'That wont ywas you to ſet in quiete,
And of mine ordir aie, till deth me mete,
The obſervaunce evir in your abſence
Shall ſorowe ben, complaint and abſtinence.

Mine herte, and eke the wofull gholt therein,
Biqueth I with your ſpirite to complain
Eternally, for thei ſhall nevir twin;
For though in yerth ytwinnid be we twain,
Yet in the felde of pite, out of pain,
'That hight Elyſium, we ſhall ben yfere,
As Orpheus and Eurydice his fere.

Thus, hertè mine ! for Antenor, alas !
I ſone ſhall be ychaungid, as I wene ;
But how ſhull ye doen in this wofull caas ?
How ſhall your tendir hertè thus ſuſtein ?
But, hertè mine ! foryet this ſorowe, and tene,
And me alſo ; for, ſothly for to ſeie,
So ye well fare I retche not for to deie.

How might it evir redde ben or ifong
'The plaintis that ſhe made in her diſtreſſe ?
I n'ot, but as for me, my little tong,
If I diſcrivin would her hevineſſe,
It ſhould ymake her ſorowe ſemè leſſe
Than that it was, and childiſhly deface
Her hie complaint, and therefore I it pace.

Pandarus, whiche that ſent from Troilus
Was to Creſeide, as ye have herd deviſe,
'That for the beſt it was acordid thus,
And he full glad to doen him that ſervice
Unto Creſeide in a full ſecrete wiſe,
There as ſhe laie in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all wholly his meſſage ;

And ſonde that ſhe her ſelyin gan to trete
Full pitouſly, for with her ſaltè teres
Her brest and face ibathid was full wete,

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Her mightie treſſis of her ſonnishe heres
Unbroidin hangin all about her eres,
Whiche yavin him very ſignall mattire
Of deth, whiche that her hertè gan deſire.

Whan ſhe him ſawe ſhe gan for ſorowe' anon
Her tery face atwixt her armis hide,
For whiche this Pandare is ſo wo bigon
That in the hous he might unneth abide,
As he that felt ſorowe on every ſide,
For if Creſeide had erſt complainid ſore
Tho gan ſhe plain a thouſande timis more.

And in her aſpre plaintè thus ſhe ſeide ;
Pandare, my eme, of joyis mo than two
Was cauſe, cauſing fiſt to me Creſeide,
That now tranſmutid bin in cruil wo,
Wher' ſhall I ſaie to you welcome or no,
That aldirfiſt me brought unto ſerviſe
Of love, alas ! that endith in ſoche wiſe ?

Endith than love in wo ? ye, or men lieth,
And every worldly bliſſe, as thinkith me ;
The ende of bliſſe aie ſorowe occupieth ;
And who ſo trowith not that it ſo be
Let him upon me wofull wretchè ſe,
That my ſelf hate, and aie my birthè curſe,
Feling alwaie fro wicke I go to worſe.

Whoſo me ſeeth ſeeth ſorowe all atonis,
Paine, turment, wo, and plaint, and eke diſtreſſe
Out of my wofull bodie harme there none is,
As langour, anguiſhe, cruill bittirneſſe,
Annoie, ſmarte, drede, furie, and eke ſikneſſe :
I trowe iwis from hevin teris rain
For pite of my aſpre' and cruill pain.

O thou my ſuſtir ! full of diſcomfort,
(Quod Pandarus) what thinkiſt thou to doe ?
Why ne' haſt thou to thy ſelvin ſome reſport ?
Why wilt thou thus thy ſelf, alas ! fordo ?
Leve ail this werke, and take now hede to
That I ſhall ſain, and herken' of gode entent
This that by me thy Troilus the ſent.

Tournid her tho Creſeide a wo making
So grete, that it a deth was for to ſe :
Alas ! (quod ſhe) what wordis maie ye bring,
What woll my dere herte ſendin unto me,
Whiche that I dredè nevir more to ſe ?
Woll he have plaint or teris ere I wende ?
I have inough if he theraſtir ſende.

She was right ſoche to ſene in her viſage
As is that wight that men on bere ybinde,
Her face, like of paradis the image
Was all ichaungid in anothir kinde ;
The plaie, the laughtir, men wer wont to find
In her, and eke her joyis evrichone,
Ben fledde ; and thus lieth Creſeide alone.

About her eyin two a purple ring
Bitrent, in ſothfaſt tokening of her pain,
That to behold it was a dedly thing,
For whiche Pandarus ne might nat reſtrain
The teris from his eyin for to rain ;
But nathèleſſe as he beſt might he ſeide
From Troilus theſe wordis to Creſeide :

Lo ! nece, I trowe well ye han herd all how
The King, with othir lordis, for the beſt
Hath made eſchaunge of Antenor and you,

B b

That cause is of this sorowe and unrest
But how this case doth Troilus molest
This maie none yerthly mann'is tong ysaie;
For very wo his wit is all awaie:

For whiche we have so sorowed he and I,
That into little it had bothe us flawe,
But through my counsaile this daie, finally,
He somewhat hath fro weping him withdrawe,
And semith me that he desirith sawe
With you to ben all night, for to devise
Remedie of this, if there were any wise.

This, short and plain, th' effect of my message,
As ferforthe as any wit can comprehend,
For ye that ben of tourment in soche rage
Maie to no long prologue as now entende,
And hereupon ye maie answere him sende;
And for the love of God, my necè dere!
So leve this wo or Troilus be here.

Grete is my wo, (quod she) and sighid fore,
As she that felith dedly sharpe distresse,
But yet to me his sorowe is mokill more,
That love him bet than he himself I gesse.
Alas! for me hath he soche hevinesse?
Can he for me so pitously complain?
Iwis this sorowe doublith all my pain.

Grevous to me, God wot, it is to twin,
(Quod she) but yet it hardir is to me
To sene that sorowe which that he is in,
For well wot I it woll my banè be,
And die I woll in certain tho (quod she:)
But bid him come er Deth that thus me threteth
Drive out that ghost which in min hert ybeteth.

These wordis saied, she on her armis two
Fill gruffe, and gan to wepin pitously.
(Quod Pandarus) Alas! why doe ye so,
Sens ye well wote the time is faste by
That he shall come? arise up hastily,
That he you nat biwopin thus yfinde,
But ye wol have him wode out of his minde:

For wist he that ye farde in this manere
He would himselfin flea; and if I wende
To have this fare he should not comin here
For all the gode that Priam maie dispende,
For to what fine he would anon pretende,
That know I well; and forthy yet I seie
So leve this sorowe, or plainly, he woll deie:

And shapith you his sorowe for to abredge
And nat encresin, lese necè swete!
Bethe rathir to him cause of plat than edge,
And with some wisdom ye his sorowes bete:
What helpith it to wepin full a strete,
Or though ye bothe in false teris dreint?

But is a time of cure aie than of pleint.

I mene thus, whan I him hithir bring,
Sens ye be wise, and bothe of one assent,
So shapith how to distourbe your going,
Or come ayen sone astir ye he went:
Women ben wise in short avisement;
And let sene how your wit shall now availe,
And what that I maie help it shall nat faile.

Go, (quod Creseide) and, uncle, truily
I shall doen all my might me to restrain
From weping in his sight, and busily

Him for to glad I shall doen all my pain,
And in my hertè sekin every vain:
If to this fore there maie ben foundin salve
It shall not lacke certaine on mine behalve.

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought,
Till in a temple he found him all alone,
As he that of his life no lengir rought,
But to the pitous goddis everichone
Full tendirly he praied and made his mone,
To doen him sone out of this worlde to pace,
For wel he thought there was non othir grace.

And, shortly, all the sothe for to seie,
He was so fallin in dispaire that daie
That uttirly he shope him for to deie;
For right thus was his argument alwaie,
He saied he n'as but lornè, welawaie!
For all that cometh cometh by necessite,
Thus to ben lorne it is my destine:

For certainly this wote I well, he saide
That foresight of the divine purveiaunce
Had sene alwaie me to forgon Creseide,
Sens God seeth every thing out of doutaunce,
And them disposith through his ordinaunce
In his meritis sothly for to be
As thei shall comin by predestine.

But nathèlesse, alas! whom shall I leve?
For there ben grete clerkis many one
That destine through argumentis preve,
And some ysain that nedely there is none,
But that fre choice is yeven us everichone.
O welawaie! so sligh arne clerkis old
That I n'ot whose opinion I maie hold.

For some men sain that God seeth al biforne,
Ne God maie nat decevid ben parde;
Than mote it fallin, though men had it sworne,
That purveiaunce hath sene before to be;
Wherefore I saie that from eterne if he
Hath wist befor our thought eke as our dede
We have no fre choice, as these clerkis rede.

For othir thought nor othir dede also
Might nevir ben but soche as purveiaunce,
Whiche maie not ben discevid nevir mo,
Hath feled biforne withoutin ignoraunce;
For if there might yben a variaunce
To writhin out fro Godd'is purveying
There n'ere no prescience of thing comming;

But it were rathir an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast foreseing;
And certis that were an abusion
That God should have no perfect clere weting
More than we men, that have doubtfuls wening:
But soche an errour upon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wickid cursidenesse.

Eke this is an opinion of some
That have ther top ful high and smothe ishore,
Thei sain right thus, that thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shall come, but thei sain that therfore
That it shal come, therfore the purveiaunce
Wote it before withoutin ignoraunce.

And in this manir this necessite
Retournith in his place contrary againe,
For nedefully behovith it nat be

That thilkè thingis fallin in certaine
That ben purveyed, but nedefully', as thei faine,
Behovith it that thingis which that fall
Than thei in certaine ben purveyid all :

I mene as though I laboured me in this
To enquire which thing cause of which thing be,
As whethir that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of thingis that to comin be parde,
Or if necessite of thing coming
Be the cause certaine of the purveying.

But nowe ne' enforce I me not in shewing
How the' ordir of the causis stant, but wot I
That it behovith that the befalling
Of thingis wistè before certainly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessaryre
To thing to come, al fal it foule or faire :

For if there sit a man yonde on a se,
Than by necessite behovith it
That certis thine opinion sothe be
That wenist or conjectist that he sit;
And furthirovir now ayenwarde hit,
Lo ! right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus ; now herkin, for I wol nat tarie :

I say that if the opinion of the
Be sothe for that he sit, than say I this,
That he mote sittin by necessite,
And thus necessite in either is ;
For in him nede of sitting is iwis,
And in the nede of sothe ; and thus forsothe
There mote necessite ben in you bothe.

But thou maist faine, the man sit nat therefore
That thine opinion of his sitting soth is,
But rathir for the man fate there before,
Therefore is thine opinion sothe iwis :
And I say, though the cause of sothe is this
Cometh of his sitting, yet necessite
Is enterchaungid bothe in him and the.

Thus in the samè wise out of doutance
I maie wel makin, as it semith me,
My resoning of Godd'is purveyaunce,
And of the thingis that to comin be,
By whichè reson men maie wel ise
That thilkè thingis that in erthe befall
That-by necessite thei comin all :

For although that this thing shall come iwis,
Therefore is it purveyid certainly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveyid is ;
Yet nathèlesse behoveth it nedefully
That thing to come be purveyid trewely
Or ellis thingis that purveyid be
That thei betidin by necessite.

And thus suffisith right inough certaine
For to distroie our fre choise everydell ;
But now is this abusin to faine
That falling of the thingis temporell
Is cause of Godd'is prescience eternell ;
Now trewily that is a false sentence
That thing to come should cause his prescience.

What might I wene and I had suche a thought,
But that God purveieth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and ellis nought ?

So might I wene that thingis all and some
That whilom ben bifall and ovrcome
Ben cause of thilkè soveraine purveiaunce
That forwote al withoutin ignoraunce.

And ore al this yet say I more therto,
That right as whan I wote there is a thing
Iwis that thing mote nedefully be so,
Eke right so whan I wote a thing coming,
So mote it come ; and thus the befalling
Of thingis that ben wiste before the tide
Thei mote not ben eschewid on no side.

Than said he thus, Almighty Jove in trone !
That wotest of all this thing the sothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dien sone,
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse.
And while he was in all this hevinesse,
Disputing with himselfe in this matere,
Came Pandare in, and seide as ye maie here :

O mighty God (quod Pandarus) in trone !
Eigh ! who saw er a wise man farin so ?
Why, Troilus ! what thinkist thou to done ?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine ownè foe ?
What ! parde yet is not Creseide ago ?
Why list the so thy selfe sordon for drede
That in thine hed thine eyin semin dede.

Hast thou nat livid many' a yere beforne
Withoutin her, and farde ful wel at ese ?
Art thou for her and for none othir borne ?
Hath Kinde the wrought al only her to plesse ?
Let be, and thinke right thus in thy disese,
That in the dice right as there fallin chaunces,
Right so in love there come and gon plesaunces,

And yet this is a wondir most of al
Why thou thus sorowest, seth thou wost nat yit
Touching her goyng how that it shal fal,
Ne if she can her selfe distourbin it ;
Thou hast not yet assayid al her wit :
A man maie al betime his neckè bede
Whan it shal of, and forowen at the nede,

Forthy take hede of al that I shal say :
I have with her ispoke and longe ibe,
So as accordid was betwixe us twey,
And evirmore me thinkith thus, that she
Hath somewhat in her hert'is privite
Wherwith she can, if I shal aright rede,
Disturbe al this of whiche thou art in drede.

For which my counsel is, whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende,
And blisful Juno, through her gretè might,
Shal (as I hope) her grace unto us sende ;
Mine hert seith certaine that she shal nat wende ;
And forthy put thine hert a while in rest,
And holde thy purpose, for it is the best.

This Troilus answerde, and sighid sore,
Thou saist right wel, and I wil do right so,
And what him list he said unto him more ;
And whan that it was timè for to go
Ful privily himselfe withoutin mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done,
And how thei wrought I shal you tellin sone.

Soth is, that when thei gonnin first to mete
So gan the paine ther hertis for to twiste
That neithir of 'hem othir mightè grete,

But 'hem in armis toke and astir kiste;
The lasse wofull of 'hem bothe ne wiste
Wher that he was, ne might o word out bring,
As I said erst, for wo and for sobbing.

The woful teris that thei letin fall
As bittir werin, out of teris kinde,
For paine, as is ligne aloes or gal;
So bittir teris wept nat, as I finde,
The wofull Myrrha through the barke and rinde,
That in this world ther n'is so hard an hert
That n'old have rewid on ther painis smert.

But whan ther wofull wery gostis twaine
Returnid ben there as 'hem ought to dwell,
And that somewhat to wekin gan the paine
By length of plainte, and ebbin gan the wel
Of ther salt teris, and the hert unswel,
With broken voice, all horse for shrigh, Creseide
To Troilus these ilke wordis seide:

O Jove! I die, and mercy the besече;
Helpe, Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his brest she laid, and lost her speche,
Her wofull spirite from his propir place
Right with the worde away in point to pace:
And thus she lith with hewis pale and grene
That whilom fresh and fairist was to sene.

This Troilus that on her gan beholde,
Cleping her name, and she lay as for ded,
Withoutin answere, and felte her limmes colde,
Her eyin throwin upwarde to her hed,
This sorouful man can now non othir rede,
But oftin time her coldè mouthe he kiste:
Where him was wo God and himself it wiste.

He risith up, and long straite he her leide,
For signe of life for aught he can or may
Can he none finde in nothing of Creseide,
For whiche his songe ful oft is Welaway!
But whan he sawe that spechelesse she lay,
With sorouful voice, and hert of blisse all bare,
He said how she was fro this world ifare.

So astir that he long had her complained,
His hondis wronge, and said that was to sey,
And with his teris salt her brest berained,
He gan tho teris wipin of full drey,
And pitoussly gan for the soule prey,
And said, O Lord! that set armin thy trosse,
Rewe eke on me, for I shal folow' her sone.

She colde was, and withoutin sentement,
For ought he wote, for brethe yet felte he none,
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this worlde agone;
And when he saw there was non othir wonne
He gan her limmis dresse in fuche manere
As men don them that shall ben laide on bere.

And astir this with sterne and cruill herte
His swerd anon out of his sheeth he twight,
Himselfe to fleen, how fore so that him smerte,
So that his soule her soule folowin might
Ther as the dome of Minos would it dight,
Sith Love and cruil Fortune it ne would
That in this world he lengir livin should.

Than said he thus, fulfild of high disdaine;
O cruil Jove! and thou Fortune adverse!
This al and some is, falsely have ye flaine

Creseide, and sith ye may do me no werse,
Fie on your might and werkis so diverse!
Thus cowardely ye shul me nevir winne;
There shal no deth me fro my lady twinne.

For I this world, sith ye have slain her thus,
Wol let, and folow' her spirit lowe or hie;
Shal nevir lovir saine that Troilus
Dare nat for fere with his lady die,
For certaine I wol bere her companie;
But sith ye wol nat suffre' us livin here,
Yet suffrith that our soulis ben ifere.

And thou, Cite! in whiche I live in wo,
And thou, Priam! and brethrin al ifere!
And thou, my mothir! farwel, for I go,
And Atropos! make redy thou my bere,
And thou, Creseide! o swete herte dere!
Receive thou now my spirite, would he sey,
With swerde at hert, al redy for to dey.

But as God would of swough she tho abraide,
And gan to sighe, and Troilus! she cride;
And he answerid, Lady mine, Creseide!
Livin ye yet? and let his swerde doune glide.
Ye, herte mine! that thankid be Cupide,
(Quod she) and therwithal she fore fight,
And he began to glade her as he might;

Toke her in armis two, and kiste her ofte,
And her to glad he did al his entent,
For whiche her gost, that flickered aie alofte,
Into her wofull hert aien it went;

But at the laste, as that her eyin glent
Aside, anon she gan his swerde asprie
As it lay bare, and gan for fere to crie,

And askid him why he had it out drawe?
And Troilus anon the cause her tolde,
And how himself therwith he would have flawe;
For whiche Creseide upon him gan beholde,
And gan him in her armis fast to folde,
And saide, O mercy, God! lo whiche a dede!
Alas! how nighe we werin bothè dede!

Than if I ne hadde spokin, as grace was,
Ye would have flaine your selfe anon? quod she.
Ye, doutlesse. And she answerde, Alas!
For by that ilke Lorde that madè me
I n'olde a forlong waie on live have be,
Astir your deth, to have ben crounid quene
Of al the londe the sunne on shinith shene;

But with this selvè swerde which that here is
My selfin I would have flaine (quod she) tho.
But ho! for we have right inough of this,
And let us rise and straite to beddè go,
And there let us yspekin of our wo,
For by that mortar whiche that I se brenne
Know I ful well that day is nat far henne.

Whan thei wer in ther bedde in armis folde
Naught was it like tho nightis here before,
For petoussly eche othir gan beholde,
As thei that haddin al ther blisse ilorne,
Bewailing al the daie that thei were borne,
Till at the last this wofull wight Creseide
To Troilus these ilke wordis seide:

La, herte mine! wel wot ye this, (quod she)
That if a wight alwaie his wo complaine,
And sekith nat how holpin for to be,

It n'is but folie and entrece of paine;
And fens that here assemblid be we twaine
To findin bote of wo that we ben in,
It were all time right sone for to begin.

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am avifid sodainly,
So wol I tel it you while it is hotte:
Me thinkith thus, that neithir ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to makin skilfully,
For there is art inough for to redresse
That yet is misse, and fleen this hevinesse.

Sothe is, the wo the whiche that we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing ellis is
But for the cause that we should ytwinne;
Confidrid al there n'is no more amis:
And what is than a remedy' unto this
But that we shape us sone for to mete?
This al and some is, my dere herte swete!

Now that I shal wel bringin it aboute
To comen' ayen sone aftir that I go
Therof am I no manir thing in doute,
For dredelasse within a weke or two
I shal ben here; and that it may be so
By alle right, and that in wordis few,
I shal you wel an hepe of wayis shewe;

For whiche I woll nat makin longe sermon,
For time iloste may not recovered be,
But I wol go to my conclusion,
And to the beste in aught that I can se;
And for the love of God forgive it me
If I speke aught aienst your hert'is reste,
For trewily I speke it for the beste;

Making alway a protestacion,
That in effect this thing that I shall say
N'is but to shew in you my mocion
To find unto our helpe the beste way,
And takith it none othirwise I pray;
For, finally, what so ye me commaunde
That wol I done, for that is no demaunde.

Now herkenith this; Ye have well understond
My goyng grauntid is by parlyment,
So ferforth that it may not ben withstond
For al this world, as by my jugement;
And sithe there helpith none avifement
To lettin it, lette it passe out of mind,
And let us shape a bettir waie to finde,

The sothe is this; the twinning of us twaine
Wol us disce and cruilly anoie,
But him behovith somtime havin paine
That servith Love, if that he wol have joie;
And fwh I shal no farthir out of Troie
Than I maie ride aien on halfe a morowe
It ought the lasse causin us for to sorowe;

So as I shal nat now ben hid in mewe,
That day by day, min ownè herte dere!
Sens wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe,
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate yhere,
And er that truce is done I shal ben here;
And thus have ye both Antenor iworne
And me also. Bethe glad now if ye conne.

And thinke it right thus, Creseide is now agen,
But what? she shal come hastily ayen:
And whan? alas! by God, lo, right anon,

Er dayis ten, this dare I safely saine,
And than as erste shall we be bothe saine,
So as we shall togethers evir dwell,
That al this worlde ne might our blisse tell.

I se that oft time, there as we ben nowe,
That for the beste, our counsaile for to hide,
Ye speke nat with me nor I with you
In fourtenight, ne se you go ne ride;
And may ye nat ten dayis than abide,
For mine honour, in suche an avinture?
Iwis ye mowe, or ellis lite endure.

Ye knowe eke howe that all my kin is here,
But if that onely it my fathir be,
And eke mine othir thingis al ifere,
And namily my derè herte ye,
Whom that I n'olde levin for to se
For al this worlde, as wide as it hath space,
Or ellis se I nevir Jov'is face.

Why trowin ye my fathir in this wise
Covetith so to se me, but for drede
Leste in this toun that folkis me dispise
Bicause of him for his unhappy dede?
What wote my fathir what life that I lede?
For if he wist in Troie how wel I fare
Us nedid for my wending nat to care.

Ye sene that every day eke more and more
Men trete of pece, and it supposid is
That men the Quene Helena shall restore,
And Grekis us restore that is amis;
So though there ne were comfort none but this,
That men purposin pece on every side,
Ye may the bett at ese of herte abide:

For if that it be pece, mine herte dere!
The nature of the pece mote nedis drive
That men must entrecommunin ifere,
And to and fro eke ride and gone as blive
Al day as thicke as been flien from an hive,
And every wight have liberty to bleve
Where as him list the bet withoutin leve.

And though so be that pece ther maie be none,
Yet hither, though ther nevir pece ne were,
I must ycome, for whidir should I gone,
Or how, mischauncè I should I dwellin there?
Among tho men of armis evre' in fere?
For whiche, as wisely God my soule rede,
I can nat sene wherof ye shouldin drede.

Have here anothir way, if it so be
That al this thing ne maie you not suffice:
My fathir, as ye knowin wele parde,
Is holdin olde and ful of covitise,
And I right nowe have foundin al the gise
Withoutin nette wherwith I shal him hent,
And herkenith now if that ye wol assent.

Lo! Troilus, men saine full harde it is
The wolfe ful and the wedir whole to have;
This is to saine, that men full oft iwis
Mote spendin parte the remnant for to save;
For aie with golde men maie the hert ygrave
Of him that is set upon covitise;
And how I mene I shal it you devise.

The movable whiche I have in this toun
Unto my fathir shal I take, and saie,
That right for trust and for salvacioun

It sent is from a frende of his or twaie,
The which frendis do fervently him praie
To sendin astir more, and that in hie,
While that this toun stant thus in jeopardie ;

And that shal be of golde huge quantite ;
Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide
This maie be sent by no wight but by me ;
I shal eke shewin him, if pece betide,
What frendis that I have on every side
To doe the wrathe of Priamus to pace
Towardis him, and don him stand in grace.

So what for o thing and for othir, twete !
I shal him so enchauntin with my sawes
That right in hevyn his soule shal he mete ;
For al Apollo or his clerkis lawes,
Or calculing, availith nat thre hawes ;
Desire of golde shal so his soule blende
That as me liste I shal wel make an ende.

And if he would aught by his fort it preve
If that I lie, in certaine I shal fonde
Disturbin him, and plucke him by the sleve,
Makin his sorte, and berin him on honde,
He hath nat wel the goddis undirsonde,
For goddis speke in amphibologies,
And for o sothe thei tellin twenty lies :

Eke drede fond first goddis, I suppose,
Thus shal I saine, and that his cowarde herte
Made him amis the goddis text to glose
Whan he for ferde out of Troie sterte ;
And but I makin him sone to converte,
And done my rede within a day or twey,
I wol to you obligè me to dey.

And trewily, as writtin wel I finde,
That al this thing was said of gode entent,
And that her herte trewe was and kinde
Towardis him, and spake right as she ment,
And that she starfe for wo nigh when she went,
And was in purpose evir to be trewe,
This writin thei that of her werkis knewe.

This Troilus, with hert and eris sprad,
Herde al this thing devisid to and fro,
And verily it semid that he had
The selvin witte, but yet to let her go
His herte misforyave him evirmo ;
But finally he gan his herte wrest
To trustin her, and toke it for the best ;

For which the grete fury of his penaunce
Was quent with hope, and therwith hem bitwene
Began for joye the amorous daunce ;
And as the birdis when the sunne shene
Delitin in ther songe in levis grene,
Right so the wordis that thei spake ifere
Delitin them, and made ther hertis chere.

But nathelless, the wendin of Creseide
For al this world may nat out of his minde,
For whiche ful oft he petously her preide
That of her haste he might her trewe yfinde,
And saide her, Certis if ye be unkinde,
And but ye come at daie set into Troie,
Ne shal I nere have hele, honor, ne joie :

For all so sothe a sunne uprist to morow,
And God so wisely thou me wofull wretche
To rest ybring out of this cruil forow,

I wol my selvin fle if that ye dretche,
But of my deth though litil be to retche,
Yet er that ye me causin so to smerte
Dwel rathir here mine ownè dere swete herte !

For trewily, mine ownè lady dere !
The sleightis yet that I have herd you stere
Ful shapely ben to fallin al ifere,
For thus men saith, *That one thinkith the bere,*
But al anothir thinkith the ledere :
Your fire is wise, and said is out of drede
Men may the wise outrenne and nat outrede.

It is full harde to haltin unespied
Before a crepil, for he can the crafte ;
Your fathir is in sleight as Argus eyed,
For albe' it that his movble' is him birafte
His old sleight is yet so with him laste
Ye shal not blende him for your womanhede,
Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede.

I n'ot if pece shall evirmo betide,
But pece or no, for ernest ne for game,
I wote sith Calchas on the Grekis side
Hath onis ben, and lost so foule his name,
He dare no more come here ayen for shame,
For whiche that we, for ought I can espy,
To trustin on n'is but a fantasie.

Ye shal eke sene your fathir shal you glose
To ben a wife, and, as he can wel preche.
He shal some Greke so prese and wel alose,
That ravishin he shal you with his speche,
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche,
And Troilus, on whom you n'il have routh,
Shal causelesse so stervin in this trouth.

And ore al this your fathir shal dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lornè,
And that th' assègè nevir shal arise ;
For why ? the Grekis have it allè sworne,
Til we ben slaine and down our wallis torne ;
And thus he shal you with his wordis fere,
That aie drede I that ye wol blevin there.

Ye shall eke sene so many' a lusty knight
Among the Grekis, ful of worthinesse,
And eche of hem with herte, wit, and might,
To plesin you done al his businesse,
That ye shull dullin of the rudinesse
Of us the sely Trojans, but if routh
Romordin you or vertue of your trouthe.

And this to me so grevoufe is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende,
Ne dredelesse in me there may nat sinke
O gode opinion if that ye wende ;
For why ? your fathir's sleightis wol us shende :
And if ye gone, as I have tolde you yore,
So thinke I n'am but ded withoutin more ;

For which with humble, true, and pitous, hert
A thousande timis mercie I you praie,
So rewith on mine aspre painis smert,
And doth somewhat as that I shal you saie,
And let us stele away betwixt us twaie,
And thinke that foly' is whan a man maie chese
For accident his substaunce for to lese.

I menè thus, that sene we mowe or daie
Well stele awaie, and ben together so,
What wit were it to puttin in assaie

(In case ye shouldin to your fathir go)
If that ye mightin come aien or no?
Thus mene I, that it were a grete folie
To put that sikirnesse in jeopardie.
And, vulgarly to spekin of substaunce,
Of tresour may we bothe with us lede
Ynough to live in honour and plesaunce
Untill the timè that we shall ben dede,
And thus we may eschewin all this drede;
For every othir waie ye can recorde
Mine hert iwis maie therwith nat acorde.

And hardily ne dredith no poverté,
For I have kin and frendis ellis where
That though we comin in our bare sherte
Us shuld nevir latke ne golde ne gere,
But ben honourid while we dweltin there;
And go we' anone, for as in mine entent
This is the best, if that ye wol assent.

Creseide with a sighe right in this wise
Answerid him; Iwis, my dere hert trewe!
We maie well stele away as ye devise,
And findin fuche unthrifty wayis newe,
But astirwarde ful fore it wol us rewe;
And helpe me God so at my moste nede
As causelesse ye suffrin al this drede:

For thilkè day that I for cherishing
Or drede of fathir, or for othir wight,
Or for estate, delite, or for wedding,
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight!
Saturnus doughtir Juno, through her might,
As wode as Atalanta do me dwell
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell.

And this on every god celestiall
I swere it you; and eke on eche goddesse,
On every nymph and deite infernall,
On Satyrys and Faunys more and lesse,
That halvè goddis ben of wildirnesse;
And Atropos my thred of life to brest
If I be false. Now trowe me if you lest.

And thou, Simois, that as an arowe clere
Through Troie rennist aie downward to the se,
Be witnesse of this worde that said is here,
That thilkè day that I untrewè be
To Troilus, mine ownè hertè fre!
That thou returne backwarde unto thy well,
And I with body and soule sinke to hell.

But that ye speke awaie thus for to go,
And lettin al your frendis, God forbede
For any woman that ye shouldin so!
And namily sens Troie hath now such nede
Of helpe; and eke of o thing takith hede,
If this were wiste, my life laie in balaunce
And your honor, God shilde us fro mischaunce!

And if so be that pece hereaftir take,
As al daie happith aftir angre game,
Why, Lorde! the sorow' and wo ye woldin make
That ye ne durst comin ayen for shame!
And er that ye jeopardin so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hottè fare,
For hasty man ne wantith nevir care.

What trowe ye the peple eke all aboute
Would of it fay? it is ful light to arede;
Thei woldin fay, and swere it out of doute,

That love ne drave you nat to don this dede,
But luste voluptuous and cowarde drede:
Thus were al losse iwis, mine hertè dere!
Your honour, whiche that now so shinith clere.

And also thinkith on mine honeste,
That flourith yet, how soule I should it shende,
And with what filth it spottid shouldè be
If in this forme I shouldè with you wende:
Ne though I lived unto the worldis ende
My name should I nevir ayenward winne:
Thus were I lost, and that were routh and sinne,

And forthy fle with reson al this hete;
Men saine, *The suffraunt overcometh parde,*
Eke *Who so wel have life mote letè*;
Thus makith vertue of necessite
By pacience, and thinke that lorde is he
Of Fortune aie that naught woll of her retch,
And she ne dauntith no wight but a wretch.

And trustith this, that certis, hertè swete
Or Phœbus sustir, Lucina the shene,
The Lion passith out of this Arite
I woll ben here withoutin any wene;
I mene, as helpe me Juno, hevin's quene,
The tenth daie, but if that deth me assaile,
I woll you sene withoutin any faile.

And now, so this be sothe (quod Troilus)
I shall well suffre unto the tenth daie,
Sens that I se that nede it mote ben thus;
But for the love of God, if it be maie,
So let us stelin privily awaie,
For evre' in one as for to live in rest,
Mine hertè saieth that it woll be the best.

O mercie, God! what life is this? (quod she)
Alas! ye flea me thus for very tene;
I se well now that ye mistrustin me,
For by your wordis it is well ifene:
Now for the love of Cynthia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causelesse for routh,
Sens to be true I have you plight my trouth.

And thinkith wel that somtime it is wit
To spendin a time a time for to win;
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a daie or two atwin:
Drive out tho fantasies you have within,
And trustith me, and levith eke your sorow,
Or here my trouth, I wol nat live til morow:

For if ye wist how fore it doeth me smerte
Ye wouldè cesse of this: for God thou wost
The pure spirite ywepith in mine herte
To sene you wepin whiche that I love most,
And that I mote gon to the Grekis hofte;
Ye, n'ere it that I wist a remedie
To come ayen right here I wouldè die.

But certis I am not so nice a wight
That I ne can imaginin a waie
To come ayen that daie that I have hight,
For who maie holden' a thing that wol awaie
My fathir naught for all his queinte plaie;
And by my thrift my wending out of Troie
Anothir daie shall tourne us all to joie.

Forthy with all mine herte I you beseke,
If that you list doen ought for my praier,
And for the love whiche that I love you eke

That er that I departin fro you here
 That of so gode a comfort and a chere
 I maie you sene that ye maie bring at rest
 Mine hertè, whiche is at the point to brest,
 And ore al this I praie you, quod she tho,
 Mine ownè hert'is sothfast suffisaunce!
 Sith I am thine all whole withoutin me,
 That while that I am absent no plesaunce
 Of othir doe me fro your remembraunce,
 For I am er agast; for why? men rede
 That love is thing aie full of busie drede.

For in this worlde there livith ladie none,
 If that ye were untre, as God defende!
 That so betrayid were or wo begon
 As I, that allè trouthe in you entende;
 And douteless if that othir wende
 I n'ere but dedde, and er ye cause yfinde
 For Godd'is love so beth me naught unkinde.

To this answerid Troilus, and seide,
 Now God, to whom there n'is no cause iwrie,
 Me glad, as wis I nevir to Creseide,
 Sithe thilke daie I saw her first with eye,
 Was false, ne nevir shall till that I die:
 At short wordis, well ye maie me bileve;
 I can no more; it shall be founde at preve.

Graunt mercy, gode hert mine! iwis, (quod she)
 And, blisful Venus! let me nevir sterue
 Er I maie stonde of plesaunce in degre
 To quite him well that so well can deserve,
 And while that God my wit will me conserve
 I shall so doen, so true I have you found,
 That aie honour to me ward shall rebounde;

For trustith well that your estate roiall,
 Ne veine delite, nor onely worthinesse

Of you in werre of turnaie marciall,
 Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richesse,
 Ne madin me to rue on your distresse,
 But morall vertue, groundid upon trouth,
 That was the cause I first had on you routh:

Eke gentle hert, and manhode that ye had,
 And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
 Evèry thing that sownid into bad,
 As rudenesse, and peplishe appetite,
 And that your reson bridlid your delite;
 This made abovin evèry cature
 That I was yours, and shall while I maie dure.

And this may length of yeris nat fordooe,
 Ne remuable Fortunè deface,
 But Jupiter, that of his might maie doe
 The sorowfull be glad, so yeve us grace
 Er nightis tenne to metin in this place,
 So that it maie your herte and mine suffise:
 And fare now well, for time is that ye rise.

And astir that thei long iplanid had,
 And oft ikist, and straite in armis folde,
 The daie gan rise, and Troilus him clad,
 And rusfully his ladie gan behold,
 As he that felt of deth'is caris cold,
 And to her grace he gan him recommaunde;
 Where he was wo this holde I no demaunde;

For mann'is hedde imaginin ne can,
 Ne' entendement confidir, ne tongue tell,
 The cruill painis of this wofull man,
 That passin every tourment doune in hell;
 For whan he sawe that she ne might ydwell,
 Whiche that his soule out of his body rent,
 Withoutin more out of the chambre he went.

TROILUS & CRESEIDE.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

APROCHIN gan the fatall destine
That Jovis hath in disposicioun,
And to you angrie Parcæ, sustrin thre,
Committith to doen execucioun,
For whiche Creseidè must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwellin forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lengir twine.

The goldin tressid Phæbus high on loft
Thryis had allè with his bemis clere
The snowis molte, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tendir levis grene,
Sens that the sonne of Hecuba the Quene
Began to love her first, for whom his sorowe
Was all that she departin should amorowe.

Full redy was at primè Diomedè
Creseide unto the Grekis hoste to lede,
For sorowe' of whiche she felt her hertè blede,
As she that ne wist what was best to rede:
And truily, as men in bokis rede,
Men wistè nevir woman have the care,
Ne was so lothe out of a toun to fare.

This Troilus withoutin rede or lore,
As man that hath his joyis eke forlore,
Was waiting on his ladie evirmore,
As she that was the sothfast croppe and more
Of all his lust or joyis heretofore;
But Troilus, now farewell all thy joie!
For shalt thou nevir sene her est in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere
He gan his wo full manly for to hide,
That well unneth it sene was in his chere,
But at the yatè there she should out ride
With certain folke he hovid her to abide,
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain,
That on his hors unneth he fate for pain.

For ire he quoke, so gan his hertè gnawe,
Whan Diomedè on hors gan him to dresse,
And saied unto himself this ilke sawe;
Alas! (quod he) this foule o wretchidnesse
Why suffre' I it? why n'ill I it redresse?
Were it nat bet at onis for to die
Than evirmore in langour thus to drie?

Why n'ill I make at onis riche and pore
To have inough to doen er that she go?
Why n'ill I bring all Troie upon a rore?
Why n'ill I slaen this Diomedè also?
Why n'ill I rathir with a man or two
Stele her awaie? Why woll I this endure?
Why n'ill I helpin to mine ownè cure?

But why he n'oldè doen so fell a dede
That shall I sain, and why him list it spare:
He had in herte alwaie a manir drede
Lest that Creseide, in rumour of this fare,
Should have ben slain: lo! this was al his care
And ellis certain, as I sayid yore,
He had it doen withoutin wordis more.

Creseide, whan she redy was to ride,
Full sorowfully fighed, and saied Alas!
But forthe she mote for aught that maie betide,
And forthe she ritte a full sobirly pase;
There is none othir remedy in this case:
What wondir is though that her sore smert
Whan she forgoith her owne swete herte?

This Troilus in gise of curtisie,
With hauke on hond, and with an hugè rout
Of knightis, rode and did her companie,
Ypassing all the valey ferre without,
And ferthir would have riddin out of doubt
Full faine, and wo was him to gone so sone,
But tourne he must, and it was eke so doen.

And right with that was Antenor icome
Out of the Grekis hofte, and every wight
Was of him glad, and saied he was welcome;
And Troilus, all n'ere his herte light,
He pained him with all his fullè might
Him to withholde of weping at the lest,
And Antenor he kist, and made grete fest.

And therewithall he must his leve ytake,
And cast his eye upon her pitously,
And nere he rode, his cause for to make,
To take her by the honde all sobirlye;
And Lorde. so she gan wepin tendirlye,
And he full soft and slyghly gan her seie,
Now holde your daie, and doe me not to deie.

With that his coursir tournid he about
With face full pale, and unto Diomede
No werde he spake, ne none of all his rout,
Of whiche the sonne of Tydeus toke hede,
As he that kouthè more than the crede
In soche a craft, and by the rain her hent,
And Troilus to Troie homwardis went.

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell,
Whan that he sawe the folke of Troie awaie,
Thought all my labor shall not ben on idell,
If that I maie, for somewhat shall I saie,
For at the worst it shortin maie our waie,
I have herd saie eke timis twise twelve
He is a fole that woll foryete him selve.

But nathellessè this thought he well inough,
That certainly I am aboutin naught
If that I speke of love or make it tought,
For doutilefs if she have in her thought
Him that I gesse he maie not ben ibrought
So sone awaie; but I shall finde a mene
That she nat yet wete shall what that I mene.

This Diomede, as he that could his gode,
Whan this was doen gan fallin forth in speche
Of this and that, and askin why she stode
In soche disese? and gan her eke beseche,
That if that he encrefin might or eche
With any thing her ese that she should
Commaunde it him, and saied he doen it would:

For truily he swore her as a knight [plese
That ther n'as thing with which he might her
That he n'olde doen his pain and al his might
To doen it, for to doen her herte an ese,
And prayid her she would her sorowe apese,
And saied, Iwis we Grekis can have joie
To honoure you as well as folke of Troie.

He saide eke thus, I wot you thinkith straunge,
No wondir is, for it is to you newe,
Th' acquaintance of these Trojans for to chaunge
For folke of Grece, which that ye nevir knewe;
But woulde nevir God but if as true
A Greke ye should emong us all yfinde
As any Trojan is, and eke as kinde.

And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now
To ben your frende, and help you to my might,
And for that more acquaintance eke of you
Have I had than anothir straungir wight,
So fro this forth I praie you daie and night
Commaundith me, how sore so that me smerte.
To doen all that maie like unto your herte:

And that ye me wold as your brothir trete,
And takith not my frendship in dispite;
And though your sorowes ben for thingis grete,
N'ot I nat why, but out of more respite
Mine hert hath for to amende it grete delite,
And if I maie your harmis nat redresse
I am right sorie for your hevinessè:

For though ye Trojans with us Grekis wroth
Have many a daie ben, alwaie yet parde
O god of Love in sothe we servin bothe:
And for the love of God, my ladie fre,
Whom so ye hate as beth not wroth with me,
For truily there can no wight you serve
That halfe so loth your wrathe would deserve.

And n'ere it that we ben so nere the tent
Of Calchas, whiche that sene us bothè maie,
I would of this you tell all mine entent;
But this enselid till anothir daie:
Yeve me your honde; I am and shall be aie,
God help me so, while that my life maie dure,
Your owne abovin every cature.

Thus saied I nere er now to woman borne,
For God mine herte as wisely glade so
I lovid nevir woman here beforene
As paramours, ne nevir shall no mo;
And for the love of God be not my fo,
All can I not to you, my ladie dere!
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere.

And wondrith nought, min owne lady bright:
Though that I speke of love to you thus blive
For I have herd or this of many a wight
That lovid thing he nere saw in his live;
Eke I am not of power for to strive
Ayenst the god of Love, but him obaie
I woll alwaie, and mercie I you praie.

Ther beth so worthy knightis in this place,
And ye so faire, that everiche of 'hem all
Woll painin him to stondin in your grace;
But might to me so faire a grace befall
That ye me for your servaunt woulde call,
So lowly ne so truily you serve
N'ill none of 'hem as I shall till I sterve.

Creseide unto that purpose lite answerde,
As she that was with sorowe oppressid so
That in effect she naught his talis herde,
But here and there now here a worde or two;
Her thought her sorowfull herte brust atwo;
For whan she gan her fathir ferre espie
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to sie.

But nathèlesse she thonkith Diomedè
Of all his travaile and his godè chere,
And that him list his frendship to her bede,
And she acceptith it in gode manere,
And woll do fain that is him lese and dere,
And trustin him she would, and well she might,
As sayid she, and from her hors she' alight.

Her fathir hath her in his armis nome,
And twentie times he kist his doughtir swete,
And saied, O dere doughtir mine! welcome.
She saied eke she was fain with him to mete,
And stode forth still, mild, muet, and mansuete.
But here I leve her with her fathir dwell,
And forthe I woll of Troilus you tell.

To Troie is come this wofull Troilus
In sorowe abovin all sorowes smert,
With felon loke and with face dispitous,
Tho sodainly doune from his hors he stert,
And through his paleyse with a swollin hert
To chambir went; of nothing toke he hede,
Ne none to him dare speke o worde for drede.

And there his sorowes that he sparid had,
He yave an issue large, and Deth he cride,
And in his throwis frenetike and mad
He cursith Jove, Apollo, and Cupide,
He cursith Bachus, Ceres, and Cypride,
His birthe, himself, his fate, and eke Nature,
And save his ladie every cature.

To bed he goth, and wellith there and turneth
In furie as doeth Ixion in hell,
And in this wise he nigh till daie sojourneth,
But tho began his herte alite unswell
Through teris which that gonnin up to wel,
And pitously he cried upon Creseide,
And to himself right thus he spake and seide:

Where is mine owne ladie lese and dere?
Where is her white brest? where is it? where?
Where ben her armis and her eyin clere
That yesterdaie this timè with me were?
Now maie I wepe alone many a tere,
And graspe about I maie, but in this place
Save a pilowe I find naught to embrace.

How shall I doen? whan shall she come again?
I n'ot, alas! Why let I her so go?
As woulde God I had as tho be flain!
O herte mine, Creseide! o swete so!
O ladie mine! that I love and no mo,
To whom for evirmo mine herte I vowe,
Se how I die; ye n'ill me not rescowe!

Who seith you now, my right lodèsterre?
Who sittith now or stant in your presence?
Who can comfortin now your hert is werre,
Now I am gon whom ye yeve audience?
Who spekith for me now in my absence?
Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I as ill as I ye fare.

How should I thus ten dayis full endure
Whan I the first night havin all this tene?
And how shall she eke, sorowfull cature,
For tendirnesse how shall she this sustene
Soche wo for me? o! pitous, pale, and grene,
Shall woxin ben her freshe womanly face
For langoar er she tourne unto this place.

And whan he fill in any slombringis
Anon begin he shoulde for to grone,
And dremyn of the dredfullist thingis
That might yben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,
Or metyn that he was emongis all
His enemies, and in their hondis fall.

And therewithall his bodie shoulde sterre,
And with the starte all sodainly awake,
And soche a tremour sele about his herte,
That of the fere his bodie shoulde quake,
And therewithall he should a noise ymake,
And semyn as though he should fallin depe,
From high aloft, and than he woulde wepe;

And rewyn on himself so pitously
That wondir was to here his fantasie;
Anothir time he shoulde mightily
Comfort himself, and fain it was folie
So causelesse soche drede and wo to drie,
And eft begin his aspre sorowes newe,
That every man might on his painis rewe.

Who could tell all aright, or full discrive
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine?
Nat all the men that han or ben on live:
Thou, Redir, maiest thy self full well devine
That soche a wo my wit can not define;
On idell for to write it should I swinke
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke.

On hevyn yet the steris werin fene,
Although full pale iwoxin was the mone,
And whitin began the horizon shene
All estwardis, as it is wont to doen,
And Phœbus with his rosie cartè sone
Gan astir that to dresse him up to fare
Whan Troilus hath sent astir Pandare.

This Pandare, that of all the daie before
Ne might have comyn Troilus to se,
Although that he on his hedde it had sworne,
For with the King Priam al daie was he,
So that it laie nat in his liberte
No where to gon, but on the morowe' he went
To Troilus, whan that he for him sent;

For in his herte he coulde well devine
That Troilus all night for sorowe woke,
And that he woulde tell him of his pine;
This knewe he well inough withoutin boke;
For which to chambir streight the way he toke,
And Troilus tho sobirly he grette,
And on the bedde full sone he gan him sette.

My Pandarus! (quod Troilus) the sorowe
Whiche that I drie I maie not long endure;
I trowe I shall not livin till to morowe;
For whiche I would alwaies on avinture
To the devisin of my sepulture
The forme, and of my movble thou dispone
Right as the semith best is for to doen:

But of the fire and flambe funèrall
In whiche my body brennin shall to glede,
And of the fest and playis Palestrall
At my vigile I praie the take gode hede
That that be well, and offir Mars my stede,
My swerde, mine helme, and, levè brothir dere!
My shelde to Pallas yeve that shinith clere.

The poudre' in which mine hert ibrend shall
That praie I the thou take, and it conserue [turn
In a vessell that men clepith an Urne,
Of golde, and to my lady that I serue,
For love of whom thus pitoufly I sterue,
So yeve it her, and doe me this plesaunce
To praie her kepe it for a remembraunce :

For well I felin by my maladie,
And by my dremis now and yore ago,
All certainly that I mote nedis die ;
The oule eke whiche that hight Ascalapho
Hath astir me shrighit all these nightis two :
And god Merc'urie, now of me woful wretch
The soule guide, and whan the list it fetch.

Pandare answerid and saied, Troilus,
My derè frende ! as I have told the yore
That it is folie for to forowen thus,
And causèlesse, for whiche I can no more,
But who so woll not trowin rede ne lore
I can not sene in him no remedie,
But let him worchin with his fantasie.

But, Troilus, I praie the tell me now
If that thou trowe er this that any wight
Hath lovid paramours as well as thou ?
Ye, God wot, and fro many' a worthie knight
Hath his ladie forgon a fourtènight
And he nat yet made halvindele the fare ;
What nede is the to makin all this care ?

Sens daie by daie thou maifest thy selvin se,
That from his love or ellis from his wife
A man mote twinnin of necessite,
Ye, though he love her as his owne life,
Yet n'ill he with himself thus makin strife ;
For well thou wost, my levè brothir dere !
That alwaie frendis maie not ben ifere.

How doen this folke that sene ther loviswedded
By frendis might, as it bitidith oft,
And sene 'hem in ther spousis bedde ibedded ?
God wote thei take it wisely faire and soft ;
For why ? gode hope halt up ther herte aloft,
And for thei can a time of sorowe' endure ;
As time 'hem hurtith a time doeth 'hem cure.

So shouldist thou endure, and lettin slide
The time, and fondè to ben glad and light ;
Tenne dayis n'is not so long to abide ;
And sens she to comin the hath behight
She n'ill her hest brekin for any wight,
For drede the nat that she n'ill finde a waie
To come ayen, my life that durst I laie.

Thy swevines eke, and all soche fantasie,
Drive out, and let 'hem farin to mischaunce,
For thei procede of thy melancolie,
That doeth the sele in slepe all this penaunce :
A strawe for all swevenis signifaunce !
God helpe me so ! I coumpt 'hem not a bene ;
There wot no man aright what dremis mene.

For preftis of the temple tellin this,
That dremis ben the revelacions
Of goddis, and als well thei tell iwis
That thei ben infernalle illusions,
And lechis saine that of complections
Procedin thei, of fast or glotonie ;
Who wot in sothe thus what thei signifie ?

Eke othir sain that through impressions,
As if a wight hath fast a thing in minde,
That thereof comith soche avisions ;
And othir sain, as thei in bokis finde,
That astir timis of the yere by kinde
Men dreme, and that th' effect goth by the mone :
But leve no dreme, for it is nat to doen.

Well worth of dremis aie these oldè wives ;
And truly eke augurie of these foulis,
For fere of which men wenin lese ther lives,
As ravin's qualm, or schriching of these oulis,
To trowin on it bothè false and foule is :
Alas ! alas ! that so noble' a cature
As is a man should dredin soche ordure !

For whiche with all mine hert I the besече
Unto thy self that all this thou foryeve ;
And rise now up, withoutin more speche,
And let us cast how forth maie best be drive
The time, and eke how freshly we maie live
Whan she comith, the which shall be right sone ;
God helpe me so the best is thus to doen.

Rise, let us speke of lustie life in Troie
That we have lad, and forth the time drive,
And eke of time coming us rejoie,
That bringin shall our blisse now so blive,
And langour of these twise dayis five
We shall therwith so foryet or oppresse
That well unneth it doen shall us duresse.

This toun is full of lordis all about,
And truis lastith all this mene while ;
Go we playin us in some lustie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hennis but a mile,
And thus thou shalt the time well begile,
And drive it forth unto that blisfull morowe
That thou her se that cause is of thy sorowe.

Now rise, my derè brothir Troilus !
For certis it non honour is to the
To wepe, and in thy bedde to roukin thus,
For truily of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge a daie, or two, or thre,
The folke wol wene that thou for cowardise
The fainist sick, and that thou darst not rise.

This Troilus answerde, O brothir dere !
This knowin folke that have isuffrid pain,
That though he wepe and make sorowfull chere
That felith harme and smerte in every vain
No wondir is ; and though I evir plain
Or alwaie wepe I am nothing to blame,
Sens I have lost the cause of al my game.

But sithins of fine force I mote arise
I shal arise as sone as er I maie,
And God, to whom mine herte I sacrifice,
So sende us hastily the tennith daie,
For was there nevir soule so saine of Maie
As I shall ben whan she comith in Troie
That cause is of my tourment and my joie.

But whidir is thy rede, (quod Troilus)
That we maie plaie us best in all this toun ?
By God my counsaile is (quod Pandarus)
To ride and plaie us with King Sarpedoun.
So long of this thei spekin up and down
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon thei went.

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was all his live, and full of his prowesse,
With all that might iservid ben on table
That deinte was, all coste it grete richeffe,
He fedde 'hem daie by daie, that soche nobleffe,
As faiden bothe the moste and eke the lest,
Was nere er that daie wiste at any fest:

Nor in this worlde there is none instrument
Delicious through winde or touch on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath er iwent,
That tonge tell or herte maie recorde
But at that fest it was well herd acorde,
Ne' of ladies eke so faire a companie
Or daunce er tho was never sene with eye.

But what availith this to Troilus,
That for his sorowe nothing of it rought,
But evir in one his herte pitous
Full busily Creseide his ladie sought?
On her was evir all that his herte thought,
Now this now that so fast imagining
That gladin iwis can him no festing.

These ladies eke that at this feste bene,
Sens that he sawe his ladie was awaie,
It was his sorowe on 'hem for to sene,
Or for to here on instrumentis plaie;
For she that of his hert berith the kaie
Was absent, lo! this was his fantasie,
That no wight shoulde makin melodie:

Now there n'as hour in all the daie or night,
Whan he was there as no man might him here,
That he ne saied, O lovesome ladie bright!
How have ye farin sins that ye were there?
Welcome iwis, mine owne ladie dere!
But welawaie! all this n'as but a mase;
Fortune his love entendid but to glase.

The lettirs eke that she of oldè time
Had him isent he would alone irede
An hundrid sithe atwixtin none and prime,
Refiguring her shape and womanhede
Within his hert, and every worde and dede
That passid was; and thus he drove to' an ende
The ferthè day, and thennis wolde he wende;

And saide, Leve brothir Pandarus!
Intendist thou that we shall here byleve
Til Sarpedon wol forth conveyin us?
Yet were it fairir that we toke our leve;
For Godd'is love let us now sone at eve
Our leve take, and homwarde let us tourne,
For trewely I n'il nat thus sojourne.

Pandarus answerid, Be we comin hither
To fetchin fire and rennin home again?
God helpe me so I can nat tellin whither
We mightin gone, if I shall sothly faine,
'There any wight is of us more faine
Than Sarpedon; and if we hennis hie
'Thus sodainly I holde it vilanie;

Sith that we seydin we wouldin byleve
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The ferthè day to take of him our leve,
He wouldè wondrin on it trewely:
Let us holde forth our purpose fermely,
And sens that ye behightin him to' abide
Holde forward now, and astir let us ride,

This Pandarus with mochil pine and wo
Made him to dwel; and at the wek'is ende
Of Sarpedon thei toke ther leve to go,
And on ther way they spedin hem to wende.
(Quod Troilus) Now, Lorde, me grace sende
That I maie findin at mine home-comming
Creseide comin, and therwith gan he sing.

Ye halif wode thought ywis Pandarus,
And to him selfe ful softly he seide,
God wote refroidin may this hottè fare
Er Calcas sende Troilus Creseide:
But nethèlesse he japid thus, and seide,
And swore iwis, his hert him wel behight
She wouldin come as sone as er she might.

Whan thei unto the paleis were icomen
Of Troilus thei doun of horse alight,
And to the chambre ther waie have thei nommen,
And unto time that it gan to night
Thei spekin of Creseide the lady bright,
And astir this, whan that 'hem bothe leste,
Thei spede 'hem fro the suppir unto rest.

On morow' as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to' abreide,
And to Pandarus his owne brothir dere,
For love of God, ful pitously he seide,
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide,
For sens we yet maie have none othir fest
So let us sene her paleis at the lest!

And therwithal his meinè for to blende
A cause he fonde into the toun to go,
And to Creseid'is paleis they gone wende;
But Lorde! this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorouful hert brast atwo,
For when he saw her doris sperrid all
Wel nigh for sorow' adoun he gan to fall.

Therwith when he was ware, and gan behold
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost him thought his hert began to cold,
For whiche with chaungid dedly pale face
Withoutin worde he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would he gan so fast to ride
That no wight of his countinaunce aspide.

Than saide he thus; O paleis desolate!
O house of housis whilom best ydight!
O paleis empty and disconsolate!
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light!
O paleis whilom day, that now art night!
Wel oughtist thou to fal and I to die
Sens she is went that wont was us to gie.

O paleis whilom croune of housis al!
Enluminid with sunne of alle blisse,
O ring, of whiche the rubie is out fall!
O cause of wo that cause hast ben of blisse!
Yet sens I may no bet faine would I kisse
Thy coldè doris, durst I for this route;
And farwel shrine of whiche the saint is out!

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie
With chaungid face, and pitous to beholde,
And whan he might his time aright aspie
Aie as he rode to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorow, and eke his joyis olde,
So pitously, and with so ded an hewe,
That every wight might on his sorow rewe.

Fro thinnis forth he ridith up and doune,
And every thing came him to remembraunce
As he rode forth by placis of the toun
In whiche he whilom had all his plesaunce;
Lo! yondir saw I mine owne lady daunce,
And in that temple with her eyin clere
Me captive caught first my right lady dere:

And yondir have I herde ful lustily
My dere hert Creseide laugh, and yondir plaie
Sawe I her onis eke ful blisfully,
And yondir onis to me gan she saie,
Now, gode swete! lovith me wel I you praye;
And yonde so godely gan she me beholde
That to the deth mine hert is to her holde:

And at the cornir in the yondir house
Herde I mine aldirlevist lady dere
So womanly with voice melodiousse
Singin so wel, so godely and so clere,
That in my soule yet me thinkith I here
The blisful sowne, and in that yondir place
My lady first me toke unto her grace.

Than thought he thus, O blisfull Lorde Cupide!
Whan I the processe have in memorie
How thou me hast weried on every side
Men might a boke make of it like a storie;
What nede is the to seke on me victorie
Sens I am thine and wholly at thy will?
What joy hast thou thine ownè folke to spill?

Wel hast thou, Lorde, iwroke on me thine ire,
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greve;
Now mercy, Lorde! thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace mooste of alle lustis leve,
And live and die I wol in thy beleve,
For whiche I ne' aske in guerdon but a bone,
That thou Creseide aien me sende sone.

Distrainin her hert as fast to returne
As thou doest mine to longin her to se,
Than wote I wel that she n'il nat sojourne:
Now blisful Lorde! so cruil thou ne be
Unto the blode of Troie, I praie the,
As Juno was unto the blode Thebane,
For whiche the folke of Thebis caught ther bane.

And astir this he to the yatis wente
Ther as Creseide out rode a full gode paas,
And up and down there made he many' a wente,
And to him selfe ful oft he said, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
As woulde blisful God now for his joie
I might her sene ayen comin to Troie!

And to the yondir hil I gan her gide,
Alas! and there I toke of her my leve,
And yonde I saw her to her fathir ride,
For sorow of whiche mine hert shal to cleve,
And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
And here I dwel, out cast from allè joie,
And shal, til I maie sene her cste in Troie.

And of him selfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale, and woxin lesse
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe
What may it be? who can the sothè gesse
Why Troilus hath al this heviness?
And al this n'as but his melancolie,
That he had of him selfe fuche fantasie.

Anothir time imaginin he would
That every wight that went by the wey
Had of him routhe, and that thei saine should
I am right fory Troilus wol dey:
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: fuche life gan he to lede
As he that stode betwixin hope and drede:

For which him likid in his songis shewe
Th' encheson of his wo as he best might,
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe,
Somwhat his wofull hertè for to light,
And whan he was from every mann'is sight
With softè voice he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye maie here:

O sterre! of which I lost have all the light,
With hertè fore wel ought I to bewaile
That evir derke in turment, night by night,
Towarde my deth with winde I stere and faile,
For whiche the tennith night if that I faile
The giding of thy bemis bright an houre
My ship and me Carybdis woll devoure.

This songè when he thus songin had sone
He fil aien into his sighis olde,
And every night, as was his wont to done,
He stodè the bright mone to beholde,
And al his sorowe he to the mone tolde,
And said, Iwis whan thou art hornid newe
I shal be glad if al the world be trewe.

I saw thine hornis olde eke by that morow
Whan hennis rode my bright lady dere,
That cause is of my turment and my sorow;
For whiche, o bright Lucina the clere!
For love of God ren fast about thy sphere,
For whan thine hornis newe ginnin to spring
Than shal she come that maie my blisse ybring;

The daie is more and lengir every night
Than thei ben wont to be, thim thoughtè tho,
And that the sunnè went his course unright
By lengir waie than it was wonte to go,
And said, Iwis I drede me evirmo
The sunn'is sonne Phaeton be on live,
And that his fathir's carre amisse he drive:

Upon the wallis fast eke would he walke;
And on the Grekis host he would yse,
And to him selfe right thus he would ytalke;
Lo! yondir is mine ownè lady fre,
Or ellis yondir there the tentis be,
And thence comith this ayre that is so fote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote.

And hardily this winde that more and more
Thus stoundemele encrefith in my face
Is of my ladies depè sighis fore;
I preve it thus, for in none othir space
Of al this toun, save onely in this place,
Fele I no winde that sounith so like paine,
It faith Alas! why twinid be we twaine?

This longè time he drivith forth right thus,
Til fully passid was the ninthè night,
And aie beside him was this Pandarus,
That besily did allè his full might
Him to comfort and make his hertè light,
Yeving him hope alway the tenthè morow
That she shal comen and stintin al his sorow.

Upon that othir side eke was Creseide
With women fewe among the Grekis strong,
For whiche ful oft a day Alas! she seide,
That I was borne! wel maie mine herte long
Aftir my deth, for now live I to long;
Alas! and I ne may it not amende,
For now is worse than evir yet I wende.

My father n'il for nothing do me grace
To gone ayen for aught I can him queme,
And if so be that I my terme pace
My Troilus, alas! shal in his hert deme
That I am false, and so it maie wel seme;
Thus shal I have unthonke on every side:
That I was borne so welaway the tide!

And if that I me put in jeopardie
To stele awaie by night, and it befall
That I be caught I shal be holde a spie,
Or ellis, lo! this drede I most of al,
If in the hondis of some wretche I fall
I n'am but lost, al be mine herte trewe:
Now mighty God thou on my sorow rewe!

Ful pale iwoxin was her brighte face,
Her limmis lene, as she that al the daie
Stode whan she durst, and lokid on the place
There she was borne, and she had dwellid aye;
And al the night weping, alas! she laie;
And thus dispeirid out of all cure
She lad her life this soroufull cature.

Ful oft a daie she fighed eke for distresse,
And in her selfe she went aie purtraying
Of Troilus the grette worthinesse,
And al his godely wordis recording
Sens first that daie her love began to spring;
And thus she sette her wofull hert afire
Through remembraunce of that she gan desire.

In all this world there n'is so cruil hert
That her had herd complainin in her sorow
That n'old have wepin for her painis smert;
So tendirly she wept both eve and morow
Her nedid not no teres for to borow;
And this was yet the worst of all her paine,
Ther was no wight to whom she durst complaine.

Ful rewfully she lokid upon Troie,
Behelde the touris high and eke the hallis;
Alas! (quod she) the plesaunce and the joie,
The whiche that now al turned into gal is,
Have I had oftin within yondir wallis!
O Troilus! what doest thou now? she seide;
Lord, whethir thou yet think upon Creseide!

Alas! that I ne' had trowed on your lote,
And went with you, as ye me redde er this,
Than had I now not fighid halfe so fore:
Who might have said that I had don amis
To stele awaie with suche one as he is?
But al to late comith the lectuarie
Whan men the corse unto the grave carie.

To late is now to speke of that matere;
Prudence, alas! one of thine eyin thre
Me lackid alway er that I came here,
For on time passid wel remembrid me,
And present time eke could I wel yse,
But future time, er I was in the snare,
Could I not sene, that causith now my care,

But nathelless, betide what may betide,
I shal to morow' at night, by est or west,
Out of this hoste stele on some manir side,
And gon with Troilus where as him lest;
This purpose wol I holde, and this is best;
No force of wickid tongis jonglerie,
For er on love have wretchis had envie:

For who so wol of every worde take hede,
Or rulin him by every wight's wit,
Ne shal he nevir thrivin out of drede,
For that that some men blamin ever yet
Lo othir manir folke commendin it;
And as for me, for al suche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce.

For whiche, withoutin any wordis mo,
To Troie I wol, as for conclusioun.
But God it wote er fully monthis two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun,
For bothe Troilus and Troi toun
Shall knotelless throughout her herte slide,
For she wol take a purpose for to abide.

This Diomede of whom I you tel gan,
Goth now within himselfe aie arguing,
With al the sleight and al that er he can,
How he maie best with shortist tarying
Into his nette Creseid's herte bring;
To this entente he couthe nevir fine;
To fishin her he laide out hoke and line.

But nathelless wel in his hert he thought
That she n'as nat without a love in Troie,
For nevir sithin he her thennis brought
Ne couthe he sene her laugh or makin joie;
He n'ist how best her hert for to acoie,
But for t' assey he said nought it ne greveth,
For *He that naught assayith naught atchevetb.*

Yet said he to him selfe upon a night,
Now am I nat a sole that wote wel howe
Her woe is for love of anothir wight
And herupon to gon assaie her nowe?
I maie well wete it n'il nat ben my prowé,
For wise folke in bokis it expresse,
Men shal nat worwe a wight in bevinesse.

But who so might ywinnin suche a floure
Fro him for whom she mournith night and daie
He might wel saine he were a conqueroure;
And right anone, as he that bold was aie,
Thought in his hert, happin what happin may,
Al should I die I wol her herte seche,
I shal no more lesin but my speche.

This Diomede, as bokis us declare,
Was in his nedis prest and corageous,
With stern voice, and mighty limmis square,
Hardy and testife, strong and chevalrous,
Of dedis like his fathir Tydeus;
And some men saine he was of tonge large,
And heire he was of Caledon and Arge.

Creseide mene ywas of her stature,
Therto of shape, of face, and eke of chere,
There ne mightin ben no fairir cature;
And oftin timis this was her manere
To gone itressid with her heris clere
Down by her colere, at her backe behinde,
Which with a threde of gold she would binde.

And save her bowis joynedin iferer
There n'as no lacke in aught I can espie;
But for to spekin of her eyin clere,
Lo! truily thei writtin that her seien
That paradis stode formed in her eien,
And with her richè beauty evirmore
Strove love in her aie which of 'hem was more.

She sobre was, simple, and wist withall,
The best inorishid eke that might be,
And godely of her speche in generall,
Charitable, estately, lusty, and fre,
Ne nevirmore ne lackid her pite,
Tendreherdid, and sliding of corage,
But truily I can nat tel her age.

And Troilus wel woxin was in hight,
And complete, formid by proporcioun
So wel, that Kinde it naught amending might,
Yong, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lioun,
And trewe as stele in eche condicioun,
One of the best entetchid creature
That is or shal while that the world maie dure.

And certainly in story it is fonde
That Troilus was nevir to no wight,
As in his time, in no degre seconde
In daring do that longith to a knight;
Al might a giaunt passin him of might
His hert aie with the first and with the best
Stode peregall to dare done what him left.

But for to tellin forth of Diomede
It fil, that astir on the tennith daie
Sens that Creseide out of the cite yede
This Diomede, as fresh as braunche in Maie,
Came to the tentè there as Calchas laie,
And fainid him with Calchas have to done,
But what he mente I shal you tellin sone.

Creseidè, at shorte wordis for to tel,
Welcomid him, and doun him by her fette,
And he was ethe inough to makin dwel;
And astir this, withoutin longè lette,
The spicis and the wine men forth 'hem fette,
And forthe thei speke of this and that ifere,
As frendis done, of whiche some shal ye here.

He gan first fallin of the warre in speche
Betwixin them and the folke of Troie toun,
And of th' assiege he gan eke her beseche
To tellin him what was her opinioun;
Fro that demaunde he so discendith doun
To askin her if that her straungè thought
The Grekis gife and werkis that thei wrought,

And why her fathir taryith so long
To weddin her unto some worthy wight?
Creseidè, that was in her painis strong
For love of Troilus her ownè knight,
So ferforth as she conning had or might
Answerde him tho, but as of his entente
It semid that she ne wist what he mente.

But nathèlesse this ilkè Diomede
Gan on him selfe assure, and thus he seide;
If I aright have taken on you hede
Me thinkith thus, o lady mine Creseide!
That sens I first hond on your bridil leide,
When I out came of Troie by the morow,
Ne might I nevir sene you but in sorow.

I can nat fain what maie the causè be,
But if for love of some Trojan it were,
The whiche right fore wouldin athinkin me,
That ye for any wight that dwellith there
Shulden yspil a quartir of a tere,
Or pitously your selvin so begile,
For dredèlesse it is nat worthe the while.

The folke of Troie, as who saith al and some,
In prison ben, as you your selvin se,
Fro thennis shal nat one on livè come
For al the golde atwixin sunne and se;
Trustith wel this, and undirstondith me,
There shal nat one to mercy gone on live,
Al were he lord of worldis twisè five.

Such wrech on them for fetching of Heleine
There shal be take, er that we hennis wende,
That Manes, whiche that goddis ben of Peine,
Shal ben agast that Grekis wol 'hem shende;
And men shal drede unto the world's ende
From hennis forthe to ravishe any quene,
So cruil shal our wreche on them be sene.

And but if Calchas led us with *ambages*,
That is to faine, with double wordis flie,
Suche as men clepen a word with two visages,
Ye shal wel knowin that I do nat lie,
And al this thing right sene it with your eie,
And that anon, ye n'il nat trowe how sone;
Now takith hede, for it is for to done.

What! wenin ye that your wife fathir would
Have yevin Antenor for you anon
If he ne wistè that the cite should
Distroyid ben? Why, nay: so mote I gone
He knew ful wel there shal nat scapin one
That Trojan is, and for the gretè fere
He durst nat that ye dwellid lengir there.

What wol ye more, o lovesome lady dere!
Let Troie and Trojans fro your hertè passe;
Drive out the bittir hope, and make gode chere,
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face,
That ye with saltè teris so deface,
For Troie is brought in suche a jeopardie
That it to save is now no remedie.

And thinkith wel ye shal in Grekis finde
A love more parfite, er that it be night,
Than any Trojan is, and morè kinde,
And bet to servin you wol don his might;
And if that ye vouchsafe, my lady bright!
I wol ben he to servin you my selve,
Ye, levir than be lorde of Grecis twelve.

And with that word he gan to waxin red,
And in his speche a litil while he quoke,
And cast aside a litil with his hed,
And stinte a while, and astirwarde he woke,
And sobrely on her he threwe his loke,
And said, I am, al be' it to you no joie,
As gentle' a man as any wight in Troie:

For if my fathir Tydeus, he seide,
Ilivid had, tho I had ben er this
Of Calidony' and Arge a king, Creseide,
And so hope I that I shal yet iwis,
But he was flaine, alas! the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebis al to rathe,
Polynices and many' a man to scathe.

But, herté mine! sithe that I am your man,
And ye ben the first of whom I seche grace,
To servin you as hertely as I can,
And evir shal while I to live have space,
So that er I depart out of this place
Ye wol me grauntin that I may to morow
At bettir laisir tell you of my sorow.

What should I tell his wordis that he seide?
He spake inough for o daie at the mest;
It previth wel he spake so that Creseide
Grauntid on the morow at his request
Forthy to spekin with him at the leste,
So that he n'olde spekin of suche matere,
And thus she to him said, as ye mowe here,

As she that had her hert on Troilus
So fast yset that none might it arace,
And straungely she spake, and seide thus:
O Diomede! I love that ilke place
There I was borne, and Jovis of thy grace
Delivre' it sone of al that doth it care:
God for thy might so leve it wel to fare!

That Grekis wold ther wrath on Troye wreke,
If that thei might, I know it wel iwis;
But it shal naught befallin as ye speke,
And God toforne; and farthir ovir this
I wote, my fathir wife and redy is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
So dere I am to him the more yholde.

That Grekis ben of high condicioun
I wote eke wel, but certaine men shall finde
As worthy folké within Troie toun,
As conning, as parfite, and eke as kinde,
As ben betwixin Orcades and Inde;
And that ye couldin wel your lady serve
I trowe eke wel, her thonke for to deserve.

But as to speke of love, iwis, she seide,
I had a lorde to whom I weddid was,
The whose mine hert was al til that he deide,
And othir love, as helpe me now Pallas,
There in mine hert ne is ne nevir was;
And that ye ben of noble' and high kinrede
I have wel herde it tellin out of drede.

And that doth me to have so grete a wonder
That ye wol scornin any woman so;
Eke God wote love and I ben fer asonder;
I am disposid bet, so mote I go,
Unto my deth to plaine and makin wo;
What I shal astir done I can nat saie,
But truily as yet me liste nat plaie.

Mine hert is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armis besy daie by daie;
Hereastir when ye wonnin have the toun
Paravintur than so it happin maie
That whan I se that I nevir ere saie
Than wol I werke that I nevir ere wrought;
This word to you inough suffisin ought.

To morow eke wol I speke with you faine,
So that ye touchin nought of this matere,
And whan you list ye maie come here againe;
And er ye gon thus muche I saie you here,
As helpe me Pallas with her heris clere,
Yf that I should of any Greke have routhe
It should ybe your selvin by my trouthe.

Vol. I.

I saie nat therfore that I wol you love,
Ne saie nat naie, but, in conclusioun,
I mené wel, by God that sit above;
And therwithal she cast her eyin down,
And gan to sigh, and saide, O Troye toun!
Yet bidde I God in quiet and in rest
I maie the sene, or do mine herté brest.

But in effecte, and shortely for to saie,
This Diomede al freshly newe againe
Gan preasin on, and fast her mercy praie;
And astir this, the sothé for to saie,
Her glove he toke, of which he was ful faine,
And, finally, whan it was woxin eve,
And al was well, he rose and toke his leve.

The bright Venus folowid and aie taught
The waie there brodè Phœbus doune alight
And Cytherea her chare-horse o'r raught
To whirle into the Lioun if she might,
And Signifer his candils shewith bright,
Whan that Creseide unto her bed wente
Within her fathir's faire brighte tente,

Retourning in her soule aie up and down
The wordis of this sodaine Diomede,
His gret estate, and peril of the toun,
And that she was alone, and haddè nede
Of frendis helpe, and thus began to drede
The causis why, the sothé for to tell,
That she toke fully purpose for to dwell.

The morow came, and, gostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come unto Creseide;
And, shortly, lest that ye my talè breke,
So wel he for himselfin spake and seide
That al her sighis fore adoun he leide;
And, finally, the sothé for to saie,
He rest her of the grete of alle her pain.

And astir this the story tellith us
That she unto him yave the faire baie stede
The whiche she onis wan of Troilus,
And eke a broche (and that was litil nede)
That Troilus was, she yave this Diomede,
And eke the bet from sorowe' him to releve
She made him were a pencell of her sleve.

I finde eke in the story ellis where,
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede,
Of Troilus tho wepte she many' a tere,
Whan that she saw his wide woundis blede,
And that she toke to kepin him gode hede,
And for to helin him of his woundis smerte:
Men saie, I n'ot, that she yeve him her herte.

But truily the story tellith us
There madin nevir woman more wo
Than she whan that she falsid Troilus;
She saide Alas! for now is clene ago
My name in trouthe of love for evir mo,
For I have falsid one the gentillest
That ever was, and one the worthiest.

Alas! of me unto the world's ende
Shall neithir ben iwrittin or isong
No gode worde, for these bokis woll me shende;
Irollid shall I ben on many' a tong,
Throughout the world my bell shall be yrong,
And women moste woll hatin me of all;
Alas that soche a caas me should befall!

C c

Thei wolle sain, in as moche as in me is
I have 'hem doen dishonour, welawaie!
All be I not the first that did amis,
What helpith that to doen my blame awaie?
But sens I se there is no bettir waie,
And that to late is now for me to rue,
To Diomedé I wolle algate be true.

But, Troilus, sens I no bettir maie,
And sens that thus departin ye and I,
Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie,
As for the gentillist knight truily
That er I sawe to servin faithfully,
And best can aie his ladie's honour kepe,
(And with that worde she brast anon to wepe.)

And certis you ne hatin shall I never,
And frend's love that shall ye have of me,
And my gode worde, all should I livin ever;
And truily I would right sorie be
For to sein you in adversite;
And giltlesse I wot well I you leve;
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leve;

But truily how long it was bitwene
That she forsoke him for this Diomedé
There is none aucthour tellith it I wene,
Take every man now to his bokis hede
He shall no termé findin out of drede,
For though that he began to wowe her sone,
Er he her wan yet was there more to done.

Ne me ne list this felie woman chide
Ferthir than that the storie wolle devise;
Her name, alas! is publishid so wide
That for her gilt it ought inough suffise;
And if I might excuse her in some wise,
For she so sorie was for her untrouthe,
Iwis I would excuse her yet for routhé.

This Troilus, as I before have told,
Thus drivith forth as wel as he bath might,
But oftin was his herté hote and cold,
And namily that ilke ninithe night
Whiche on the morowe she had him behight
To come ayen; God wote full little rest
Had he that night; nothing to slepe him left.

The lauril-crounid Phœbus with his hete
Gan in his course aie upward as he went
To warme of the est se the wavis wete,
And Cîrce's doughtir song with freshe entent,
Whan Troilus his Pandare astir sent,
And on the wallis of the touné thei pleide,
To loke if thei can sene aught of Creseide;

Till it was none thei stodin for to se
Who that there came, and every manir wight
That came fro ferre thei saidin it was she,
Till that thei couldin knowin him aright;
Now was his herté dull, now was it light;
And thus bejapid stodin for to stare
About naught this Troilus and Pandare.

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide;
For aught I wot before none sikirly
Into this touné ne comith not Creseide,
She hath inough to doin hardily
To twinnin from her fathir, so trowe I;
Her oldé fathir wolle yet make her dine
Er that she go; God yeve his herté pine!

Pandare answerd, it may wel ben certain
And forthy let us dine, I the besече,
And astir none than maist thou come again:
And home thei go withoutin more speche,
And comin ayen; but long maie thei seche
Er that thei findin that thei astir gape;
Fortune 'hem bothe ythinkith for to jape.

(Quod Troilus) I se well now that she
Is taryid with her old fathir so
That er she come it wolle nigh evin be;
Come forthe, I wolle unto the yate go,
These portirs ben unkonning evirmo,
And I wolle doen 'hem holdin up the yate
As naught ne were, although she comin late.

The daie goth fast, and after that came eve,
And yet came not to Troilus Creseide:
He lokith forth by hedge, by tre, by greve,
And ferre his hedde ovir the wall he leide,
And at the last he tournid him, and seide,
By God I wote her mening now, Pandare;
Almoste iwis all newe was all my care.

Now doutlefs this ladie can her gode;
I wote she comith riding privily;
I commendin her wisedome by mine hode;
She wolle nat makin peple nicily
Gaure on her whan she cometh, but softly
By night into the touné she thinkith ride,
And, dere brothir! thinke nat long to abide.

We have naught ellis for to doen iwis;
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowin me,
Have here my trouth I se her; yond she is:
Heve up, thine eyin man; maist thou nat se?
Pandare answerid, Naie, so mote I the;
All wrong by God: what saist thou man? wher art?
That I se yonde afarre n'is but a carte.

Alas! thou saiest right sothe, (quod Troilus)
But hardily it is not all for nought
That in mine herté I now rejoicé thus;
It is ayenst some gode: I have a thought,
N'ot I nat how, but sens that I was wrought
Ne felt I soche a comfort dare I saie;
She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay.

Pandare answerde, It maie be well inough;
And helde with him of all that er he saied,
But in his herté he thought, and soft he loughy,
And to himself full sobirly he saied,
From hasilwodde, there Joly Robin plaied,
Shall come all that that thou abidist here;
Ye, farwell all the snowe of ferné yere.

The wardein of the yatis gan to call
The folke which that without the yatis were,
And badde 'hem drivin in their bestis all,
Or all the night thei must bylevin there;
And ferre within the night, with many' a tere,
This Troilus gan homward for to ride,
For well he seeth it helpith nat to abide.

But nathelless he gladdid him in this,
He thought he misaccomptid had his daie,
And saied, I understande have all amis,
For thilké night I last Creseide saie
She saied I shall ben here, if that I maie,
Er that the mone, o my dere herté swete!
The Lion passe out of this Ariete:

For whiche she maie yet hold all her behest;
And on the morowe to the yate he went,
And up and doune, by west and eke by est,
Upon the wallis made he many' a went;
But al for naught; his hope alway him blent,
For which at night in sorow and sighes fore
He went him home withoutin any more.

This hope all clene out of his herte fledde,
He ne' hath wheron now lengir for to hong,
But for the pain him thought his herte bledd,
So wer his throwis sharp, and wondir strong,
For whan he sawe that she abode so long
He ne wist what he judgin of it might,
Sens she hath brokin that she him behight.

The thirde, the fourth, the fiste, and the sixt, daie
Aftir tho dayis tenne of whiche I told,
Betwixin hope and drede his herte laie,
Yet somwhat trusting on her heftis old;
But whan he sawe she n'olde her termis hold
He can now sene none othir remedie
But for to shapin him sone for to die.

Therwith the wickid spirit, God us bleffe!
Whiche that men clepin the wode Jalousie,
Can in him crepe in all this hevinesse,
For whiche bicause he wouldin sone die
He n'ete ne dronke for his melancolie,
And eke from every companie he fledde;
This was the life that all this time he ledde.

He so defaite was that no manir man
Unnethis him might knowin there he went,
So was he lene and therto pale and wan,
And feble, that he walkith by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfin shent;
But whofo askid him wherof him smerte,
He saied his harme was all about his herte.

Priam full oft, and eke his mothir dere,
His bretherne and his sustin, gan him frain
Why he so wofull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his pain?
But all for naught; he n'olde his cause plain,
But saied he felt a grevous maladie
About his herte, and fain he wouldè die.

So on a daie he laie him doune to slepe,
And so bifell it that in slepe him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to wepe
For love of her that him these painis wrought,
And up and doune as he that forest sought
He met he sawe a bore with tuskis grete
That slept ayenist the bright sunn'is hete;

And by this bore, fast in her armis fold,
Laie kissing aie his ladie bright Creseide,
For sorowe' of whiche, whan he it gan behold,
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide,
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and seide,
O Pandarus! now knowe I crop and rote
I n'am but dedde; there n'is none othir bote.

My ladie bright, Creseide, hath me betraide,
In whom I trustid moste of any wight;
She elliswhere hath now her hert apaied;
The blisfull goddis thorough ther grete might
Have in my dreame ishewid it full right;
Thus in my dreame Creseide have I beholde,
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

O my Creseide! alas! what subtilte,
What newe lust, what beaute, what science,
What wrathe of juste cause have ye unto me?
What gilt of me, what fell experience,
Hath fro me rafte, alas! thine advertence?
O trust! o faithe! quod he', o depe assuraunce!
Who hath me rafte Creseide, all my plesaunce?

Alas! why let I her from hennis go?
For whiche well nigh out of my wit I breide;
Who shall now trowe on any othis mo?
God wote I wende, o ladie bright Creseide!
That every worde was gospel that ye seide:
But who maie bet begile if that him list,
Than he on whom men wenin best to trift?

What shall I doen, my Pandarus? alas!
I felin now so sharpe a newe pain,
Sens that there is no remedy' in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine hondis twain
My selvin flowe than alwaie thus to plain,
For through the deth my wo shuld have an ende;
There every daie with life my self I shende.

Pandare answerde and saide, Alas the while
That I was borne! Have I nat saied er this
That dremis many' a manir man begile?
And why? for folke expoundin' hem amis;
How darst thou sain that false thy ladie is
For any dreame? right for thine owne drede
Let be this thought; thou canst no dremis rede.

Paravinture there thou dremest of this bore
It maie so be that it maie signifie
Her fathir, whiche that old is and eke hore,
Ayen the sunne lyith on point to die,
And she for sorowe ginnith wepe and crie,
And kissith him, there he lieth on the ground;
Thus shuldith thou thy dreame aright expound.

How might I than doin (quod Troilus)
To knowe of this, yea, were never so lite?
Now saiest thou wisely, (quod this Pandarus)
My redy is this, sens thou canst well endite,
That hastily a lettir thou her write,
Thorough which thou shalt wel bringin about
To knowe a soth of that thou art in dout.

And se now why; for this I dare well sain,
That if so is that she untrue ybe
I can not trowe that she woll write again;
And if she write thou shalt full sone ise
As whethir she hath any liberte
To come ayen, or ellis in some clause
If she be let she wol assigne a cause.

Thou hast not writtin to her sens she went,
Nor she to the; and this I durst wele laie,
There maie soche cause ben in her entent
That hardily thou wolt thy selvin saie
That her abode the best is for you twaie:
Now write her than, and thou shalt felè sone
A soth of all; there is no more to done.

Acordid ben to this conclusioun,
And that anon, these ilke lordis two,
And hastily sat Troilus adoun,
And rollith in his herte to and fro
How he maie best discrivin her his wo,
And to Creseide his owne ladie dere
He wrote right thus, and saide as ye maie here.

The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I have aye ben and shall,
Withoutin part of ellifwhere servise,
With herte and bodie, life, lust, thought, and all,
I wofull wight, in every humble wise
That tong can tell or herte maie devise,
As oft as mattir occupyth place,
Me recommaunde unto your noble grace.

Likith it you to wetin, swete herte!
As ye well knowin, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre painis smerte,
Whan that ye wentin, of whiche yet bote non
Have I non had, but evir worse bigon
Fro daie to daie am I, and so mote dwell
While it you list, of wele and wo my well.

For whiche to you with dredefull herte true
I write, as he that sorowe driveth to write,
My wo, that every houre encresth newe,
Complaining as I dare or can endite;
And that defacid is that maie ye wite
The teris which that from mine eyin rain,
That wuldin speke if that thei durst and plain.

You first besече I that your eyin clere
To loke on this defoulid ye nat hold,
And ore all this that ye my ladie dere
Woll vouchsafin this lettir to behold,
And by the cause eke of my caris cold,
That staeth my wit, if aught amis me sterre
Foryevith it me, mine owne swete herte!

If any servaunt darst or ought of right
Upon his ladie pitously complain,
Than wene I that I ought to be that wight,
Confidrid this, that ye these monthis twain
Have taryed there ye saidin, sothe to sain,
But tennē dayis ye n'olde in hoste sojourne,
But in two monethis yet ye not retourne.

But for as moche as me mote nedis like
All that you list I dare nat planin more,
But humbly with sorowfull fighis like
You write I mine unrestie sorowes fore,
Fro daie to daie desiring evirmore
To knowin fully, if your will it were,
How ye have fared and don while ye be there;

The whose welfare and hele eke God encrese
In honour soche, that upward in degre
It growe alwaie, so that it nevir cese;
Right as your herte aie can, my ladie fre,
Devise, I praie to God so mote it be,
And graunt it that ye sone upon me rewe,
As wisely as in all I am to you true.

And if you likith knewin of the fare
Of me, whose wo there maie no wight discrive,
I can no more, but cheff of every care,
At writing of this lettir I am on live,
All redy out of my wofull ghost to drive,
Whiche I delaie and holde him yet in honde
Upon the sight of mattir of your sonde.

Mine eyin two, in vain with whiche I se,
Of sorowfull teres salt am woxin wellis,
My song in plaint of mine adversite,
My gode in harme, mine ese eke woxin hel is,
My joie in wo: I can sey now nought ellis

But tournid is, for whiche my life I warie,
Every joie or ese in his contrarie:

Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye maie redresse, and more a thousande lithe
Than er I had encreffin in me joie,
For was there nevir herte yet so blythe
To have his life as I shall ben as swithe
As I you se, and though no manir routhe
Can mevin you, yet thinkith on your trouthe.

And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me se,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served
Besече I you, mine owne ladie fre
That hereupon you wuldin write to me
For love of Jovis, my right lode sterre,
That deth maie make an end of al my werre.

If othir cause aught doeth you for to dwel,
That with your lettir ye me recomfort,
For though to me your absence is an hell,
With pacience I woll my wo comfort,
And with your letter of hope I woll disport:
Now writith, swete, and let me thus nat plain;
With hope or deth delivereth me fro pain.

Iwis, mine owne herte true!
I wot that whan ye next upon me se,
So lost have I mine hele and eke mine hewe,
Creseide shall not come tho knowin me;
Iwis, mine hert'is daie, my ladie fre!
So thurstith aie mine herte to behold
Your beaute that uneth my life I hold.

I saie no more, all have I for to sey
To you well more than that I tellin maie;
But whethir that ye doe me live or dey
Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie:
And farith well, thou godely faire freshe Maie!
As ye that life or deth me maie commaunde,
And to your trouthe aie I me recommaunde,

With hele soche, that but ye yevin me
The samin hele I shall non hele yhave:
In you lieth, whan you list that it so be,
The daie in whiche me clothin shall my grave,
And in you my life, in you might to save
Me fro disese of all my painis smerte:
And farith now wele, myne own dere swete herte!

Le vostre, T.

This lettir forthe was sent unto Creseide,
Of whiche her answere in effect was this;
Full pitously she wrote ayen, and seide,
That all so sone as she might iwis
She would come, and amende that was amis;
And, finally, she wrote and sayid then
She would ycome, ye, but she n'ist not when.

But in her lettir madin she soche festes
That wondir was, and swore she loved him best,
Of whiche he found but botomles bihestes.
But, Troilus, thou maiest now east and west
Pipe in an ivie lese if that the lest:
Thus goth the world; God shild us fro mischaunce,
And every wight that menith trouthe avaunce!

Encreffin gan the wo fro daie to night
Of Troilus for tarying of Creseide,

And lessin gan his hope and ek his might,
For whiche al doun he in his bedde him leide;
He ne ete, dronke, ne slept, ne wordè seide,
Imagining aie that she was unkinde,
For whiche well nigh he wext out of his mind.

This dreame of whiche I told have eke beforne
Maie nevir come out of his remembraunce;
He thought aie well he had his ladie lorn,
And that Jovis of his hie purveiaunce
Him shewed had in slepe the signifiante
Of her untrouth and his disavinture,
And that the bore was shewed him in figure;

For whiche he for Sibylle his sustir sent,
That callid was Cassandre' eke all about,
And all his dreame he told her er he stent,
And her besought affoilin him the doubt
Of the strong bore with all his tuskis stout;
And, finally, within a litil stounde
Cassandra him gan thus his dreame expound.

She gan first smile, and said, O brothir dere!
If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of oldè stories here,
To purpose how that Fortune ovirthrowe
Hath lordis old, through which within a throw
Thou shalt this bore well know, and of what kinde
He comin is, as men in bokis finde.

Diana, whiche that wrothe was and in ire,
For Grekis n'olde doin her sacrifice,
Ne encens on her altar set on fire,
She for that Grekis gon her so dispise
Ywrake her in a wondir cruill wife,
For with a bore as grete as oxe in stall
She made up frete ther corne and vinis all.

To flea the bore was all the countrie reised,
Emongis whiche there came this bore to se
A maid, one of this worlde the best ipraised;
And Meleager, lorde of that countre,
He lovid so this freshe maidin fre,
That with his manhode er he wouldè stent
This bore he slough, and her the hed he sent.

Of whiche, as oldè bokis tellin us,
There rose a conteke and a grete envie;
And of this lorde defendid Tydeus
By ligne, or ellis oldè bokis lie;
But how this Meleager gan to die,
Thorough his mothir, woll I you not tell,
For all to long it werin for to dwell.

She tolde eke how Tydeus, er she stent,
Unto the strongè cite of Thebes
(To claimin kingdome of the cite) went
For his felawè Dan Polynices,
Of whiche the brothir Dan Eteocles
Pull wrongfully of Thebis held the strength;
This tolde she by processe all by length.

She tolde eke how Hemonides asterte
Whan Tydeus slough fiftie knightis stoute;
She tolde eke all the propheties by herte,
And how that seven kingis with ther rout
Besiegedin the cite all aboute,
And of the holie serpent, and the well,
And of the Furies all, she gan him tell.

*Associat profugus Tydeus primo Polynicem,
Tydea legatum docet, insidiasque secundus,
Tertius Hemoniden canit, & vatem latitantem,*

*Quartus habet Reges ineuntes praelia septem,
Lemniadum Furia quinto narratur, & angues,
Archemori bustum sexto, ludique leguntur,
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum septimus umbris,
Octavo cecidit Tydeus, spes, vita Pelasgum,
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopæo,
Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur,
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres,
Argivum stentem narrat duodenus, & ignem.*

Of Archinorie's burying and the plaies,
And how Amphiaras fill through the grounde,
How Tydeus was slain, Lord of Argeies,
And how Hipome'don in a litil stounde
Was dreint, and dedde Parthenope of wound,
And also how Capaneus the proude
With thonder dint was slain, that cryd loude.

She gan eke tell him how that eithir brother,
Eteocles and Polynice also,
At a scarmishe eche of 'hem slough the other,
And of Argivis weping and ther mo,
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho;
And tho discendid doune from jestis old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told:

This ilkè bore betokenith Diomede,
Tydeus sonne, that doune discendid is
Fro Mele'ager, that made the bore to blede,
And thy ladie, where so she be iwis,
This Diomede her herte hath and she his:
Wepe if thou wolt or leve, for out of dout
This Diomede is in and thou art out.

Thou saiest nat sothe, (quod he) thou forcereffe,
With all thy falsè ghost of prophecie;
Thou wenist ben a grete devinereffe,
Now seest thou nat this sole of fantasie
Pinin her upon ladies for to lie:
Awaie, (quod he) there Jovis yeve the sorowe!
Thou shalt be fals para'venture er to morow.

As well thou mightist lien on gode Alceste,
That was of all creturis (but men lie)
That evir werin kindist and the beste,
For whan her husbonde was in jeopardie
To die himself, but if she wouldè die,
She chese for him to die and gon to hell,
And starfe anon, as us the bokis tell.

Cassandre goeth; and he with cruill herte
Foryate his wo for angre of her speche,
And fro his bedde all sodainly he sterte,
As though all whole him had imade a leche,
And daie by daie he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this with all his besy cure;
And thus he drivith forthe his avinture.

Fortune, whiche that the permutacion
Of all thinges hath, as it is her committed
Through purveiaunce and disposicion
Of high Jove, as reignis shall ben yflitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan thei shal ben smitted,
Gan pull awaie the fethirs bright of Troie
Fro daie to daie, till thei ben bare of joie.

Emong all this the fine of the jeopardie
Of Hector gan approchin wondir blive,
The Fatis would his soule should unbodie,
And shapin had a mene it out to drive,
Aycnst whiche fate him helpith not to strive,

But on a daie to fightin gan he wende,
At whiche, alas! he caught his liv'is ende :

For whiche me thinkith every manir wight
That hauntith armis oughtin to bewaile
The deth of him that was so noble' a knight,
For as he drough a king by th' aventaille,
Unware of this Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to rive,
And thus the worthy knight was rest of live;

For whom, as olde bokis tellin us,
Was made soch wo that tong it maie nat tel,
And namily the sorowe' of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorowe, love, and for unrest,
Full oft a daie he had his herte brest.

But nathèlesse though he gon him dispaire,
And drede aie that his ladie was untrue,
Yet aie on her his herte gan repaire,
And, as these lovirs doen, he fought aie newe
To get ayen Creseide bright of hewe,
And in his herte he went her excusing,
That Calchas causid all her tarying.

And oftin time he was in purpose grete
Him selvin like a pilgrim to disgise
To sene her; but he maie not counterfete
To ben unknownen of folke that werin wise,
Ne finde excuse aright that maie suffice,
If he among the Grekis knowin were,
For whiche he wept full oft many a tere.

To her he wrote yet oftin time all newe
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouth,
Beseching her, fithins that he was true,
That she would come ayen and hold her trouth :
For whiche Creseide upon a daie for routh,
I take it so, touching all this mattere
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye maie here :

Cupid's sonne, ensample' of godelihede,
O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse!
How might a wight in turment and in drede,
And helelesse, you sendin as yet gladnesse?
I hertilese, I sicke, I in distresse,
Sens ye with me nor I with you maie dele,
You neithir sende I maie ne herte ne hele.

Your lettirs full the papir all iplainted
Commevid havin mayne bert'is pite;
I have eke sene with teris all depainted
Your lettir, and how ye requirin me
To come ayen, whiche yet ne maie not be,
But why, lest that this lettir foundin were,
No mencion ne make I now for fere.

Grevous to me (God wote) is your unrest,
Your hast, and that the goddis ordinaunce
It semith nat ye take it for the best,
Nor othir thing n'is in your remembraunce
As thinkith me, but onely your plesaunce;
But beth nat wroth, and that I you besече,
For that I tarie' is all for wickid speche :

For I have herd well more than I wend
Touching us two how thingis have istond,
Whiche I shall with dissimuling amende;
And beth not wroth, I have eke undirstond
How ye ne doe but holdin me in honde ;

But now no force; I can nat in you gesse
But allè trouthe and allè gentilnesse.

Comin I woll, but yet in soche disjoints
I stond as now, that what yere or what daie
That this shall be that can I nat apointe;
But in effect I praie you as I maie
Of your gode worde and of your frendship aie,
For truily while that my life maie dure
As for a frende ye maie in me assure.

Yet praie I you on evill ye na take
That it is short whiche that I to you write;
I dare nat there I am well lettirs make,
Ne nevyr yet ne could I well endite;
Eke grete effect men writin in place lite;
Th' entent is all, and nat the lettirs space:
And farith well; God have you in his grace!

Le vostre, C.

This Troilus thought this lettir al straunge
Whan he it sawe, and sorowfully he sight;
Him thought it like a kalendes of eschaunge;
But, finally, he ful ne trowin might
That she ne would him holdin that she hight,
For with ful evill wil liste him to leve
That lovith wel, in such case, though him greve.

But nathèlesse men sain that at the last
For any thing men shal the sothè se,
And suche a case betide, and that as fast,
That Troilus wel understonde that she
N'as nat so kinde as that her ought to be;
And, finally, he wote now out of dout
That al is lost that he hath ben about.

Stode on a daie in his melancolie
This Troilus, and in suspèctioun
Of her for whom he wenid for to die,
And so besil that throughout Troie toun,
As was the gise, iborne was up and down
A manir cote armoure, as saithe the storie,
Beforn Deiphobe, in signe of his victorie;

The whichè cote, as tellith Lollius,
Deiphobe it had yrente fro Diomede
The same daie; and when this Troilus
It sawe he gan to takin of it hede,
Avising of the length and of the brede,
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful sodainly his herte began to colde,

As he that on the coler sonde within
A broche that he Creseide yave at morow
That she from Troie toun must nedis twin,
In remembraunce of him and of his sorow,
And she him laide ayen her faith to borow
To kepe it aie; but now ful wel he wist
His lady n'as no longir on to trist.

He goeth him home, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus, and al this newè chaunce,
And of this broch he tolde him orde and ende,
Complaining of her hert'is variaunce,
His longè love, his trouth, and his penaunce;
And aftir Deth, withoutin wordis more,
Ful fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

Than spake he thus; O lady mine, Creseide!
Where is your faith, and where is your behest?
Where is your love? where is your trouth? he
seide;

Of Diomedes have ye now al his fest?
 Alas! I would have trowid at the lest
 That sene ye n'olde in trouthe to me stonde
 That ye thus n'olde have holdin me in honde.

Who shal now trowen on any othis mo?
 Alas! I nevir would have wende er this
 That ye, Creseide, coulde have chaungid so,
 Ne but I had agilte and don amis;
 So cruel wende I nat your herte iwis
 To fle me thus; alas! your name of trouthe.
 Is now fordone, and that is al my routhe.

Was there none othir broche you list to lete
 To fesse with your newe love, (quod he)
 But thilke broche that I with teris wete
 You yave as for a remembraunce of me?
 None other cause, alas! ne haddin ye
 But for dispite, and eke for that ye mente
 All uttirly to shewin your entente:

Through which I se that clene out of your
 Ye have me cast, and I ne can nor maie [minde
 For all this world within mine herte finde
 To unlovin you a quartir of a daie;
 In cursid time I borne was, welawaie!
 That you that done me all this wo endure
 Yet love I the best of any cature.

Now God (quod he) me sendin yet the grace
 That I maie metin with this Diomedes,
 And truily if I have might and space
 Yet shall I make I hope his sidis blede:
 Now God (quod he) that aughtist takin hede
 To forthrin trouthe, and wrongis to punice,
 Why n'ilt thou don a vengeance of this vice?

O Pandarus! that in dremes for to triste,
 Me blamid hast, and wonte art oft upbreide,
 Now maist thou sene thy selfe, if that the list,
 How trewe is now thy nece bright Creseide:
 In sondry formis, (God it wote) he seide,
 The goddis shewin bothe joie and tene
 In slepe, and by my dreame it is now sene.

And certainly, withoutin more speche,
 From hennis forthe, as ferforthe as I maie,
 Mine owne deth in armis wol I seche,
 I ne retche nat how sone be the daie;
 But trewily, Creseide, swete Maie!
 Whom I have ay with al my might iserved,
 That ye thus done I have it nat deserved.

This Pandarus, that al these thingis herde,
 And wiste wel that he said a sothe of this,
 He nat a worde ayen to him answerde,
 For fory of his frend's sorow' he is,
 And shamid for his nece hath done amis,
 And stante astonied of these causis twaie
 As stil as stone; o worde ne coulde he saie.

But at the last thus he yspake and seide:
 My brothir dere! I may do the no more;
 What should I faine? I hate iwis Creseide,
 And God it wote I wol hate her er-more;
 And that thou me besoughtist don of yore,
 Having unto mine honour ne my reste
 Right no regarde, I did al that the leste.

Yf I did aught which that might likin the
 It is me lese, and of this trefon now
 God wote that it a sorow is to me,

And dredelesse, for hert's ese of you,
 Right faine I would amende it wist I how;
 And fro this world Almighty God I praie,
 Delivir her sone! I can no more saie.

Great was the woe and plaint of Troilus,
 But forthe her course Fortune aie gan to holde,
 Creseide lovith the sonne of Tydeus,
 And Troilus mote wepe in caris colde:
 Such is this worlde, who so it can beholde;
 In eche estate is litill hert's reste;
 God leve us to takin it for the beste!

In many cruil bataile, out of drede,
 Of Troilus this ilke noble knight
 (As men maie in these oldè bokis rede)
 Was sene his knighthod and his gretè might,
 And dredèlesse his irè daie and night
 Ful cruilly the Grekis aie abought,
 And alwaie most this Diomedes he fought.

And oftin timis I finde that thei mette
 With bloody strokis and with wordis grete,
 Assaying how ther speris werin whette;
 And God it wote with many' a cruil hete
 Gan Troilus upon his helme to bete:
 But nathèlesse Fortune it naught ne would
 Of eithir's honde that eithir dyin should.

And if I had itakin for to write
 The armis of this ilke worthy man,
 Than would I of his battailis endite;
 But for that I to writin first began
 Of his love, I have saidin as I can
 His worthy dedis, who so liste 'hem here,
 Rede Dares, he can tel 'hem al ifere.

Beseching every lady bright of hewe,
 And every gentil woman, what she be,
 Al be it that Creseide was untrewe,
 That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me,
 Ye maie her gilte in othir bokis se;
 And gladdir I would writin if you leste
 Of Penelope's trouthe and gode Alceste.

Ne saie I nat this all only for men,
 But most for women that betrayid be
 Through fals folke, God yeve 'hem sorrow, Amen!
 That with ther gretè witte and subtilte
 Betrayin you, and this commevith me
 To speke; and in effecte you al I praie
 Beth ware of men, and herkenith what I saie:

Go, litil boke, go litill tragedie,
 There God my makir yet er that I die
 So sende me might to make some comedie;
 But, litil boke, make thou the none envie,
 But subject ben unto al poesie,
 And kisse the steppes wher as thou seist pace
 Of Virgil, Ovide, Homer, Lucan, Stace.

And for there is so grete diversite
 In English, and in writing of our tonge,
 So praie I to God that none miswrite the,
 Ne the misse-metre for defaute of tonge;
 And redde where so thou be or ellis songe
 That thou be undirstonde God I beseeche;
 But yet to purpose of my rathir speche.

The wrathe, as I began you for to seie,
 Of Troilus the Grekis boughtin dere,
 For thousandis his hondis madin deye,

As he that was withoutin any pere,
Save in his time Hector, as I can here;
But welawaie! (save onely Godd's wil)
Dispitously him slough the fierse Achil.

And whan that he was slain in this manere,
His lightè goste ful blisfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seventh sphere,
In his place leting everiche element,
And there he sawe, with ful avisement,
The erratike sterres, herkening harmonie,
With fownis full of hevins melodie.

And doun from thennis fast he gan avise
This litil spotte of erth that with the se
Embracid is, and fully gan dispise
This wretchid world, and helde al vanite
In respecte of the plaine felicitye
That is in heaven above, and at the last
There he was slaine his loking doun he cast.

And in him selfe he lough right at the wo
Of them that weptin for his dethe so fast,
And dampnid all our werkes, that foloweth so
The blindè lust whiche that ne may nat last,
And shuldin al our herte on hevin cast;
And forthe he went, shortly for to tell,
There as Mercury sortid him to dwel.

Suche fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,
Suche fine hath all his gretè worthinesse,
Suche fine hath his estate royal above,
Suche fine his lust, suche fine hath his noblesse,
Suche fine hath this false world's brotilnesse!
And thus began his loving of Creseide
As I have tolde, and in this wise he deide.

O yonge and freshe folkis, he or she!
In whiche that love up growith with your age,
Repairith home from worldely vanite,

And of your hertes up castith the vilage
To thilkè God that astir his image
You made, and thinkith al n'is but a faire,
This world that passith sone, as flouris faire:

And lovith him the whiche that right for love
Upon a crosse, our soulis for to bey,
First starfe and rose, and sit in heaven above,
For he n'il falsin no wight, dare I sey,
That wol his hert al wholly on him ley;
And sens he best to love is and most meke
What nedith fainid lovis for to seke?

Lo! here of Painims cursid oldè rites!
Lo! here what al ther goddis maie availe!
Lo! here this wretchid world's appetites!
Lo! here the fine and guerdon for travaile
Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, and such raskaile!
Lo! here the forme of oldè clerkis speche
In poetrie, if ye ther bokis seche!

O, moral Gower! this Boke I directe
To the and to the philosophicall Strode,
To vouchsafe there nede is for to correcte
Of your benignities and zelis gode;
And to the sothfast Christ, that starfe on rode,
With al mine hert of mercy er I praie,
And to the Lorde right thus I speke and saie:

Thou One, and Two, and Thre! eterne on live,
That raignist aie in Thre, and Two, and One!
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscribe,
From visibill and invisibill sone
Defende us in thy mercy everichone!
So make us, Jesus, to thy mercy digne,
For love of maide and mothir thine benigne!

TESTAMENT OF FAIRE CRESEIDE*.

A DOLY feson till a carefull dite
Should corresponde and be equivalent;
Right so it was whan I began to write
This tragedy, the weder right fervent,
Whan Aries in middis of the Lent
Showris of haile gan fro the north discende,
That scantly fro the cold I might me defende.

Yet nertheleffe within mine orature
I stode, whan Titan had his bemis bright
Withdrawin down, and scylid undir cure,
And faire Venus the beaute of the night,
Upraise, and sette unto the weste ful right
Her goldin face, in oppositioun
Of god Phæbus, directe discending down.

Throughout the glasse her bemis brast so faire
That I might se on every side me by,
The northrin winde hath purified the aire,
And shedde his misty cloudis fro the skie,
The froste fresid, the blastis bittirly
Fro pole Artike came whisking loud and still,
And causid me remove ayenst my will:

For I trustid that Venus, Lov's quene,
To whom somtime I hight obedience,
My fadid hert of love she would make grene,
And thereupon with humble reverence
I thought to praie her hie magnificence,
But for grete colde as than I lettid was,
And in my chambre to the fire gan pas.

Though love be hote, yet in a man of age
It kindlith nat so sone as in youthed,

* The Author of The Testament of Creseide, which might pass for the sixth book of this story, I have been informed by Sir James Uriskin late Earl of Kelly, and diverse aged scholars of the Scottish nation, was one Mr. Robert Henderson, chief schoolmaster of Dumferlin, a little time before Chaucer was first printed, and dedicated to King Henry VIII. by Mr. Thynne, which was near the end of his reign. Mr. Henderson wittily observing that Chaucer in his fifth book had related the death of Troilus, but made no mention what became of Creseide, he learnedly takes upon him, in a fine poetical way, to express the punishment and end due to a false unconstant whore, which commonly terminates in extreme misery.
Urry,

Of whom the blode is flowing in a rage,
And in the olde the corage dul and ded,
Of whiche the fire outwarde is best rented:
To helpe by phisike wher that nature failed:
I am experte, for bothe I have assailed.

I made the fire and bekid me aboute,
Than toke I drinke my spirites to comforte,
And armid me wel fro the colde theroute:
To cutte the wintir night and make it shorte
I toke a quere, and leste al othir sporte,
Writin by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of faire Creseide and lusty Troilus:

And there I founde aftir that Diomede
Recevid had that lady bright of hewe
How Troilus nere out of his witte abrede,
And wept full sore, with visage pale of hewe
For which wanhope his teris gan renewe
While Esperus rejoyfid him againe;
Thus while in joie he lived and while in paine.

Of her behest he had grete comforting,
Trusting to Troie that she wold make retour,
Whiche he desired most of al erthly thing,
For why! she was his onely paramour;
But whan he sawe passid both day and hour
Of her gaincome, in sorowe gan oppresse
His woful herte in care and hevinesse.

Of his distresse me nedith nat reherse,
For worthy Chaucer in that samè boke
In godely termis and in joly verse
Compilid hath his caris, who will loke:
To break my slepe anothir quere I toke,
In which I founde the fatal destiny
Of faire Creseide, which endid wretchidly.

Who wote if all that Chaucer wrate was trewe?
Nor I wote nat if this narracion
Be authorised, or forgid of the newe
Of some poete by his invencion,
Made to reporte the lamentacion
And wofull ende of this lusty Creseide,
And what distresse she was in or she deide,

Whan Diomedes had al his appetite
And more fulfilled of this faire lady
Upon anothir sette was his delite,
And sende to her a libel repudy,
And her excluded fro his company;
Than desolate she walkid up and doun,
As some men faine in the courte as commune.

O faire Creseide! the floure and a per se
Of Troie and Grece, how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in filthe al thy feminite,
And be with fleshly lust so maculate,
And go among the Grekes erly and late
So giglotlike, taking thy foule plesaunce!
I have pite the should fall suche mischaunce.

Yet nerthelasse, what er men deme or say
In scornfull langage of thy brutilnesse,
I shall excuse as ferforth as I may
Thy womanhed, thy wisedome, and fairnesse,
The which Fortune hath put to suche distresse,
As her plesid, and nothing throughe the gilte
Of the through wickid langage to be spilt.

This faire lady, on this wise destitute
Of al comforte and consolatioun,
Right prively, without selowship or refute,
Dishevelid, passid out of the toun
A mile or two unto a mansioun
Bildid ful gaie, where her fathir Calchas
Which than among the Grekis dwelling was.

Whan her he saw the cause he gan enquire
Of her comyng: she said, sighing ful sore,
For Diomedes had gottin his desire
He woxe wery, and would of me no more.
Quod Calchas, Doughtir wepe thou nat therfore,
Paravinture al comith for the best:
Welcome; to me thou art ful dere a ghest.

This olde Calchas, aftir the lawe was tho,
Was kepir of the temple as a preste
In whiche Venus and her sonne Cupido
Were honourid, and his chambre was nest,
To which Creseide with bale enewed in brest
Ufid to passe, her prayirs for to saie,
While at the last upon a solempne daie,

As custome was, the peple ferre and nere
Before the none unto the temple went
With sacrifice devout in ther manere;
But stil Creseide, hevy in her intent,
Into the church would nat herself present,
For giving of the peple any deming
Of her expulse fro Diomedes the King,

But passid into a secrete oratore,
Where she might wepe her wofull destiny;
Behinde her backe she closid fast the dore,
And on her kneis bare fel doun in hie;
Upon Venus and Cupide angirly
She cryid out, and sayid in this wise,
Alas that er I made you sacrifice!

Ye gave me ones a divine responsaile
That I should be the floure of love in Troie;
Now am I made an unworthy outwaile,
And al in care translatid is my joie:
Who shal me gide? who shal me now convoie,
Sithe I fro Diomedes and noble Troilus
Am clene excluded, abject, odious?

O false Cupide! none is to wite but thou,
And the mothir of Love, that blinde goddace;
Ye caused me undirstande alwaie and throw
The fede of love was sowin on my face,
And aie grewe grene thorough your fople grace;
But now, alas! that fede with frost is flaine,
And I fro lovirs leste and all forlaine.

Whan this was said, doun in an extasy,
Ravished in spirite, in a dreame she fel,
And by apparaunce herde where she did lie
Cupide the King tinging a silvir bel,
Which men might here fro hevin into hel,
At whose founde before Cupido aperes
The seven planets discending fro the spheres,

Whiche hath powir of al thing generable,
To rule and stere by their gret influence
Wedir and winde, and course variable;
And first of al Saturne gave his sentence,
Whiche gave to Cupide litil reverence,
But as a boistous chorle in his manere
Came crabbidly with austrine loke and chere.

His face frounid, his lere was like the lede,
His tethe chatrid, and shivered with the chin,
His eyin droupid, whole sonkin in his hede,
Out at his nose the mildrop fast gan rin,
With lippis blew, and chekis lene and thin,
The isekils that fro his heer doune honge
Was wondir grete, and as a spere as longe;

Attour his belte his liart lockis laie
Feltrid unfaire, or fret with frostis hore,
His garment and his gite ful gay of graie,
His widrid wede fro him the winde out wore,
A boustous bowe within his honde he bore,
Undir his girdle a fashe of felone flains
Fedrid with ise and hedid with holstains.

Than Jupiter right faire and amiable,
God of the steris in the firmament,
And norice to al thing generable,
Fro his fathir Saturne farre different,
With burly face, and browis bright and brent,
Upon his hed a garlonde wondris gaie
Of flouris faire, as it had ben in Maie;

His voice was clere, as cristal was his eien,
As goldin wier so glittring was his here,
His garment and his gite ful gaie of grene,
With goldin listis gilte on every gere,
A burly brandy about his middle he bere,
And in his right hand he had a groundin spere,
Of his fathir the wrothe fro us to bere.

Next aftir him came Mars, the god of ire,
Of strife, debate, and all discencioun,
To chide and fight as fierse as any fire,
In harde harnesse hewmonde and habergioun,
And on his haunch a rousty fel fauchoun,
And in his hande he had a rousty sworde,
Writhing his face, with many angry worde;

Shaking his brande before Cupide he come,
With red visage and grisly glowing eien,
And at his mouth a blubbir stode of some,
Like to a bore whetting his tuskis kene,
Right tulfurelike, but temperaunce in tene,
An horne he blewe with many boustous bragge,
Whiche al this world with warre hath made towagge,

Than faire Phœbus, lanterne and lampe of light,
Of man and best both frute and flourishing,
Tendir norice, and banishir of night,
And of the worlde causing by his moving
And influence life in al erthly thing,
Without comforte of whom of force to nought
Must go dyin all that this world hath wrought.

As king royall he rode upon a chare,
The whiche Phaeton somtime gided unright.
The brightnesse of his face whan it was bare
Non might beholde for persing of his sight,
This goldin carte with firy bemis bright
Foure yokid stedis ful different of hewe
But baite or tiring through the spheris drew.

The first was sorde, with mane as red as rose,
Callid Eoye in the orient;
The seconde stede to name hight Ethiose,
Whitely and pale, and somdele ascendent;
The third Pyrois, right hote and fervent;
The fourth was blak, and callid Phlegone;
Which rollith Phœbus down into the se.

Venus was there present, that goddes gay,
Her sonn's quarrel to defende, and make
Her owne complaint, cladde in a nice aray,
The one halfe grene, th' othir halfe fable blake,
White heer as gold, kembit and shede abake,
But in her face semid grete variaunce,
Whiles parfite truth and whilis inconstaunce.

Undir smiling she was dissimulate,
Provocative with blinkis amorous,
And sodainly chaungid and alterate,
Angry as any serpent venomous,
Right pungitive with wordis odious;
Thus variaunt she was who list take kepe,
With one eye laugh and with the othir wepe,

In tokening that al fleshely paramour,
Which Venus hath in rule and govirnaunce,
Is sometime swete, sometime bittir and sour,
Right unstable, and ful of variaunce,
Minglid with careful joye and false plesaunce,
Now hotte, now colde, now blith, now ful of wo,
Now grene as lefe, now widrid and ago.

With boke in hand than come Mercurious,
Right eloquent and ful of rethorie,
With polite termis and delicious,
With penne and inke to reporte al redie,
Setting songis and singing merily,
His hode was red heclid attour his croun,
Like til a poete of the olde fashioun.

Boxis he bare with fine electuares
And sugrid siropes for digestion,
Spicis belonging to the potiquares,
With many wholsome swete confection,
Doctor in phisike cledde in scarlet gown,
And furrid wel, as suche one ought to be,
Honest and gode, and nat a worde couth lie.

Next after him come Lady Cynthia
The laste of al, and swiftist in her sphere,
Of colour blake, buskid with hornis twa,
And in the night she listith best t' apere,
Hawe as the leed, of colour nothing clere,
For al the light she borroweth at her brother
Titan, for of her selfe she hath non other.

Her gite was gray and ful of spottis blake,
And on her brest a chorle paintid ful even,
Bering a bushe of thornis on his bake,
Whiche for his theft might clime no ner the heven,
Thus when thei gadrid were the goddis seven
Mercurius thei chosed with one assent
To be fore-spekir in the parliment.

Who had ben there and liking for to here
His faconde tonge and termis exquisite,
Of rethorike the practike he might lere,
In brese sermon a preignant sentence write,
Before Cupide, valing his cappe a lite,
Speris the cause of that vocacioun,
And he anon shewde his entencioun.

Lo, quod Cupide, who wol blaspheme the name
Of his owne god either in worde or dede
To al goddis he doeth bothe losse and shame,
And should have bittir painis to his mede;
I saie this by yondir wretche Creseide,
The whiche through me was somtime flour of love;
Me' and my mothir she stately can reprove,

Saying of her gret infelicite
I was the cause, and my mothir Venus
She called a blinde goddes and might nat se,
With sclaudir and defame injurious;
Thus her living unclene and lechirous
She would retorte on me and my mother,
To whom I shewde my grace above al other.

And sithe ye are al sevin deficate
Participant of divine sapience,
This gret injury done to' our high estate
Me thinke with paine we shuld make recompence;
Was ner to goddis done suche violence;
As wel for you as for my selfe I saie,
Therefore go help to revenge I you praie.

Mercurius to Cupide gave answere,
And said, Sir King, my counsaile is that ye
Referre you to the hyist planet here,
And take to him the lowist of degre,
The paine of Creseide for to modifie,
As God Saturne with him take Cynthia.
I am content (quod he) to take thei twa.

Than thus procedid Saturne and the Mone,
Whan thei the matir ripely had digest,
For the dispite to Cupide that she' had done,
And to Venus opin and manifest,
In al her life with pain to be oprest,
And turment fore, with fikenesse incurable,
And to al lovirs be abhominable.

This doleful sentence Saturne toke in hande,
And passid down where careful Creseide laie,
And on her hed he laide a frosty wande,
Than lausfully on this wise gan he saie;
Thy grete fairnesse and al thy beauty gaie,
Thy wanton blode, and eke thy goldin here,
Here I exclude fro the for evirmere:

I chaunge thy mirthe into melancoly,
Whiche is the mothir of al pensivenesse,
Thy moistir and thy hete to colde and dry,
Thine insolence, thy plaie and wantonnesse,
To grete disese, thy pompe and thy richesse
Into mortal nede and grete penurie;
Thou suffre shalt, and as a beggir die.

O cruil Saturne ! froward and angrie,
Harde is thy dome and to malicious,
Of faire Creseide why hast thou no mercie,
Whiche was so swete, gentill, and amorous ?
Withdrawe thy sentence and be gracious,
As you were ner, so shewith through thy dede
A wrekeful sentence givin on Creseide.

Than Cynthia, whan Saturne past awaie,
Out of her sete descendid dounè blive,
And red a bill on Creseide where she laie,
Containing this sentence diffinitive,
Fro hele of body here I the deprive,
And to thy sikenesse shal be no recure,
But in dolour thy dayis to endure ;

Thy cristal eyen mengid with blode I make,
Thy voice so clere unplefant here and hace,
Thy lustie lere orspred with spottis blake,
And lumpis have appering in thy face,
Where thou comist eche man shall fle the place ;
Thus shalt thou go begging fro hous to hous
With cuppe and clappir, like a Lazarous.

This dolie dreame, this ugly visoun,
Brought till an ende, Creseide fro it awoke,
And all that courte and convocacioun
Vanished awaie ; than rose she up and toke
A polished glasse, and her shadowe couth loke,
And whan she sawe her visage so deformate
If she in herte were wo I note, God wate.

Weping ful sore, Lo ! what it is (quod she)
With froward langage for to move and stere
Our crabbid goddes ! and so is sene on me ;
My blaspheming now have I bought ful dere,
All yerthly joie and mirthe I set arere ;
Alas this daie, alas this woful tide,
Whan I began with my goddis to chide !

By this was saied a childe came fro the hal
To warne Creseide the suppir was redie,
First knockid at the dore, and eft couth call,
Madame, your fathir biddith you cum in hie,
He hath marveile so long on grose ye lie,
And saith your bedis beth to long somdele,
The goddis wote all your entent full wele.

Quod she, Faire child, go to my fathir dere,
And praie him come to speke with me anon ;
And so he did, and saied, Doughtir, what chere ?
Alas ! (quod she) fathir, my mirthe is gone,
How so ? (quod he) and she gan all expone
As I have told, the vengeaunce and the wrake
For her trespas Cupide on her couth take.

He lokid on her ugly lepir's face,
The whiche before was white as lily flour,
Wringing his handes oftimis saied Alace
That he had lived to se that wofull hour !
For he knewe well that there was no socour
To her siknesse, and that doublid his pain :
Thus was there care inow betwixt hem twain.

Whan thei togidir mournid had full lang,
Quod Creseide, Fathir, I would nat be kende,
Therefore in secrete wise ye let me gange
To yon hospitall at the toun's ende,
And thidir some mete for charite me sende
To live upon, for all mirth in this yerth
Is fro me gone, soche is my wickid werth.

Whan in a mantill and a bevir hat,
With cuppe and clappir, wondir privily
He opened a secrete gate, and out therat
Conveyid her that no man should espie,
There to a village halfe a mile therebie
Delivered her in at the spittill hous,
And daily sente her part of his almous.

Sum knew her well, and sum had no knowlege
Of her, bicause she was so deformate,
With bilis blake orspred in her visage,
And her faire colour fadid and alt'erate ;
Yet thei presumid for her hie regrate
And still mourning she was of noble kin,
With bittir will there thei token her in.

The daie passid, and Phoebus went to rest,
The cloudis blake orwhelid all the skie,
God wote if Creseide were a sorowfull gest,
Seing that uncouth fare and herborie ;
But mete or drinke she dressid her to lie
In a darke cornir of the hous alone,
And on this wise weping she made her mone.

Here foloweth the complaint of Creseide.

O soppe of sorowe sonkin into care !
O caitife Creseide now and evirmare !
Gon is thy joie and al thy mirthe in yerth ;
Of all blithnesse now art thou blake and bare ;
There is no salve that helpin maie thy fare ;
Fell is thy fortune, wickid is thy werthe,
Thy blisse is banished, and thy bale unberde ;
Undir the grete God if I gravin ware
Wher men of Grece ne yet of Troie might herd !

Where is thy chambir wantonly besene,
With burly bed and blankits broudid bene,
Spicis and wine to thy colatioun,
The cuppis all of gold and silver shene,
Thy swete metis servid in platis clene,
With favere sauce of a gode fashoun,
Thy gaie garmentes with many godely gown,
Thy plefant laune pinnid with goldin pene ?
All is arere thy grete roiall renoun.

Where is thy gardein with thy Grecis gaie,
And freshe flouris, which the quene Floraie
Had paintid plefantly in every paine,
Where thou were wout full merily in Maie
To walke, and take the dewe by it was daie,
And here the merle and mavise many one,
With ladies faire in carolling to gone,
And se ther roiall renkis in ther raie ?

This lepir loge take for thy godely boure,
And for thy bed take now a bounche of fire,
For wailid wine and metis thou had tho
Take mouldid bred, pirate and sidir soure,
But cuppe and clappir is all now ago.

My clere voice and my courtly carolling
Is ranke as roke, full hidous here and bace,
Deformid is the figure of my face,
To loke on it no peple hath liking,
So sped in fight, I saie with fore fighting
Lying among the lepir folke, Alas !

O ladies faire of Troie and Grece ! attende
My freile fortune, mine infelicite,
My grete mischefe which no man can ament,
And in your minde a mirroure make of me,

As I am now paravinture that ye,
For al your might, may come to the same ende
Or ellis worse, if any worse maie be;
Beware therefore, approchith nere your ende.

Nought is your fairnesse but a fading floure,
Nought is your famous laude and hie honour
But winde inflate in othir mennis eres,
Your rosing redde to roting shall retoure,
Exemple make of me in your memoure,
Which of soche thingis wofull witnes beres,
Al welth in yerth as wind awaie it weres;
Beware therefore, approchith nere your hour.

Thus chiding with her drerie destine
Weping she woke the night fro ende to ende:
But all in vain; her dole, her carefull crie,
Might not remede, ne yet her mourning mend;
A lepir ladie rose and to her wende,
And saied, Why spurnist thou again the wall
To fle thy self, and mende nothing at all?

Sith that thy weping but doublith thy wo,
I counsaile the make vertue of a nede,
Go lerne to clappe thy clappir to and fro,
And lerne aftir the lawe of lepers lede.
There was no bote, but forthwith than she yede
Fro place to place, while cold and hungir sore
Compellid her to be a ranke beggore.

That same time of Troie the garnifoun,
Whiche had the chestein worthy Troilus
Through jeoparddy of warre had strikin down
Knightis of Grece in nombir marveilous,
With grette triumphe and laude victorious
Again to Troie right roially thei rode
The waie wher Creseide with the lepir stode.

Seing that companie come with o steven
Thei gave a crie, and shoke cuppis, Gode spede,
Worthie lordis! for Godd's love of heven
To us lepirs part of your almose dede!
Than to her crie noble Troilus toke hede,
Having pite, nere by the place gan pas
Where Creseide sat, nat weting what she was.

Than upon him she kest up bothe her eyen,
And with a blinke it come intill his thought
That he somtime her face before had sein,
But she was in soche plight he knew her nought,
Yet than her loke into his minde he brought,
The swete visage and amorous blenking
Of faire Creseide, somtime his own derling.

No wondir was suppose in mind that she
Toke her figure so sone; and lo! now why
'The' idea of a thing in case maie be
So depe enprintid in the fantasie
That it deludith the wittes outwardly,
And so appereth in forme and like estate
Within the minde as it was figurate.

A sparke of love than til his hert couth spring,
And kindilid his body in a fire
With hote fevir, in swette, and trembling
Him toke, while he was redie to exspire;
To bere his shilde his brest begon to tise,
Within a while he chaungid many' a hewe,
And nerthèles nat one anothir knewe.

For knightly pite and memoriell
Of faire Creseide a girdill gan he take,
A purse of golde, and many' a gaie jewell,

And in the skirte of Creseide doun gan shake,
Than rode awaie, and nat a worde he spake,
Penfise in herte, while he came to the toune,
And for grete care oft sith almose fell doune.

The lepre folke to Creseide then couth draw,
To se the equall distribucioun
Of the almose; but whan the golde they sawe
Eche one to othir privily gan roun,
And saied, Yon lorde hath more affectioun,
Hower it be, unto yon Lazarous
Than to us all, we knewe by his almous.

What lorde is yon, (quod she) have ye no sele,
That doeth to us so grete humanite?
Yes, quod a lepre man, I knowe him wele,
Troilus it is, a knight gentle and fre.
Whan Creseide undirstode that it was he
Stiffir than stele there sterte a bittir stound
Throughout her hert, and fill doune to the ground.

Whan she, orcome with sighing fore and sad,
With many' a carefull crie and cold atone,
Now is my brest with stormie stoundis stad,
Wrappid in wo, oh wretchfull will of one!
Than fell in swoun ful oft or she would sone,
And evir in her swouning cried she thus,
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus!

Thy love, thy laude, and all thy gentilnesse,
I comptid small in my prosperite,
So efflatid I was in wantonnesse,
And clambe upon the fickle whele so hie,
All faithe and love I promittid to the
Was in thy self sikill and furious;
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus!

For love of me thou kept thy countinaunce
Honest and chaste in conversacion;
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helpid ther opinion:
My minde on fleshy foule affection
Was enclinid to lustis lecherous;
Fie, false Creseide! o true knight Troilus!

Lovirs, beware, and take gode hede about
Whom that ye love, for whan ye suffre pain
I let you wit there is right fewe throughout
Whom ye maie trust to have true love again;
Prove whan you woll, your labour is in vain;
Therefore I rede ye take them as ye finde,
For thei are sad as wedircocke in winde

Bicause I knowe the grete untablenesse,
Brittle as glasse, unto my selfe I saie,
Trusting in othir as grete brutilnesse,
As inconstaunt, and as untrue of saie;
Though some be true I wot right few ar thei:
Who findith truthe let him his lady ruse;
None but my self as now I woll accuse.

Whan this was said, with papir she sat doun,
And in this manir made her Testament;
Here I bequeth my corse and carioun
With wormis and with todis to be rent,
My cuppe, my clappir, and mine ornament,
And all my gold, these lepre folke shall have,
Whan I am dedde to burie me in grave.

This roiall ring, set with this rubie redde,
Whiche Troilus in dowrie to me sende,
To him again I leve it whan I am dedde,

To make my careful deth unto him kende.
Thus I conclude shortly and make an ende;
My sp'rit I leve to Diane, where she dwelles,
To walke with her in wast wadis and welles.

O Diomedes! thou hast bothe broche and belte
Whiche Troilus gave me in tokining
Of his true love; and with that worde she swelt.
And sone a lepirman toke off the ring,
Than buried her withoutin taryng;
To Troilus forthwith the ring he bare,
And of Creseide the deth he gan declare.

Whan he had herd her grete infirmite,
Her legacie, and lamentacioun,
And how she endid in such povertie,
He swelte for wo, and fell doune in a fwoun,
For sorowe his herte to brast was boun,

Sighing full sadly saied I can no more;
She was untrue, and wo is me therfore.

Some faith he made a tombe of marble graie;
And wrote her name and superscripcioun,
And laid it on her grave whereas she laie,
In golden lettirs, conteining this refoun;
Lo! faire ladies, Creseide of Troie toun,
Somtime comptid the floure of womanhed,
Undir this stone, late lepir, lyith dedde!

Now worthy women, in this balade short,
Made for your worship and instruction,
Of charite. I monishe and exhorte,
Minge nat your love with false discepcion,
Bere in your minde this fore conclusion
Of faire Creseide as I have saied before;
Sith she is dedde I speke of her no more.

THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN*.

A THOUSAND tymis I have herd men tell
That there is joie in heven and pain in hell,
And I acord it wele that it is so,
But nathellese yet wot I wele also
That there n'is non dwelling in this countre
That eithir hath in heven or hell ibe,
Ne maie of it none othir waies wittin
But as he herd saied or found it writtin,
For by affaie there maie no man it preve.

But God forbede but that men shuldin leve
Well more thing than thei han seen with eye!
Men shall nat wenin every thing a lie
But if himself it seeth or els it doeth,
For God wote thing is nevir the lesse soth
Though every wight ne maie it not ise.

Bernarde the monke ne faugh not all parde,
Than motè we to bokis that we finde,
(Through which the oldè thingis ben in minde)
And to the doctrine of these oldè wise,
Yeve credence in every skilfull wise,
That tellin of these old apprevyd stories
Of holines, of reignis, of victories,
Of love, of hate, and othir sondrie thinges,
Of whiche I maie not makin reherfinges;
And if that oldè bokis were awaie
I lorne were of all remembraunce the kaie.

Well ought us than honourin and beleve
These bokis there we han none othir preve.

And as for me, though that I can but lite,
On bokis for to rede I me delite,
And to 'hem yeve I faithe and ful credence,
And in mine herte have 'hem in revèrence
So hertily, that there is gamè none
That fro my bokis makith me to gone,
But it be feldome, on the holic daie,
Save certainly whan that the month of Maie
Is comin, and I here the foulis sing,
And that the flouris ginnin for to spring,

* Some ladies in the court took offence at Chaucer's large speeches against the untruth of women, therefore the Queen enjoined him to compile this book in the commendation of sundry maidens and wives who shewed themselves faithful to faithless men. This seems to have been written after *The Flower and the Leaf*.

Farewell my boke and my devocioun.

Now have I than eke this condicion,
That above all the flouris in the mede
Than love I moste these flouris white and rede,
Soche that men callin Daifles in our toun;
To them have I so grete affectioun,
As I saied erst, whan comin is the Maie,
That in my bedde there dawith me no daie
That I n'am up and walking in the mede
To sene this floure ayenst the sunne sprede
Whan it uprisith erly by the morowe;
That blisfull sight softinith all my sorowe;
So glad am I when that I have presence
Of it to doin it all revèrence,
As she that is of all flouris the floure,
Fulfillid of all vertue and honoure,
And evir ilike faire and freshe of hewe
As wel in wintir as in summir newe;
This love I evre', and shall until I die,
All swere I not of this, I woll nat lie.

There lovid no wight hottir in his life;
And whan that it is eve I renne blithe,
As sone as evir the sunne ginnith west,
To sene this floure how it woll go to rest;
For fere of night, so hatith she derknesse,
Her chere is plainly spred in the brightnesse
Of the sunne, for there it woll unclofe:
Alas that I ne' had Englishe, rime, or prose,
Suffisaunt this floure to praise aright!
But helpith ye that han conning and might,
Ye lovirs, that can make of sentiment;
In this case ought ye to be diligent
To forthrin me somewhat in my labour,
Whether ye ben with the Lefe or the Flour,
For well I wote that ye han here beforne
Of making ropen and lad awaie the corne,
And I come aftir glening here and there,
And am full glad if I maie finde an ere
Of any godely worde that ye han leste;
And though it happe me to reherfin est
That ye han in your freshe songis saied
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaied,
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour
Of Love, and eke in service of the flour,

Whom that I serve as I have wit or might;
 She is the clerenesse and the very light
 That in this derke world me windith and ledeth;
 The hert within my wofull brest you dredeth
 And loveth so fore, that ye ben verily
 The maistris of my wit and nothing I;
 My worde, my workes, is knit so in your bonde,
 That as an harpe obeyith to the honde,
 And makith sounne aftir his fingiring,
 Right so mowe ye out of mine hertè bring
 Soch voice right as you list to laugh or pain;
 Be ye my guide and ladie soverain:
 As to mine yerthly god to you I call
 Bothe in this werke and my sorowis all.
 But wherfore that I spake to yeve credence
 To old stories, and doen 'hem revèrence,
 And that men mustin morè thing bileve
 Than men may sene at eye or ellis preve,
 That shall I sein whan that I se my time;
 I maie not all at onis speke in rime;
 My busie ghost, that thurstith alwaie newe
 To sene this flour so yong, so freshe of hewe,
 Constrainid me with so gredie desire
 That in mine herte I felin yet the fire
 That madè me to rise er it were daie,
 And this was now the first morowe of Maie,
 With dredfull herte and glad devocion
 For to ben at the resurrection
 Of this flourè, whan that it should unclofe
 Again the sunne, that rose as redde as rose,
 That in the brest was of the best that daie
 That Agenor's doughtir ladde awaie;
 And doune on knees anon right I me sette,
 And as I could this freshe floure I grette,
 Kneling alwaie till it unclosid was
 Upon the small, and soft, and swetè gras,
 That was with flouris swete embroudid al,
 Of soche swetnesse and soche odour oer all
 That for to spekin of gomme, herbe, or tre,
 Comparison maie none imakid be,
 For it surmountith plainly all odoures,
 And of riche beaute the most gaye of floures.
 Forgottin had the yerth his pore estate
 Of wintir, that him nakid made and mate,
 And with his sworde of colde so fore greved;
 Now hath the' atempre sonne al that releved
 That nakid was, and clad it newe again;
 The smallè foulis, of the seson fain,
 That of the panter and the net ben scaped,
 Upon the foulir that 'hem made awhaped
 In wintir, and destroyid had ther brode,
 In his dispite them thought it did 'hem gode
 To sing of him, and in ther song dispise
 The foulè chorle that for his covitise
 Had 'hem betrayid with his sophistrie:
 This was ther song; The foulir we desie,
 And all his crafte: and some ysongin clere
 Lais of love, that joie it was to here,
 In worshipping and praising of her make,
 And for the newè blisfull somir's sake;
 Upon the braunchis full of blosmis soft
 In ther delite thei tournid 'hem full oft,
 And songin, Blissid be Sainct Valentine!
 For on his daie I chese you to be mine,

Withoutin repenting, mine hertè swete!
 And therwithall their beakis gonnin mete,
 Yelding honour and humble obeisaunce
 To Love, and didden ther othir observaunce
 That longith unto love and to nature;
 Constrewe that as you list; I doe no cure:
 And tho that had doin unkindenesse,
 As doeth the tidise for newefangelnesse,
 Besoughtin mercie of ther trespassing,
 And humilly songin ther repenting,
 And sworin on the blosmis to be true,
 So that ther makis would upon 'hem rue:
 And at the last thei madin ther acorde,
 All found thei Daungir for the time a lorde,
 Yet Pite thorough his strong gentill might
 Foryave, and madè mercy passin right
 Through Innocence and rulid Curtesie;
 But I ne clepe nat innocence folie,
 Ne false pite, for vertue is the mene,
 As Ethicke saith, in soche manir I mene:
 And thus these foulis, voide of all malice,
 Accordidin to love, and lastin vice
 Of hate, and songin all of one acorde,
 Welcome Sommir, our governour and lorde!
 And Zephyrus and Flora gentilly
 Yave to the flouris soft and tendirly
 Ther sotè breth, and made 'hem for to sprede,
 As god and goddesse of the flourie mede,
 In whiche me thought I might daie by daie
 Dwellin alwaie the joly monthe of Maie
 Withoutin slepe, withoutin mete or drinke:
 Adoune full softly I gan to sinke,
 And lening on my elbowe and my side
 The longè daie I shope me for to abide,
 For nothing ellis, and I shall nat lie,
 But for to lokin upon the Daisie,
 That well by reson men it callè maie
 The Daisie, or els the eye of the daie,
 The emprise, and the floure of flouris all:
 I praie to God that faire mote she fall,
 And all that lovin flouris for her sake!
 But nathèlesse ne wene nat that I make
 In praisin of the Floure again the Lefe
 No more than of the corne again the shefe,
 For as to me n'is levir none ne lother;
 I n'am withholdin yet with neithir nother,
 Ne' I n'ot who servith Lefe ne who the Floure;
 Well broukin thei ther service or laboure;
 For this thing is all of anothir tonne,
 Of old storie, er soche thing was begonne.
 Whan that the sunne out of the south gan west,
 And that this floure gan clofe and gon to rest,
 For derknes of the night the whiche she drede,
 Home to mine house full swiftly I me spede
 To gone to rest, and erly for to rise
 To sene this floure to sprede as I devise;
 And in a little herbir that I have,
 That benchid was of turvis fresh igrave,
 I bad men shouldin me my couchè make;
 For deinte of the newè sommir's sake
 I bad 'hem strawin flouris on my bedde:
 Whan I was laied and had mine eyin hedde
 I fell aslepe, and slept an houre or two,
 Me met how I laie in the midowe tho

To fene this floure that I love so and drede,
And from aserre came walking in the mede
The god of Love, and in his hande a quene;
And she was clad in roiall habite grene,
A fret of goldè she had next her here,
And upon that a white coroune she bere
With flourounis small, and, I shall nat lie,
For all the worldè right as a Daisie
Icrounid is, with whitè levis lite,
So were the florouns of her crounè white,
For of o perlè fine orientall
Her whitè coroune was imakid all,
For which the white coroune above the grene
Ymade her like a Daisie for to fene,
Confidrid eke her fret of gold above;
Ielothid was this mightie god of Love
In silke embroidid, full of grenè greves,
In whiche there was a fret of red rose leves,
The freshest sens the worldè was first bigon;
His gilt here was ycrounid with a son
In stede of gold, for hevinessè and weight,
Therwith me thought his face shone so bright
That well unnethis might I him behold,
And in his hand methought I sawe him hold
Two fire dartis as the gledis rede,
And angelike his wingis sawe I sprede;
And all be that men sain that blinde is he
Algatis me thought that he might wele se,
For sternly on me he gan behold,
So that his loking doeth min hertè cold;
And by the hande he helde this noble quene,
Crounid with white, and clothid al in grene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this worldè though that men woldin seke
Halfe her beaute ne shouldin thei nat finde
In cature that yformid is by Kinde,
And therefore maie I sain, as thinkith me,
This song in praïsing of this ladie fre:

Hide, Absolon, thy giltè treffis clere,
Hester, laie thou thy mekenesse all adoun,
Hide, Jonathas, all thy frendly manere,
Penelope, and Marcia Catoun,
Make of your wifehode no comparisoun,
Hide ye your beauties Isoude and Helein,
My ladie cometh, that all this maie distain.

Thy faire bodie ne let it not appere
Lavine, and thou Lucrece of Romè toun,
And Polyxene, that boughtin love so dere,
And Cleopatra, with all thy passioun,
Hide ye your trouthe of love and your renoun,
And thou Thisbe, that hast of love soche pain,
My ladie cometh, that all this maie distain.

Hero, Dido, I'abdomia', ifere,
And Phyllis, hanging for Demophoon,
And Canace, espyid by thy chere,
Hypsipyle, betrayid by Jason,
Makith of your trouthe neither boste ne soun,
Nor Hypermetra' or Ariadne, ye twaine,
My ladie cometh, that all this maie distain.

This balade maie full well isongin be,
As I have said erst, by my ladie fre,
For certainly all these mowe not suffice
To' apperin with my ladie in no wise.

For as the sunnè woll the fire distain,
So passith all my ladie soverain,
That is so gode, so faire, so debonaire,
I praie to God that evir fall her faire!
For ne had comfort ben of her presence
I had ben dedde without any defence
For drede of Lov'is wordis and his chere,
As whan tyme is hereaftir ye shall here.

Behinde this god of Love upon the grene
I sawe coming of ladyis ninetene,
In roial habit, a full esie pace,
And aftir them of women soche a trace
That sens that God Adam had made of yerth
The thirde part of mankinde, or the ferth,
Ne wende I nat by possibilitè
Had evir in this widè worldè ibe,
And true of love these women were echon:
Now whether was that a wondir thing or non,
That right anon as that thei gonne espie
This floure whiche that I clepe the Daisie,
Full sodainly thei stentin all at ones,
And knelid doune as it were for the nones,
And songin with o voice, *Hele and honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour,
That berith our aldir prise in figuring,
Her white coroune berith the witnesing!*
And with that wordè a compas envirooun
Thei sittin 'hem full softly adoun:
First sat the god of Love, and sith his quene,
With the white coroune, yclad all in grene,
And sithin all the remnaunt by and by,
As thei were of estate, full curtisly;
Ne nat a worde was spokin in the place
The mountenance of a furlong waie of space.

I kneling by this floure in gode entent
Abode to knowin what this peple ment
As still as any stone, till at the last
This god of Love on me his eyin cast,
And said, Who knelith there? and I answerd
Unto his asking whan that I it herde,
And saied, Sir, It am I, and come him nere,
And salued him. (Quod he) What doest thou here
So nigh mine ownè floure so boldly?

It werin bettir worthy truly
A worme to nighin nere my flour than thou.

And why, Sir, (quod I) and it likith you?
For thou (quod he) art therto nothing able;
It is my relike digne and delitable,
And thou my so, and all my folke werriest,
And of mine old servauntis thou mislaiest,
And hindrist 'hem with thy translacon,
And lettist folke from ther devocion
To servin me, and holdist it folie
To servin Love; thou maiest it nat denie,
For in plain text, withoutin nede of glose,
Thou' hast translatid The Romaunt of the Rose,
That is an heresie ayenst my lawe,
And makist wise folke fro me to withdrawe;
And of Creseide thou hast saide as the list,
That makith men to women lesse to triste,
That ben as trewe as er was any stele:
Of thine answer avisin the right wele,
For though that thou renyid hast my lawe
As othir wretchis have done many a daie,

By Seint Venus, which that my mothir is,
If that thou live thou shalt repent in this
So cruilly that it shal wel be sene.

Tho spake this lady, clothid all in grene,
And sayid, God, right of your curtisie
Ye mote herkin if that he can replie
Ayenst al this that ye have to him meved;
A God ne shoulde nat be thus agreved,
But of his deite he shall be stable,
And therto gracious and merciable,
And if ye n'ere a god that knowin all
Than might it be, as I you tellin shall,
This man to you maie falsely ben accused,
That as by right him oughtin ben excused,
For in your court is many' a losingeour,
And many a queint totoler accusour
That tabouren in your eris many' a soun
Right after ther imaginacioun
To have your daliaunce, and for envy;
These ben the causis, and, I shal nat lie,
Envie is lave'ndir of the court alwaie,
For she ne partith neithir night ne daie
Out of the house of Cesar, thus saith Dant,
Who so that goeth algate she wol nat want.

And eke peraunter for this man is nice
He mightin done it, gessing no malice,
But for he usith thingis for to make
Him reckith nought of what matir he take,
Or him was bodin makin thilkè twey
Of some persone, and durst it nat withsey,
Or him repentith uttirly of this;
He ne' hath nat done so grevously amis
To translatin that oldè clerkis writen,
As though that he of malice would enditen
Dispite of Love, and had himselfe it wrought;
This shoulde a rightwise lorde have in his thought,
And nat be like tirauntes of Lombardie,
That han no rewarde but at tirannie;
For he that king or lorde is naturel,
Him ought not be a tiraunt ne cruel
As a fermour, to done the harme he can,
He must thinkin it is his liegè man,
As is his tresour, and his golde in cofer,
This is the sentence of the philosopher;
A kinge to kepe his liegis in justice,
Withouthin doute that is his office,
Al wol he kepe his lordes in ther degre,
As it is right and skil that thei shoulde be
Enhaunsid and honourid, and most dere,
For thei ben halfegoddiss in this world here,
Yet mote he done both right to pore and riche,
Al be that ther estate be nath both liche,
And have of povir folke compassion;
For lo the gentil kinde of the lion!
For whan a flie offendith him or biteth
He with his taile awaie the flie yfmiteth
Al esily, for of his genterie
Him deinit nat to wreke him on a flie,
As doeth a curre or els anothir best;
In noble corage ought to ben arest,
And wayin every thinge by equite,
And have regarde unto his owne degre;
For, Sir, it is no maistrise for a lorde
To dampne a man without answere of word

And for a lorde that is ful foule to use;
And it so be he maie him nat excuse,
But askith mercy with a dredeful herte,
And profirith him right in his bare sherte
To ben right at your ownè jugement,
Than ought a god by short avisement
Confidre' his owne honour and his trespace,
For sith no cause of deth lieth in this case
You ought to ben the lightlier merciable:
Lettith your ire, and beth somewhat trefable;
The man hath servid you of his conninges,
And forthrid well your law in his makinges;
Al be it that he can nat wel endite,
Yet hath he madin leude folke delite
To servin you, in preising of your name;
He made the boke that hight The House of Fame,
And eke The Deth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And The' Parliament of Foulis, as I gessie,
And al The Love of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebis, though the storie is knowen lite,
And many an hymne for your holy daies,
That hightin Balades, Rondils, Virélaies;
And for to speke of othir holinesse,
He hath in prose translatid Boece,
And made The Life also of Saint Cecile,
He madin also, gon is a grete while,
Origines upon the Maudelaine,
Him oughtin now to have the lese paine;
He hath made many' a ley and many' a thing.

Now as ye be a god and eke a king,
I your Alceste, whilom Quene of Thrace,
I askè you this man right of your grace
That ye him nevir hurte in al his live,
And he shal swerin to you, and that blive,
He shal ner more agiltin in this wise,
But shal makin as ye wol him devise
Of women trewe in loving al their life,
Where so ye wol of maidin or of wise,
And forthrin you as muche as he misseide
Or in The Rose, or ellis in Creseide.

The god of Love answerde her thus anon;
Madame, (quod he) it is so longe agon
That I you knew so charitable' and trewe,
That nevir yet sithin the worlde was newe
To me ne founde I bettir none than ye;
If that I wol ysavin my degre

I may nor wol nat werne your request;
Al lieth in you; doth with him as you lest.

I al foryeve withoutin lengir space,
For who so yeveth a yeste or doth a grace
Do it betime, his thanke shal be the more,
And demith ye what he shal do therefore.

Go, thankith now my lady here (quod he.)
I rose, and down I set me on my kne,
And sayid thus; Madame, the God above
For yeldè you that ye the god of Love
Have makid me his wrathè to foryeve,
And give me grace so longè for to live
That I maie know sothily what ye be
That have me holpen and put in this degre!
But trewily I wende as in this caas
Nought have agilde ne done to Love trespas;
For why? a trewe man withoutin drede
Hath nat to partin with a thev'is dede;

Ne a trewe lovir ought me not to blame
Though that I speke a false lovir some shame,
Thei oughtin rather with me for to holde
For that I of Creseidè wrote or tolde,
Or of the Rose; what so mine author ment
Algatis God wote it was mine entent
To forthrin trouth in love, and it chesice,
And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice,
By whiche ensample this was my mening.

And she answerde, Let be thine arguing,
For Love ne wol not countirpletid be
In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me:
Thou hast thy grace, and holde the right therto;
Now woll I saine what penaunce thou shalt do
For thy trespass: Understandith it here
Thou shalt while that thou livist yere by yere
The moste partie of thy timè spende
In making of a glorious Legende

Of Gode Women, both maidinis and wives,
That werin trewe in loving all ther lives,
And tellin of false men that 'hem betraien,
That al ther life ne do nat but assaien
How many women thei maie done a shame,
For in your world that is nat holde a game;
And though that the like nat a lovir be
Speke wel of love, this penaunce yeve I the,
And to the god of Love I shal so praie
That he shal charge his servantes by' any waie
To forthrin the, and wel thy labour quite;
Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but lite;
And when this boke is made yeve it the Quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham or at Shene.

The god of Love gan smile, and than he seide;
Wost thou (quod he) wher this be wise or maide,
Or quene or countesse, or of what degre,
That hath so litill penaunce yevin the,
That hast deservid forely for to smerte?

But pite rennith sone in gentle herte,
That maist thou sene; she kithith what she is.

And I answerde, Naie, Sir, so have I blis,
No more but that I se wel she is gode.

That is a trewe tale by mine hode
(Quod Love) and that thou knowist wel parde,
If it be so that thou avise the:
Hast thou nat in a boken in thy cheste
The grette godenesse of the Quene Alceste,
That turnid was into a Däiesie,
She that for her husbande chese to die,
And eke to gone to hell rathir than he,
And Hercules rescuid her parde,
And brought her out of hel againe to blis?

And I answerde againe, and sayid, Yes;
Now know I her; and is this gode Alceste,
The Däiesie, and mine owne hert'is reste?
Now se I wel the godenesse of this wise,
That both astir her deth and in her life
Her grette bounte doublith her renoun,
Wel hath she quit me mine affection

That I have to her floure the Däiesie;
No wondir is though Jove her stellifie,
As tellith Agaton, for her godenesse,
Her white corowne berith of it witnesse,
For all so many virtuis had she
As smal florounis in her crowne be;
In remembraunce of her and in honour
Cybilla made the Däiesie, and the flour
Icrownid all with white, as men maie se,
And Mars yave her a corown red parde,
In stede of rubies set among the white;
Therwith this quene woxe red for shame alite
Whan she was praisid so in her presence.
Than sayid Love, A ful grette negligence
Was it to the, that ilkè time thou made
(*Hide, Absolon, thy treffis*) in balade,
That thou forgette her in thy songe to sette,
Sith that thou art so gretly in her dette,
And wotist wel that kalender is she
To any woman that wol lovir be,
For she taught all the crafte of trewe loving,
And namily of wisehode the living,
And all the bondis that she ought to kepe;
Thy litil witte was thilkè time aslepe;
But now I chargè the upon thy life
That in thy Legende thou make of this wise,
Whan thou hast othir smale imade before;
And fare now wel, I chargè the no more,
But er I go this muche I wol the tel,
Ne shal no trewe lovir come in hel.

These othir ladies sitting here arowe
Ben in my balade, if thou const 'hem knowe,
And in thy bokis al thou shalt 'hem finde;
Have 'hem now in thy Legende al in minde,
I mene of them that ben in thy knowing,
For here ben twenty thousande mo sitting
Than that thou knowist, and gode women al,
And trewe of love, for ought that maie befall;
Makith the metris of 'hem as the leste,
I mote gone home, the sunnè drawith weste,
To Paradis, with al this companie;
And servin alwaie the fresh Däiesie:
At Cleopatra I wol that thou beginne,
And so forthe, and my love so shalt thou winne;
For let se now what man that lovir be
Wol done so strong a paine for love as she.
I wote wel that thou maiest not al it rime
That suche loviris diddin in ther time;
It were to longe to redin and to here;
Suffisith me thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al ther life the grette,
Astir these olde authors liste for to trete;
For who so shal so many' a storie tel
Sei shortly, or he shal to longe dwell.
And with that worde my bokis gan I take,
And right thus on my Legende gan I make.

HERE BEGINNETH

THE LEGENDE OF CLEOPATRA,

QUENE OF EGYPTE.

After the dethe of Ptolemy the King,
That all Egypt had in his governing,
Reignid his sustir Quene Cleopatras,
Til on a time bifel there suche a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
To conquerin relmis, and bring honour
Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,
To have the worlde at her obēsaunce,
And, sothe to saie, Antonius was his name.
So fil it, as Fortune him ought a shame,
Whan he was fallin in prosperite
Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he,
And or al this the sustir of Cæsare
He left her falsely, er that she was ware,
And would algatis han anothir wife,
For whiche he toke with Rome and Cæsar strife.

Natheleise, for sothe this ilke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentil werriour,
And of his deth it was ful grete damage;
But Love had brought this man in such a rage,
And him so narrow boundin in his laas,
And al for the love of Cleopatras,
That al the world he set at no value;
Him thought there was nothing to him so due
As Cleopatras for to love and serve;
Him roughtē nat in armis for to sterue
In the defence of her and of her right.

This noble Quene eke lovid so this knight
Through his deserte and for his chivalrie,
As certainlie, but if that bokis lie,
He was of person and of gentilnesse,
And of discretion and of hardinesse,
Worthy to any wight that livin maie,
And she was faire as is the rose in Maie;
And, for to makin shorte is the best,
She woxe his wife, and had him as her left.

The wedding and the festē to devise,
To me that have itakin suche emprise
Of so many a storie for to make,
It were to longe, lest that I shoulde flake

Of thing that berith more effecte and charge,
For men maie ovirlade a shippe or barge;
And forthy to effecte than wol I skippe,
And al the remnaunt I wol let it slippe.

Octavian, that wode was of this dede,
Shope him an hoste on Antony to lede,
Al uttirly for his distruction,
With stoute Romainis, cruil as lion:
To ship thei went; and thus I let hem faile.

Antonius was ware, and wol not faile
To metin with these Romaines if he maie,
Toke eke his rede, and both upon a daie
His wife and he, and al his host, forth went
To ship anone, no lengir thei ne stent,
And in the se it happid hem to mete;
Up goeth the trumpe, and for to shoute and shete,
And painin hem to set on with the sunne;
With grisly sounne out goith the grete gonne,
And hertily thei hurtlin al at ones,
And fro the top doune comith the grete stones,
In goth the grapinel so ful of crokes
Among the ropis ran the shering hokes,
In with the polaxe presith he and he,
Behinde the maste beginnith he to fle,
And out againe, and drivith him or borde,
He stickith him upon his speris orde,
He rent the saile with hokis like a fithe,
He bringeth the cuppe, and biddith hem be blith,
He pourith presen upon the hatchis slider,
With pottis ful of lime thei gon togider.

And thus the longe daie in fight thei spende,
Til at the last, as every thing hath ende,
Antonius is shent and put to flight,
And al his folke to go that best go might,
Fleeth eke the Quene, with al her purple saile,
For strokis whiche that went as thicke as haile;
No wondir was, she might it nat endure:
And whan Antony sawe that avinture,
Alas (quod he) the daie that I was borne!
My worship in this daie thus have I lorne,

And for dispaire out of his witte he sterte,
And rose himselfe anon throughout the herte
Er that he ferthir went out of the place :
His wife, that could of Cæsar have no grace,
To Egypt fled for drede and for distresse ;
But herkenith, ye that spekin of kindenesse.

Ye men that falsely swerin many' an othe
That ye wol die if that your love be wrothe,
Here maie ye sene of women such a trouth
This woful Cleopatre' had made suche routh
That there n'is tonge none that maie it tel,
But on the' morowe she wol no lengir dwel,
But made her subtil werkmen make a shrine
Of al the rubies and the stonis fine
In al Egypt which that she coude espie,
And she put ful the shrine of spicèrie,
And lette the corse enbaume, and forth she sette
This ded corse, and she in the shrine is shette ;
And next the shrine a pit than doth she grave,
And al the serpentis that she might have
She put 'hem in that grave, and thus she seide ;
Now love, to whom my sorowful hert obeide
So ferforthly, that fro that blisful hour
That I you swore to bea al frely your,

I mene you, Antonius, my knight,
That nevir waking in the daie or night
Ye n'ere out of mine hert'is remembraunce,
For wele or wo, for carole or for daunce,
And in my selfe this covenant made I tho,
That right suche as ye feltin, wele or wo,
As ferforth as it in my power laie,
Unreprovable' unto my wisehode aie,
The same would I felin in life or dethe,
And thilkè covenant while me lastith brethe
I wol fulfil, and that shal wel be sene,
Was ner unto her love a trewir quene ;
And with that word nakid, with ful gode hert,
Among the serpentis in the pitte she stert,
And there she chese to have her burying :
Anone the nedirs gonne her for to sting,
And she her deth recevith with god chere,
For love of Antony that was her dere ;
And this is storial sothe, it is no fable.
Now er I finde a man thus trewe and stable,
And wol for love his deth so frely take,
I praie God let our hedis nevir ake !

D d iij

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF THISBE

OF BABYLONE.

At Babylone whilom fil it thus,
The whiche toun the Quene Simiramus
Let dichin al about, and wallis make
Full hic of hardè tilis wel ibake;
There werin dwelling in this noble toun
Two lordis which that were of grete renoun,
And wonidin so nigh upon a grene
That there n'as but a stone wal 'hem bitwene,
As oft in grete tounis is the wonne,
And, sothe to faine, that one man had a sonne
Of al that londe one of the lustyist,
That othir had a doughtir the fairist
That estward in the world was tho dwelling;
The name of everiche gan to othir spring,
By women that were neighbouris aboute,
For in that countre yet withoutin doute
Maidinis ben ikepte for jelousie
Ful straitely, lest thei diddin some folie.

This younge man was clepid Pyramus,
And Thisbe hight the maide (Naso saith thus)
And thus by reporte was ther name isrove,
That as thei woxe in age so woxe ther love;
And certaine, as by reson of ther age,
Ther might have ben betwixt 'hem mariage,
But that ther fathirs n'olde it nat assent;
And thei in love ylike fore bothè brent
That none of al ther frendis might it lette,
But privily somtimis yet thei mette
By sleight, and spakin some of ther desire,
As wrie the glede and hottir is the fire;
Forbid a love and it' is ten times so wode.

This wal which that betwixt 'hem both ystode
Was cloven atwo right fro the top adoun
Of oldè time of his foundacioun,
But yet this clifte was so narow and lite
It was nat fenè, (dere inough a mite)

But what is that that love can not espie?
Ye lovirs two, if that I shal nat lie,
Ye foundin first this litle narowe clifte,
And with a sounde as softe as any shrifte
Thei let ther wordis through the cliftè pace,
And toldin, while that thei stoden in the place,
Al ther complaint of love and al ther wo,
At every time whan thei durstin so.

Upon that one side of the wal stode he,
And on that other side stode Thisbe,
The swete sounde of othir to receve,
And thus ther wardeins wouldin thei disceve,
And every daie this wal thei wouldin threte,
And wish to God that it were down ibete;
Thus would thei faine, Alas! thou wickid wal,
Thorough thine envie thou us lettist al;
Why n'ilt thou cleve or fallin al atwo?
Or at the lestè, but thou wouldist so,
Yet wouldist thou but onis let us mete,
Or onis that we mightin kissin swete,
Than were we curid of our caris colde;
But nathèlesse yet be we to the holde,
In as much as thou suffrist for to gone
Our wordis through thy lime and eke thy stone,
Yet oughtin we with the ben wel apaide.

And whan these idil wordis werin saide
The coldè wal thei woldin kisse of stone,
And take ther leve, and forth thei woldin gone,
And this was gladly in the evintide,
Or wondir erly, lest men it espide:
And longè time thei wrought in this manere,
Til on a daie, whan Phœbus gan to clere,
Aurora with the stremis of her hete
Had dryid up the dewe of herbis wete,
Unto this clifte, as it was wonte to be,
Come Pyramus, and astir come Thisbe,

And plightin trouth right fully in ther faie,
That ilke samè night to stele awaie,
And to begile ther wardeins everichone,
And forth out of the cite for to gone;
And for the feldis ben so brode and wide
For to metin in o place at o tide
Thei settin markes ther metingis should be
There King Ninus was graven undir a tre,
For olde Painims, that idollis heried,
Usidin tho in feldis to ben beried;
And faste by his grave was a wel,
And shortly of this tale for to tel,
This covenant was affirmid wondir fast,
And longe 'hem thoughtin that the sonne last,
That it n'ere gone undir the se adoun.

This Thisbe hath so grete affectioun,
And so grete liking Pyramus to se,
That whan she sawe her timè might ybe
At night she stole awaie ful privily,
With her face iwimplid full subtilly,
For al her frendis (for to save her trouthe)
She hath forsake, alas! and that is routhe,
That evir woman would ybe so trewe
To trustin man but she the bet him knewe;
And to the tre she goeth a ful gode pace,
For love made her so hardy in this case,
And by the welle adoun she gan her dresse.
Alas! than comith a wilde lionesse
Out of the wode, withoutin more arest,
With blode mouthe of strangling of a best,
To drinkin of the wel there as she sat;
And whan that Thisbe had espyid that
She rist her up with a ful drery herte,
And in a cave with dredful fote she sterte,
For by the mone she sawe it wel withall,
And as she ran her wimple let she fall,
And toke none hede, so sore she was awhaped,
And eke so glad for that she was escaped;
And thus she sat and lurkith wondir still.
Whan that this lionesse hath dronke her fill
Aboutin the well gan she for to winde,
And right anon the wimple gan she finde,
And with her bloody mouthe it al to rente;
Whan this was done no lengir she ne stente,
But to the wode her way than hath she nome.

And at the last this Pyramus is come,
But al to longe, alas! at home was he;
The mone shone, men mightin wel ife;
And in his waie, as that he come ful fast,
His eyin to the grounde adoun he cast,
And in the sonde, as he behelde adoun,
He saw the steppis brode of a lioun,
And in his hert he sodainly agrofe,
And pale he wexte, therwith his hert arofe,
And nere he came, and founde the wimple torne;
Alas (quod he) the daie that I was borne!
This o night wol both us loviris fle;
How should I askin mercy of Thisbe
Whan I am he that have you slaine? alas!
My biding hath you slaine in this caas:
Alas! to bidde a woman gone by night
In place there as perill fallin might,
And I so flowe: alas! I ne had be
Here in this place a furlonge waie er ye.

Now what lioun that is in this forest
My body mote he rentin, or what best
That wilde is, gnawin mote he now mine herte.
And with that worde he to the wimple sterte,
And kiste it ofte, and wepte on it ful fore,
And said, Wimple, alas! there n'is no more,
But thou shalt fele as well the blode of me
As thou hast felte the bleding of Thisbe:
And with that worde he smote him to the herte,
The blode out of the wounde as brode asterte
As watir, whan the conduite brokin is.

Now Thisbe, which that ne wist not of this,
But sitting in her drede she thoughte thus,
Yf it so fallin that my Pyramus
Be comen hithir, and may me nat ifinde,
He maie me holdin false and eke unkinde.
And out she cometh, and astir him gan spien
Both with her herte and eke with her eien,
And thought I wol him tellin of my drede
Both of the lionesse and of my dede;
And at the last her love than hath she founde
Ybeting with his helis on the grounde
Al bloody, and therwithal abacke she sterte,
And like the wawis quappe began her herte,
And pale as boxe she woxe, and in a throwe
Avisid her, and gan him wel to knowe,
That it was Pyramus, her herte dere:
O! who could writin whiche a dedly chere
Hath Thisbe now! and how her here she rent,
And how she gan her selfin to turment,
And how she lieth and swounith on the ground,
And how she wept of teris ful his wounde,
How medlith she his blode with her complaint,
How with her blod her selvin gan she paint,
How clippith she the red ded corse, alas!
How doth this woful Thisbe in this caas,
How kissith she his frosty mouthe so colde!
Who hath don this? and who hath ben so bolde
To fleen my life? o! speke my Pyramus,
I am thy Thisbe that the callith thus;
And therwithal she listith up his hed.

This wofull man, that was nat fully ded,
Whan that he herde the name of Thisbe crien,
On her he cast his hevy dedly eyen,
And doun againe, and yeldith up the gost.

Thisbe rist up withoutin noise or host,
And saw her wimple and his empty sheth,
And eke his sward, that him hath don to deth,
Than spake she thus; My woful hande (quod she)
Is stronge inough in suche a werke to me,
For love shal yeve me strength and hardinesse
To make my wounde large inough I gesse;
I wol the folowen ded, and I wol be
Felawe and cause eke of thy deth, (quod she)
And though that nothing save the deth only
Might the fro me departin trewily,
Thou shalt no more departin now fro me
Than fro the deth, for I wol go with the.

And now, ye wretchid jelouse fathirs our,
We that ywerin whilom childrin your,
We prayin you withoutin more envie
That in o grave we both motin lie,
Sens love hath brought us to this pitous ende:
And rightwys God to every lovir sende,

That lovith trewly, more prosperite
 Than evir had Pyramus and Thisbe,
 And let no gentil woman her assure
 To puttin her in suche an avinture:
 But God forbid but that a woman can
 Ben as true and as loving as a man,
 And for my part I shal anon it kith;
 And with that word his sward she tokè swith,
 That warme was of her lov'is blode and hote,
 And to the herte she her selvin smote.

And thus are Thisbe' and Pyramus age:
 Of trewe men I findin but fewe mo
 In al my bokis save this Pyramus,
 And therfore have I spokin of him thus,
 For it is deinte to us men to finde
 A man that can in love be trewe and kinde.
 Here maie ye sene, what lovir so he be,
 A woman darc and can as wel as he.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF DIDO

QUENE OF CARTHAGE.

GLORIE and honour, Virgile Mantuan,
Be to thy name, and I shal as I can
Folowe thy lanterne as thou goest beforne,
How Æneas to Dido was forsworne
In thine Æneide, and Nase wol I take
The tenour and the gret effectis make.
Whan Troee ybrought was to distruction
By Grekis sleight, and namely by Sinon
Faning the horse offrid unto Minerve,
Through which that many a Trojan must sterue,
And Hector had aftir his deth apered,
And fire so wode that it might nat ben stered,
In al the noble toure of Illion,
That of the cite was the chefe dongeon,
And al the countre was so lowe ibrought,
And Priamus the king fordone and nought,
And Æneas was chargid by Venus
To flien awaie, he toke Ascanius,
That was his son, in his right hande and fledde,
And on his backe he bare and with him ledde
His oldē fathir clepid Anchises,
And by the waie his wife Creusa he lese;
And mokil sorow had he in his minde
Er that he could his felawship yfinde,
But at the last, whan he had 'hem yfounde,
He made 'hem redy in a certaine stounde,
And to the se ful fast he gan him hie,
And sailith forth with al his companie
Towards Itaile, as wold Destine:
But of his aventuris in the se
N'is nat to purpose for to speke of here,
For it accordith nat to my matere;
But as I said, of him and of Dido
Shal be my talē til that I have do.
So long he failid in the saltē se
Til in Libye unneth arrivid he

With shippis sevin, and no more navie,
And glad he was to londē for to hie,
So was he with the tempest al to shake;
And whan that he the havin had itake
He had a knight was callid Achates,
And him of all his felowship he chese
To gon with him the countre for t'espie,
He ne toke with him no more companie.
But forthe thei gon, and left his shippis ride,
His fere and he, withoutin any guide.

So long he walkith in this wildirnesse;
Till at the last he met an huntireffe;
A bowe in honde and arowis had she,
Her clothis cuttid were unto the kne,
But she was yet the fairist creature
That evir was iformid by Nature,
And Æneas and Achates she grette,
And thus she to 'hem spake whan she 'hem met:

Saw ye, (quod she) as ye han walkid wide,
Any of my sustrin walke you beside
With any wildē bore or othir best,
That thei have huntid to in this forest,
Ituckid up, with arowes in ther caas?

Naie, sothly, ladie, (quod this Æneas)
But by thy beaute, as it thinkith me,
Thou mightist nevir yerthly woman be,
But Phæbus sustir art thou as I gesse,
And if so be that thou be a goddesse
Have mercie on our labour and our wo.

I n'am no goddesse sothly, quod she tho,
For maidins walkin in this countre here
With arowes and with bow in this manere;
This is the relme of Libye there ye ben,
Of whiche that Dido ladie is and quene;
And shortly tolde all the occasion
Why Dido came into that region,

Of whiche as now me listith nat to rhyme;
 It nedith nat; it n'ere but losse of time;
 For this is all and some, it was Venus,
 His ownè mothir, that spake with him thus:
 And to Carthage she bade he should him dight,
 And vanishid anon out of his sight.
 I could folowin worde for worde Virgile,
 But it would lastin all to longè while.

This noble Quene, that clepid was Dido,
 That whilom was the wife of Sichæo,
 That fairir was by ferr than the bright sonne,
 This noble toane of Carthage hath begonne,
 In whiche she reignith in so grete honour
 That she was holdin of all quenis flour
 Of gentilleffe, of fredome, and beaute,
 That well was him that might her onis se,
 Of kingis and of lordis so desired,
 That all the worlde her beautie had ifired,
 She stode so well in every wight's grace.

Whan Æneas was come unto the place,
 Unto the maistir temple of all the toun,
 There Dido was in her devocioun,
 Full privily his waie than hath he nome:
 Whan he was into the large temple come
 I can not faine if that it be possible,
 But Venus had him makid invisible,
 Thus saith the boke, withoutin any lese.

And whan this Æneas and Achates
 Haddin in this temple ben ovir all,
 Than foundin thei depaintid on a wall
 How Troie and all the lande destroyid was;
 Alas that I was borne! (quod Æneas)
 Thorough the world our shame is kid so wide,
 Now it is paintid upon every side:
 All we that werin in prosperite
 Ben now disclaundrid, and in soche degre,
 No lengir for to livin I ne kepe;
 And with that word he braut out for to wepe
 So tendirly that routh it was to sene.

This freshe ladie, of the cite Quene,
 Stode in the temple in her estate roiall,
 So richily and eke so faire withall,
 So yong, so lustie, with her eyin glade,
 That if that God that hevin and yerth made
 Would have a love, for beaute and godenesse,
 And womanhede, and trouth and femelineffe,
 Whom should he lovin but this ladie swete?
 There n'is no woman to him half so mete.
 Fortune, that hath the world in govirnaunce,
 Hath sodainly brought in so newe a chaunce
 That nevir was there yet so frened a caas,
 For all the companie of Æneas,
 Which that we wenid have lorne in the se,
 Arivid is nought ferre fro that cite,
 For whiche the gretis of his lordis some
 By avinture ben to the cite come,
 Unto that samè temple for to seke
 The Quene, and of her socour her beseke,
 Soche renome was ther sprong of her godenes.

And whan that thei had tolde all ther distrefs,
 And all ther tempest and all ther hard case,
 Unto the Quene apperid Æneas,
 And opinly beknewe that it was he;
 Who haddin joie than but his meine,

That haddin found ther lorde, ther govirnour?

The Quene saw that thei did him soche honour,
 And had herd oft of Æneas er tho,
 And in her hertè she had routhe and wo
 That evir soche a noble man as he
 Shall ben disheritid in soche degre,
 And sawe the man that he was like a knight,
 And suffisaunt of persone and of might,
 And like to ben a very gentilman,
 And well his wordis he besettin can,
 And had a noble visage for the nones,
 And formid well of brawne and eke of bones,
 And astir Venus had soche fairenesse
 That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse,
 And well a lorde him semid for to be;
 And for he was a straungir, somewhat she
 Ylikid him the bet, as God doe bote,
To some folk oftin newè thing is fote;
 Anon her herte hath pitie of his wo,
 And with that pite love ycame also;
 And thus for pite and for gentilnesse
 Refreshid must he ben of his distresse.

She sayid certis that she sorie was
 That he hath had soche perill and soch caas,
 And in her frendly speche in this manere
 She to him spake, and saied as ye maie here:

Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises?
 In gode faith all the worship and encrese
 That I maie godely doen you ye shall have;
 Your shippis and your meine shall I save;
 And many' a gentill worde she spake him to,
 And commaundid her messangirs to go
 The samè daie withoutin any faile
 His shippis for to seke and 'hem vitaile:
 Full many' a best she to the shippis sent,
 And with the wine she gan 'hem to present,
 And to her roiall paleis she her spedde,
 And Æneas alwaie with her she ledde.

What nedith you the festis to discrive?
 He nevir bet at ese was in his live;
 Full was the fest of deinties and richesse,
 Of instrumentes, of song, and of gladnesse,
 And many' an amo'rous loking and devise.

This Æneas is come to paradise
 Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in joie
 Remembrith him of his estate in Troie.
 To daunsing chambris full of paramentes,
 Of richè beddis and of ornamentes,
 This Æneas is ledde astir the mete;
 And with the Quene whan that he had ysete,
 And spicis partid, and the wine agon,
 Unto his chambir was he lad anon
 To take his ese and for to have his rest,
 With all his folke to doen what so 'him left.

There ne was courfir well ibridlid none,
 Ne stedè for the justing well to gone,
 Ne large paulfrey esie for the nones,
 Ne jewill yfret full of richè stones,
 Ne sackis full of gold, of large wight,
 Ne rubie none that shinith bright by night,
 Ne gentill hautin faukon heronere,
 Ne hounde for harte, or wildè bore, or dere,
 Ne cuppe of gold, with floreins newe ibette,
 That in the londe of Libye maie ben gette

That Dido ne' hath Æneas it isent,
And all is payid what that he hath spent.
Thus gan this worthy Quene her gestis call,
As she that can in fredome passin all.

Æneas sothely eke, withoutin lese,
Hath sent to his shippis by Achates
Aftir his sonne, and aftir richè thinges,
Both sceptre, clothis, brochis, and eke ringes,
Some for to were, and some for to present
To her that all these noble things him sent,
And bad his sonne how that he should ymake
The presenting, and to the Quene it take.

Repairid is this Achates again,
And Æneas full blisfull is and fain
To sein his yonge sonne Ascanius,
For unto him it was reportid thus,
That Cupido, that is the god of Love,
At prayir of his mothir hie above,
Yhad the likenesse of the childe itake,
This noble Quene enamoured for to make
On Æneas; but as to that scripture,
Be as be maie, I make of it no cure;
But soth is this, the Quene hath made soch chere
Unto this childe that wondir was to her.,
And of the present that his fathir sent
She thankid him full oft in gode entent.
Thus is this Quene in plesaunce and in joie
With all these newè lustie folke of Troie,
And of the dedis hath she more enquired
Of Æneas, and all the storie lered
Of Troie, and all the longè daie thei twaie
Entendidin for to speke and to plaie,
Of whiche there gan to bredin soche a fire,
That selie Dido hath now soche desire
With Æneas her newè gest to dele
That she hath lost her hewe and eke her hele.

Now to the' effect, now to the fruite, of all
Why I have told this storie' and tellin shall.

Thus I beginne. It fell upon a night,
Whan that the mone upreisid had her light,
This noble Quene unto her rest ywent,
She sighid sore, and gone her self tourment,
She walkith, waloweth, and made many braied,
As doen these lovirs, as I have herd saied,
And at the laste unto her sustir Anne
She made her mone, and right thus spake she than:

Now, derè sustir mine! what maie it be
That me agastith in my dreame? (quod she)
This ilke newe Trojan is so in my thought,
For that me thinketh he it so well iwrought,
And eke so likely for to ben a man,
And therwithall so milkill gode he can,
That all my love and life lieth in his cure;
Have ye nat herd him tell his avinture?

Now certis, Anne, if that ye redè me,
I woldin fain to him iweddid be:
This is the effect; what should I more seine?
In him lieth all to doe me live or deine.

Her sustir Anne, as she that coud her gode,
Said as her thought, and somdele it withstode;
But hereof was so long a sermoning
It were to long to makin reherfing;
But finally, it maie not be withstonde,
Love woll ylove, for no wight woll it wonde;

The dawning uprist out of the false se,
This amorous Quene chargith her meinë
The nettis dresse, and speris brode and kene,
An hunting woll this lustie freshe Quene,
So prikith her this newè jolie wo;
To horse is all her lustie folke igo,
Unto the court the houndis ben ibrought,
And upon coarfir swift as any thought
Her yongè knightis hevin all about,
And of her women eke an huge rout:
Upon a thicke palfraie, papirwhite,
With sadill redde, enbroudid with delite,
Of golde the barris, up enbossid high,
Sate Dido, all in golde and perreywrich,
And she is faire as is the brightè morowe
That helith sick folkis of night's sorowe,
Upon a courfir startlin as the fire,
Men mightin tourne him with a little wire.

But Æneas, like Phœbus to devise,
So was he fresh arayid in his wife,
The somie bridill, with the bitte of gold,
Govirnith he right as himself hath would;
And forthe this noble Quene, this ladie, ride
On hunting, with this Trojan by her side.
The herde of hartis foundin is anon,
With Hey go bet, pricke thou, let gon, let gon!
Why n'il the lion comin or the bere,
That I might him ones metin with this spere?
Thus fain this yongè folke, and up thei kill
The wilde hartis, and have 'hem at ther will.

Emong all this to romblin gan the heven,
The thondir rorid with a grisly steven,
Doun come the rain, with haile and flet so fast,
With hevin's fire, that made so sore agast
This noble Quene and also her maine,
That eche of 'hem, was glade awaie to fle;
And, shortly, fro the tempest her to save
She fled her self into a little cave,
And with her went this Æneas also,
I n'ot with 'hem if ther went any mo,
The auctour makith of it no mencion;
And here began the depe affection
Betwixt 'hem two; this was the firstè morowe
Of her gladnesse and ginning of her sorowe,
For there hath Æneas iknelid so,
And tolde her all his hert and all his wo,
And sworne so depè to her to be true
For well or wo, and chaungin for no newe,
And as a false lovir so well can plain,
That selie Dido rewid on his pain,
Toke him for husbond, and became his wife
For evirmore, while that 'hem last shulde life;
And aftir this, when that the tempest stente,
With mirth out as thei came homward thei went;
The wickid fame uprofe, and that anon,
How Æneas hath with the Quene igon
Into the cave, and demid as 'hem list;
And whan the King (that Yarbass hight) it wist,
As he that had her loved evir his life,
And wowid her to havin to his wife,
Soche sorow' as he hath makid and soche chere
It is a routhe and pity for to here;
But as in love all daie it happith so
That one shall laughin at an othir's wo,

Now laughith Æneas, and is in joie
And more riches than evir was in Troie.

O felie woman, full of innocence,
Full of pite, of truthe, and continence!
What makid you to men to trustin so?
Have ye soche routh upon ther fainid wo
And have soche old ensamplis you beforne?
Se ye nat all how that thei ben forsworne?
Where se ye one that he ne' hath lasste his lese,
Or ben unkinde, or doen her some mischese,
Or pillid her, or boftid of his dede?
Ye maie as well it sene as ye maie rede.
Takith hede now of this grete gentilman,
This Trojan, that so well her plesin can,
That fainith him so true and obeising,
So gentill and so privie' of his doing.
And can so well doen all his obeisaunce,
And waitith her at festis and at daunce,
And whan she goeth to temple and home again,
And fastin till he hath his ladie sein,
And berin in his devisis for her sake
N'ot I nat what, and songis would he make,
Justis, and doen of armis many thinges,
Sende her lettirs, tokins, brochis, and ringes.

Now herkenith how he shal his lady serve:
There as he was in perill for to sterve
For hungir and for mischese in the se,
And desolate, and fledde fro his countre,
And all his folke with tempest all to driven,
She hath her body and eke her relme yeven
Into his honde, there as she might have ben
Of othir land than of Carthage a quene,
And lived in joy inough; what would ye more?

This Æneas, that hath thus depe iswore,
Is werie of his craft within a throwe,
And the hote ernest is all ovirblowe,
And privily he doeth his shippis dight,
And shapith him to stele awaie by night.

This Dido hath suspicion of this,
And thoughtin well that it was all amis,
For in his bedde he lieth anight and siketh:
She askith him anon, What the misliketh,
My derè herte! whiche that I lovin moste?

Certis (quod he) this night my fathir's ghoſte
Hath in my slepe me so sorely tourmented,
And eke Mercurie's his message hath presented,
That nedis to the conquest of Itaile
My destinie is sonè for to faile,
For which me thinkith brostin is mine hert;
Therwith his falsè teris out thei stert,
And takith her within his armis two.

Is that in ernest? (quod she) woll ye so?
Have ye no sworne to wife me for to take?
Alas! what woman woll ye of me make?
I am a gentill woman and a quene,
Ye woll not fro your wife thus foul yflene?
That I was borne alas! what shall I do?

To telle in short, this noble Quene Dido

She sekith halowes and doeth sacrifice,
She knelith, crieth, that routh is to devise,
Conjurith him, and profe'rith him to be
His thrall, his servaunt, in the best degre,
She fallith him to fote, and sownith there,
Dischevilid with her bright gildid here,
And saieth, Have mercy! let me with you ride,
These lordis whiche that wonnin me beside
Woll me destroyin only for your sake;
And if ye wolle me now to wife ytake
As ye have sworne, than woll I yeve you leve
Te slaen me with your swerde now son at eve,
For than yet shall I dyin as your wife;
I am with childe, and yeve my childe his life:
O mercie, Lorde! have pite in your thought.
But all this thing availith her right nought,
For on a night he sleping let her lie,
And stole away into his company,
And as a traitour forthe he gan to faile
Towardis the large countre of Itaile:
And thus hath he left Dido in wo and pine,
And weddid there a ladie hight Lavine.
A clothe he laſt, and eke his sworde standing,
Whan he fro Dido ſtale in her sleping,
Right at her bedd'is hedde, so gan he hie
Whan that he ſtale awaie to his navie.

Which cloth whan felie Dido gan awake
She hath it kiſte ful oftin for his ſake,
And ſaid, Swete cloth! while Jupiter it leſt
Take my ſoule, unbinde me of this unreſt,
I have fulfilled of Fortune all the courſe:
And thus, alas! withoutin his ſocourſe
Twentie timis iswounid heth ſhe than.
And whan that ſhe unto her ſuſtir Anne
Complainid had of which I maie not write,
So grete routh I have it for to endite,
And bad her norice and her ſuſtrin gon
To fetchin fire and othir thinges anon,
And ſayid that ſhe woulde ſacrific;
And whan ſhe might her timè well aſpie
Upon the fire of ſacrifice ſhe ſterte,
And with his ſworde ſhe roſe her to the herte:
But as mine auctour ſaith yet this ſhe ſeide,
Or ſhe was hurtin, beforne or ſhe deide,
She wrote a lettre' anon, and thus began;

Right ſo (quod ſhe) as the milkwhite ſwan
Ayeuſt his deth beginnith for to ſing,
Right ſo to you I make my complaining,
Not that I trowe to gettin you again,
For well I wote that it is al in vain,
Sens that the goddes ben contrarious to me,
But ſin my name is loſt through you (quod ſhe)
I maie well leſe a worde on you or letter,
All be it I ſhall be nevir the better,
For thilkè wind that blewè your ſhip awaie
The ſamè winde hath blowè awaie your faie:
But who ſo wol al this lettre' have in minde
Rede Ovide, and in him he ſhall it finde.

HERE FOLLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF HYPsipYLE AND MEDEA.

Thou rote of false lovris, Duke Jason,
 Thou fleer, devourir, and confusion,
 Of gentill women, gentil creatures,
 Thou madist thy reclaiming and thy lures
 To ladies of thy scathliche aparaunce,
 And of thy wordis falsid with plesaunce,
 And of thy fainid trouth and thy manere,
 With thine obeisaunce and humble chere,
 And with thine counterfeitid pain and wo,
 There othir falsin one thou falsid two.
 O! oftin swore thou that thou woldist die
 For love whan thou ne feltist maladie
 Save foule delite, whiche that thou callist love:
 If that I live thy name shall be yshove
 In Englishe, that thy deceipt shall be knowe:
 Have at the, Jason; now thin horn is blow.
 But certis it is bothè routh and wo
 That Love with false lovris werkith so,
 For thei shal have well bettir love and chere
 Than he that hath aboughtin love full dere,
 Or had in armis many a bloodie boxe,
 For ay as tendre a capon eteth the fox,
 Though he be fals, and hath the foule betraied,
 As shall the gode man that therefore hath paied;
 Although he have to the capon skill and right
 The false foxe woll have his part at night:
 On Jason this ensample is well isene
 By Hypsipyle and Medea the quene.

In Thessalie, as Ovide tellich us,
 There was a knight that hightin Pelus,
 That had a brothir whiche that hight Jason;
 And whan for age he might unnethis gon
 He yave to Peleus the govirning
 Of all his reigne, and made him lorde and king;
 Of whiche Jason this Jason gettin was,
 That in his time in all that land there n'as
 Nat soche a famous knight of gentillesse,
 Of fredome, of strengthe, and of lustinesse.

Aftir his fathir's deth be bare him so
 That there n'as none that list to ben his foe,
 But did him all honour and companie,
 Of whiche this Peleus hath grete envie,
 Imagining that Jason might ybe
 Enhaunfid so, and put in soche degre,
 With love of lordis of his regionn,
 That from his reigne he maie be put adoun;
 And in his wit anight compassid he
 How this Jason might best destroyid be,
 Withoutin sclaudir of his compasment;
 And at the last he toke avisement
 That to sende him into some ferre cowntre,
 Theras this Jason maie destroyid be:
 This was his wit, all made he to Jason
 Grete chere of loke and of affection,
 For drede lest that his lordis it espide.
 And so bifell it, as fame ronnith wide,
 There was soche tiding or all, and soche loos,
 That in an isle that callid was Colchos,
 That stonte beyonde Troie estward in the se,
 There was a Ram which that men mightin se
 That had a Flees of Golde that shone so bright
 That no where was there soche an othir fight;
 But it was kept alwaie with a dragoun,
 And many othir marvailles up and down,
 And with two bullis makid all of bras,
 That spittin fire, and mochil thing ther was;
 But this was eke the tal nathèles,
 That who so would ywinnin thilkè Flees
 He must bothe, or that he it winnin might,
 With the bullis and with the dragon fight.

And King Oetus lorde was of that ile.
 This Peleus bethought upon this while
 That he his nevewe Jason would exhort
 To sailin to that londe him to disport,
 And sayid, Nevewe, if it might ybe
 That soche a worship might befallin the

That thou this famous trefure mightist win,
And bringin it my region within,
It were to me grete plesaunce and honour,
Than were I holdin to quite thy labour,
And all thy costis I woll my self make,
And chesith what folke thou wolt with the take :
Let se now, darste thou takin this voiage ?
Jafon was young, and lustie of corage,
And undirtoke to doen this ilke emprise ;
Anon Argus his shippis gan devise.

With Jafon went the strong stout Hercules,
And many' an othir that he with him ches ;
But who so askith who is with him gon
Let him rede the boke Argonauticon,
For he wol tel a talè long inough.
Philocretes anon the faile up drough,
Whan that the winde was gode, and gan him hie
Out of his countre callid Theffalie.
So long thei failid in the saltè se
Till in the ile of Lemnos arived he,
All be this nat reherfid of Guido,
Yet saieth Ovide in his Epistlis so ;
And of this ileland ladie was and quene
The faire and yonge Hypsipyle the shene,
That whilom Thoas doughter was, the king.

Hypsipyle was gon in her playing,
And roming on the clevis by the se ;
Undir a banke anone espyid she
Where laie the shippe that Jafon gon arive ;
Of her godenesse adoune she sendith blive
To wetin if that any straungè wight
With tempest thidir were iblowe anight,
To doen 'hem socour, as was her usaunce
To furth'rin every wight, and don plesaunce
Of very bounte and of curtisie.

This messangir adoune him gan to hie,
And founde Jafon and Hercules also,
That in a cogge to londe werin igo
'Hem to refreshin and to take the aire,
The morowning attempre was and faire,
And in ther waie this messangir 'hem mette ;
Full conningly these lordis two he grette,
And did his message, asking 'hem anon
If thei wer brokin or ought wo bigon,
Or had nede of lodesmen or of vitale ?
For of succour they shouldin nothing faile,
For it was uttirly the Quen's will.

Jafon answerid mekely and still,
My ladie (quod he) thanke I hertily
Of her godenesse : us nedith truely
Nothing as now, but that we werie be,
And comin for to plaie out of the se
Till that the winde be bettir in our waie.

This ladie romith by the cliffe to plaie,
With her meinè, endlong upon the stronde,
And findith Jafon and this othir stonde
In speking of this thing, as I you told.

This Hercules and Jafon gan behold
How that the Quene it was, and faire her grete,
Anon right as thei with this ladie mete,
And she toke hede, and knewe by ther manere,
By ther araie, by wordis, and by chere,
That it were gentillmen of grete degre,
And to the castle with her ledith she

These straungè folke, and doith 'hem gret honor
And askith 'hem of travaile and of labor
That thei have suffrid in the saltè se ;
So that within a daie, or two or thre,
She knewe by the' folke that in his shippis be
That it was Jafon, full of renomè,
And Hercules, that had the gretè loos,
That foughtin the aventures of Colchos,
And did 'hem honour more than before,
And with 'hem deled evir longir the more,
For thei ben worthy folke withoutin lese,
And namely moste she spake with Hercules,
To him her herte she bare, an he should be
Sadde, wise, and true, of wordis avisè,
Withoutin any othir affection
Of love, or othir imaginacion.

This Hercules hath this Jafon so preised,
That to the sunnè he hath him up reised,
That halfe so true a man there n'as of love
Undir the cope of heaven that is above,
And he was wise, hardie, secrete, and riche,
Of these iii pointis there n'as non him liche,
Of fredome passid he and lustie hedde
All tho that livin and all tho ben dedde,
Thereto so grete a gentillman was he,
And of Theffalie likely king to be ;
There n'as no lacke but that he was agast
To love, and for to spekin shamèfast ;
Him had levir himself murdir and die
Than that men should a lovir him espie,
As woldè God above that I had give
My blode and fleshe, so that I might live
With the bones, that he had aught where a wise
For his estate, for soche a lustie life
She shouldin ledin with this lustie knight :
And all this was compassid on the night
Betwixin Jafon and this Hercules :
Of both these two here was a shreudè lese,
To come to house upon an innocent,
For to bedote this Quene was ther entent.
And Jafon is as coie as is a maide ;
He lokith pitoufly, but naught he saied ;
But frely yave he to her counsailers
Yestis full grete and to her officers,
As would God that I lesir had and time
By processe all his woeing for to rime ;
But in this house if a false lovir be,
Right as himself now doeth right so did he
With faining and with every subtile dede :
Ye get no more of me but ye woll rede
Th' originall, that tellith all the caas.

The sothe is this, that Jafon weddid was
Unto this Quene, and toke of her substaunce
What so him list unto his purveiaunce ;
And upon her begate he childrin two,
And drough his faile, and sawe her nevir mo.
A lettir sent she unto him certain,
Which were to long to writtin and to sain,
And him reprovith of his grete untrouth,
And prayith him on her to have some routh,
And on his childrin two : she said him this,
That thei be like of allè thing iwis
To Jafon, save that thei couth nat begile ;
And prayid God er it were longè while

That she that had his herte ireft her fro
Mote findin him untrue and false also,
And that she muste both her childrin spill,
And allè tho that suffrith him his will.
And true to Jason was she all her life,
And evir kept her chaste as for his wife,
Ne nevir had she joie at her herte,
But dyid for his love of sorowes smerte.

To Colchis comin is this Duke Jason,
That is of love devourir and dragon,
As matire appetitith forme alwaie,
And from forme into forme it passin maie,
Or as a wellè that were botomles;
Right so can falsè Jason have no pees
For to desirin through his appetite
To doen with gentillwoman his delite;
This is his luste and his felicitye.
Jason is romid forthe to the cite
That whilom clepid was Jasonicos,
That was the maistirtoune of all Colchos,
And hath itolde the cause of his coming
Unto Ææta, of that countre king,
Praying him that he must doen his affaie
To gette the Fleece of Golde if that he maie,
Of whiche the King assentith to his bonè,
And doth him honour as it is to done,
So ferforth that his doughtir and his heire
Medea, whiche that was so wise and faire,
That fairir sawe there nevir man with eye,
He made her doen to Jason companie
At mete, and sittin by him in the hall.

Now was Jason a femely man withall,
And like a lorde, and had a grete renoun,
And of his loke roiall as a lioun,
And godelic of his speche and familiere,
And coud of love the craft and art plener
Withoutin boke, with everiche observaunce;
And as Fortune her ought a foule mischaunce
She woxe enamorid upon this man.

Jason, (quod she) fer ought I se or can
As of this thing the whiche ye ben about,
Ye and your self ye put in mochil doubt,
For who so woll this avinture atcheve
He maie nat wele astertin as I leve
Withoutin deth, but I his helpè be;
But nathèles it is my will (quod she)
To forthrin you so that ye shall nat die,
But turnin sounde home to your Thessalie.

My right fair lady! (quod this Jason tho)
That ye have of my deth or of my wo
Any regarde, and doen me this honour,
I wot wel that my might ne my labour
May nat deservin it my liv'is daie;
God thankè you there I ne can ne maie;

Your man am I, and lowely you besече
To ben my helpe withoutin more speche;
But certis for my deth shal I not spare.

Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peril of this case fro point to point,
Of his batyle, and eke in what disjoynt
He motè stondin, of wniche no cature
Save onley she ne might his lyfe assure:
And shortly, right to the poynt for to go,
They ben accordid full betwyxe 'hem two
That Jason shall her wedde as her true knight,
And terme yset to comin sone at night
Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
Upon the goddes, that he for lese or lothe
Ne shulde her nevir falsin nyght ne daye
To ben her husbonde whyle he lyvin maye,
As she that from his deth him savid here;
And hereupon at night they mete yfere,
And doth his othe, and goth with her to bedde;
And on the morewe upwarde he him spedde,
For she hath taught him how he shal nat fayle
The Flees to wyne and stintin his bataile,
And savid hym his life and his honour,
And gate him a name as a conquerour,
Right through the sleight of her enchantement.
Now hath Jason the Fleece, and home is went
With Medea, and tresours full grete wonne:
But unwyste of her fathir she is gonne
To Thessalye with Duke Jason her lese,
That astirwarde hath brought her to mischese,
For as a traytour he is from her go,
And with her lestè yongè childrin two,
And falsely hath betrayid her, alas!
And er in love a chese traytour he was,
And weddid yet the thirde wyfe anon,
That was the doughtir of the Kyng Creon.

This is the mede of lovyng and guerdon
That Medea receved of Duke Jason
Right for her truth and for her kyndinesse,
That loved him bettir than her self I gesse,
And lestè her fathir and her herytage:
And of Jason this is the vassalage,
That in his dayes n'as nevir non yfounde
So false a lovyr goyng on the grounde;
And therefore in her lettir thus she sayd,
First whan she of his falsnesse him upbrayd,
Why lykid me thy yelowè here to se
More than the boundis of myn honeste?
Why lykid me thy youth and thy fayrnesse,
And of thy tonge the' infynite gracyousnesse?

O! haddest thou in thy conquest ded ybe
Ful mikil untrouth had ther dyed with the.
Wel can Ovide her lettre' in verse endyte,
Which were as now to longé for to write.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF LUCRECE OF ROME.

Nowe mote I fain th' exilyng of kyngis
Of Rome for ther horrible doyngis,
Of the laſte kyng Sextus Tarquinius,
As ſaith Ovid and Titus Lyvius;
But for that cauſe tel I nat this ſtorye,
But for to prayſe and drawe in memorye
The very wyfe, the very true Lucreſſe,
That for her wiſehode and her ſtedfaſtneſſe
Nat onely that theſe Panymes her commende,
But that yclepid is in our Legende
The gret Auſtyn, that hath compaſſioun
Of this Lucrece that ſtarfe in Romè toun,
And in what wiſe I woll but ſhortly trete,
And of this thing I touch not but the grete.

Whan Ardea beſiegid was aboute
With Romainys that ful ſterne werin and ſtout,
Ful longè lay the ſiege, and litil wroughten,
So that they wer halfe ydil as 'hem thoughten,
And in his play Tarquinius the yonge
Gan for to jape, for he was lyght of tonge,
And ſayid that it was an ydle lyfe,
No man dyd there no more than did his wiſe,
And let us ſpeke of wivis, that is beſt,
Praiſe everie man his own as him leſt,
And with our ſpechis let us eſe our herte.

A knight (yclepid Colatin) up ſterte,
And ſayid thus Nay, Sir, it is no nede
To trowin on the worde but on the dede;
I have a wiſe (quod he) that as I trowe
Is holdin gode of al that er her knowe,
Go we to Rome to nyght and we ſhul ſe.

Tarquinius anſwerde, That lykith me.
To Rome they be comin, and faſt 'hem dighte
To Colatyn's houſe, and downe they light,
Tarquinius and eke this Colatine;
The huſbonde knewe the eſtirs wel and fyne,
And ful prively into the houſe thei gòne:

Nor at the gate ne portir was there none,
And at the chambre dorè they abyde.
This noble wiſe ſatè by her bedd'is ſyde

Diſcheveled, for no malyce ſhe ne thought,
And ſoft wol, ſaith Livy, that ſhe wrought
To kepin her from ſlouth and ydilneſſe,
And bad her ſervauntes done ther beſineſſe,
And askith 'hem, What tidinges herin ye?
How ſaieth men of the ſiege, howe ſhal it be?
God wolde the wallis were fallin adowne!
Myn huſbond is to long out of this towne,
For whiche drede doth me ſorely to ſmerte,
Right as a ſworde it ſtyngith to mine hert
Whan I thinkin on this or of that place;
God ſave my lorde, I pray him for his grace!
And therwithal ſo tendirly gan wepe,
And of her werke ſhe toke no morè kepe,
But mekily ſhe let her eyin fal,
And thilkè ſemblant ſate her wel withal,
And eke her teris, ful of honeſtè
Embeliſſid her wiſely chaſtitè;
Her countinaunce is to her hertè digne,
For thei accordidin in dede and ſigne.
And with that worde her huſbonde Colatin,
Or ſhe of him was ware, came ſtertling in,
And ſayid, Drede the nat for I am here:
And ſhe anone up roſe with bliſful chere,
And kyſſed him, as of wivis is the wonne.

Tarquinius, this proudè king'is ſonne,
Concevid hath her beautie and her chere,
Her yelowè here, her bountie', and her manere,
Her hewe, her wordis, that ſhe hath complained,
And by no craft her beautie was nat fained,
And caught unto this lady ſoche deſire
That in his hert he brent as any fire,
So wodely, that his witte was all forgotten,
For wel thought he ſhe ſhuldè nat be gotten;
And aye the more that he was in diſpaire
The more he covetith and thought her faire;
His blindè luſte was al his coveting.
On morowe, whan the birde began to ſyng,
Unto the ſiege he cometh ful privily,
And by himſelfe he walkith ſobirly,

The ymage of her recording alway newe,
 Thus lay her here, and thus fresh was her hew,
 Thus fate she, thus she spake, this was her chere,
 Thus faire she was, and this was her manere :
 Al this conceite his herte hath newe ytake,
 And as the se with tempest al to shake,
 That aftir whan the storme is al ago
 Yet woll the watir quappe a daie or two,
 Right so, though that her formè were absent
 The plesaunce of her formè was present ;
 But nathelesse nat plesaunce but delite,
 Or an unrightful talent with dispite,
 For maugre her she shal my lemman be,
Hap helpith bardy man alway, (quod he ;) *W O L*
 What endè that I make it shal be so,
 And gyrtè him with his sworde and gan to go :
 And he forth ritt til he to Rome is come,
 And al alone his way that he hath nome
 Unto the house of Colatin ful right ;
 Down was the sunne, and day hath lost his lyght ;
 And in he come unto a privie halke,
 And in the night ful thefely gan he stalke,
 Whan every wight was to his rest ybrought,
 Ne no wight had of trefon soche a thought,
 Whethir by windowe or by othir gin :
 With swerde ydrawe shortly he comith in
 There as she lay, this noble wife Lucrece,
 And as she woke her bedde she feltin presse :
 What best is that (quod she) that wayith thus ?

I am the king's sonne Tarquinius,
 (Quod he) but and thou crie or noise ymake,
 Or if thou any creature awake,
 By thilkè God that formid man of lyve
 This swerde through thyne herte shal I ryve ;
 And therewithal unto her throte he sterte,
 And set the swerde al sharpe upon her herte.
 No word she spake ; she hath no might therto ;
 What shal she saine ? her witte is al ago,
 As when a wolfe findith a lambe alone ;
 To whom shal she complaine or make her mone ?
 What ! shal she fightin with an hardie knight ?
 Wel wotte men that a woman hath no might ;
 What shal she crie, or how shal she asterte,
 That hath her by the throte with swerde at herte ?
 She askith grace, and said al that she can.

No, wolt thou nat tho ? (quod this cruil man)
 As wisely Jupiter my soule save
 As I shal in thy stable sle thy knave,
 And lay him in thy bedde, and loudè crie
 That I the fyndin in soche avoutrie ;
 And thus thou shalt be ded, and also lese
 Thy name, for that thou shalt none othir chese.
 This Romans wives lovidin so ther name
 At thilke tyme, and dredidin so the shame,
 That what for fere of flaundre and dred of deth
 She lost at onis both her wit and breth,
 And in a swough she lay, and woxe so ded
 Men mightin smitin of her arme or hed,
 She felith nothing neithir foule ne feyre.

Tarquinius, that art a king's heyre,
 And shuldist as by linage and by right
 Done as a lorde and as a very knight,
 Why hast thou done dispite to chivalrye ?
 Why hast thou done thy lady vilanie ?

Alas ! of the this was a vila'inous dede.
 But now to the purpose. In the story I rede
 Whan he was gonne, and this mischaunce is fal,
 This lady sent aftir her frendis al,
 Fathir, mothir, and husbonde, al yfere,
 And dischevilid with her herè clere,
 In habyt soche as women usid tho
 Unto the buryeng of ther frendis go,
 She fate in hal with a sorowful syght ;
 Her frendis askin what her aylin myght,
 And who was ded ? and she fate aye wepyng,
 A worde for shame ne may she forth out bring,
 Ne upon them she durstè nat behold ;
 But at the laste of Tarquin she hem tolde
 This rusful case, and al this thyng horrible :
 The wo to tellin were impossible
 That she and all her frendis make at ones ;
 Al haddin folkis hertis ben of stones
 It might have makid hem upon her rewe,
 Her hert ywas so wisely and so trewe.
 She said that for her gilte ne for her blame
 Her husbonde shulde nat have the foulè name ;
 That woldè she nat sufferin by no waye.
 And they answerid al unto her faye
 That they foryave it her, for it was right,
 It was no gylte, it lay nat in her myght,
 And saydin her ensamplis many one :
 But al for naught, for thus she said anone,
 Be as be may (quod she) of forgivng,
 I will nat have no forgifte for nothing :
 But privily she coughtin forth a knife,
 And therewithal she rafte her selfe her life,
 And as she fel adowne she cast her loke,
 And of her clothis yet gode hede she toke,
 For in her fallyng yet she had a care
 Leste that her fete or soche thingis lay bare,
 So wel she lovid clennessè and eke trouthe.
 Of her had all the towne of Rome routhe,
 And Brutus hath by her chaste blode yswore
 That Tarquin shulde ybanished be therfore
 And al his kinne, and let the peple cal,
 And opinly the tale he tolde hem al,
 And opinly let cary her on a bere
 Through al the towne, that men may se and here
 The horrible dede of her oppressioun ;
 Ne nevir was there kyng in Rome toun
 Sens thylke day : and she was holdin there
 A faynt, and evre her day yhalowed dere
 As in ther lawe. And thus endith Lucrese
 The noble wyfe, Titus berith witnesse.
 I tel it for she was of love so trewe,
 Ne in her wil she chaungid for no newe,
 And in her stable herte sadde and kinde,
 That in these women men may al day finde
 There as they cast ther hert there it dwellith ;
 For wel I wote that Christ himfelse tellith
 That in Israel, as wide as is the londe,
 He so grete faith in al the londe ne fonde
 As in a woman, and this is no lie :
 And as for men, loke ye soche tyrannie
 Thei done al daie, assay hem who so listè,
 The trewist is ful brotil for to tristè.

E c

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF ARIADNE.

OF ATHENS.

MINOS, Infernal Judge, of Crete the Kyng,
Now cometh thy lotte; thou comist on the ryng:
Nat for thy sake alone written is this storye,
But for to clepe ayen unto memorie
Of Theseus the gret untrouthe of love,
For whiche the goddis of hevin above
Ben wroth, and wrath have takin for thy synne:
Be red for shame, nowe I thy lyfe beginne.

Minos, that was the mighty King of Crete,
That had an hundrid cities strong and grete,
To schole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athenes, of the whiche it happid thus,
That he was slayne, lerning philosophie
Right in that cyte, nat but for envie.

The grete Minos, of the whiche that I speke,
His sonnis deth is comin for to wreke.
Alcathoe' he besiegid harde and longe,
But natheles the wallis be so stronge,
And Nisus that was kyng of that cite
So chivalrous, that litil dredith he;
Of Minos or his hoste toke he no cure
Tyl on a daie befil an avinture
That Nisus doughtir stode upon the wal,
And of the siege behelde the manir al;
So happid it that at a scarmishing
She caste her hert upon Minos the king,
For his beantie and for his chivalrye,
So sorely that she wenid for to die:
And shortly of this processe for to pace,
She made Minos to winnin thilke place,
So that the cite was al at his wyl
To savin whom him liste or ellis spill;
But wickidly he quit her kyndenesse,
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse,
N'ere that the goddis had of her pite:
But that tale were to longe as nowe for me.

Athenis was this King Minos also,
As Alcathoe' and othir townis mo,
And this th' effect, that Minos hath so driven
Them of Athenis that thei mote him yeven
Fro yere to yere ther ownè childrin dere
For to be flaine, as ye shal after here.
This Minos hath a monstre', a wickid best,
That was so cruil, that without arest
Whan that a man was brought into' his presence
He wolde him ete; there helpith no defence:
And evèry thirde yere withoutin doute
Thei castidin lotte as it came aboute
On riche and pore, he must his sonne take,
And of his childe he must a presente make
To Minos, for to save him or to spill,
Or let his best devour him at his will:
And this hath Minos don right in dispite;
To wreke his sonne was set al his delyte,
And makin' hem of Athenis hys thral,
Fro yere to yere while that he livin shal;
And hom he sailith whan this toun is won:
This wickid custome is so long yron
Till that the King of Athenes, Ægeus,
Mote sendin his owne sonne Theseus,
Sens that the lotte is fallin him upon,
To ben devourid, for grace is there non:
And forth is ladde this woful yongè knight
Unto the countre' of Minos ful of night,
And in a prison fettrid fast is he
Tyl that ilke time he shulde yfretin be,
Wel maist thou wepe, o woful Theseus!
That art a king's sonne and damnid thus;
Me thinkith this, that thou art depe yholde
To whom that favid the fro caris colde,
And nowe yf any woman helpè the
Wel oughtist thou her servaunt for to be,

And ben her trewe lovir yere by yere.
But nowe to come aien to my matere.

The tourè there this Theseus is throwe
Downe in the bottom derke and wondir lowe,
Was joyning to the wal of a foreine
That longing was unto the doughtr in tweine
Of Minos, whiche that in ther chambris grete
Dweltin above toward the maistirstrete
Of thilkè towne in joy and in folas :
N'ot I nat howe, it happened per cas,
As Theseus complainid him by night,
The kinge's doughtir that Ariadne hight,
And eke her sustir Phœdra, herdin al
His complainte as thei stod in on the wall
And lokid up upon the brightè mone,
'Hem listin nat to go to bedde so sone,
And of his wo thei had compassioun ;
A king's sonne to be in soche prision,
And ben devoured, thought 'hem grete pite :
Than Ariadne spake to 'her sustir fre,
And sayd, Phœdra, my lese sustir dere !
This woful lord's sonne maie ye nat here
Howe pitoufly he complainith his kinne,
And eke his pore estate that he is inne,
And giltileffe ? certis nowe it is routh,
And if ye wol assentin, by my trouthe
He shal ben holpin, howe so that we do.

Phœdra answerde, Ywis me is as wo
For him as er I was for any man,
And to his helpe the best rede that I can
Is, that we done the gailir privily
To come and spekin with us hastily,
And done this woful man with him to come,
For if he maie this monstir ovircome
Than were he quite, there is non other bote :
Let us wel taste him at his hert's rote,
That if so be that he a wepon have,
Where that he dare, his life to kepe and save,
Fightin with this fende, and himself defende,
For in the prision there he shal discende :
Ye wote wel that the best is in a place
That is not derke, and hath rounne and eke space
To welde an axe, or swerde, a staffe, or knife,
So that me thinkith he shulde save his life ;
If that he be a man he shal do so :
And we shal make him ballis eke also
Of wexe and towe, that whan he gapith fast
Into the best's throte he shal 'hem caste
To fleke his hongir and encombre his tethe,
And right anon whan that Theseus sethe
The best achekid he shal on him lepe
To fleen him or they comin more to hepe ;
This wepon shal the gailir or that tyde
Ful privily within the prision hyde :
And for the house is crenclid to and fro,
And hath so queintè wayis for to go,
For it is shapin as the mase is wrought,
Therto have I a remedy in my thought,
That by a clewe of twyne as he hath gon
The samè way he may retorne anon,
Folo'wing alway the threde as he hath come :
And whan that he this best hath ovircome
Than may he flien away out of this stede,
And eke the gailir may he with him lede,

And him avaunce at home in his countre,
Sens that so gret a lord's sonne is he.

This is my rede, if that ye dare it take.
What shulde I lengir sermon of it make ?
The gailir cometh, and with him Theseus ;
And whan these thingis ben accordid thus,

Adowne fate Theseus upon his kne ;
O the right lady of my life ! (quod he)
I forowfull man, ydamnid to the dethe,
Fro you whilis that me ylastith brethe
I wol nat twinne aftir this avinture,
But in your service thus I wol endure,
That as a wretch unknow I wol you serve
For evirmore tyl that min hertè sterfe ;
Forsake I wol at home min heritage,
And as I saied ben of your courte a page,
If that ye vouchsafin that in this place
Ye grauntin me to havin soche a grace
That I may have nat but my mete and drinke ;
And for my sustinaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you list, that Minos ne no wight
Sens that he saw me nevir with eyen sight,
Ne no man ellis, shal me nat espye,
So flily and so wel I shal me gye,
And me so wel disfigure and so lowe,
That in this world there shal no man me knowe,
To have my lyfe and to have the presence
Of you that done to me this excellence ;
And to my fathir shal I sendin here
This worthy man, which that is your gaylere,
And him so guerdon that he shal wel be
One of the gretist men of my countre :
And if I durstè sayne, my lady bright !
I am a king's sonne and eke a knight,
As woldè God if that it mighte ybe
Ye werin in my countre allè thre,
And I with you to bere you companye,
Than shuld you sene if that I therof lye,
And if I profir you in lowe manere
To ben your page, and servin you right here,
But I you serve as lowly in that place
Ypray to Mars to yeve me sochè grace
That sham's deth on me there motè fall,
And deth and povertè to my frendis all,
And that my spritè by night motè go
Aftir my deth and walkin to and fro,
That I mote of foule traitour have a name,
For whiche my sprit mote go, to do me shame,
And if I clayme evir othir degre,
But ye vouchsafin to grauntin it me,
As I have saied, of sham's deth I dey,
And mercy, lady ! I can naught els sey.

A semely knight was this Theseus to se,
And yongè, but of twenty yere and thre,
But who so had ysene his countinaunce
He would have wept for routh of his penaunce,
For which this Ariadne in this manere
Answerde to his profre and to his chere :

A kyng's sonne and eke a knight (quod she)
To ben my servaunt in so low degre
God shuld it ! for the shame of women al,
And lene me nevir soche a case befall,
And sende you grace and sleight of hert also
You to defende and knightly fleen your foe,

And leue here aftir that I may you finde
 To me and to my sustir here so kynde
 That I ne repent nat to yeve you lyfe;
 Yet were it bettir that I were your wife,
 Sithe that ye ben as gentil borne as I,
 And have a relme nat ferre but faste by,
 Than I suffrid your gentillese to sterue,
 Or that I let you as a page to serve;
 It is no profite unto your kinrede,
 But what is that that men nill do for dred?
 And to my sustir, syth that it is so
 That she mote gone with me if that I go,
 Or ellis suffre deth as wel as I,
 That ye unto your sonne as trewily
 Done her be weddid at your home comming;
 This is the fynal ende of al this thing,
 Ye swere it here on all that may be sworne.

Ye, lady myn, (quod he) or els to torne
 Mote I be with the Minotaure to morowe,
 And havith here of min hert blod to borowe,
 If that ye wol, if I had knife or spere
 I wolde it lettin out and thereon swere,
 For than at crste I wot ye would me leve,
 By Mars, that is the chiefe of my beleve,
 So that I mightin lyvin and nat faile
 To morowe for to takin my bataile
 I ne wolde nevir fro this place flye
 Tyl that ye shulde the very profe yse;
 For now, if that the soth I shall you say,
 I have lovid you ful many a daie,
 Though ye ne wist it nat, in my countre,
 And aldirmoste desyrid you to se
 Of any earthly living creature;
 Upon my trouthe I swere and you assure,
 This sevin yere I have your servaunt be;
 Nowe have I you, and also have ye me,
 My dere hert! of Athenis Duchesse.

This lady smilith at his stedfastnesse,
 And at his hertely wordes, and at his chere,
 And to her sustir sayd in this manere:

And sothely, leve all sustir myn, (quod she)
 Nowe be we duchessis both I and ye,
 And sikerde to the regals of Athenes,
 And bothe hereaftir likely to be quenes,
 And favid fro his deth a king's sonne,
 As er of gentilwomen is the wonne
 To save a gentilman enforth ther might,
 In honest cause, and namely in his right,
 Me thinkith no wight ought us hereof blame,
 Ne berin us therefore an evil name.
 And shortly of this matir for to make,
 This Theseus of her hath leve ytake,
 And every point was performed in dede
 As ye have in this covenaut herde me rede;
 His wepen, his clewe, his thing, that I have said,
 Was by the gailir in the house ylaid,
 There as the Mynotaure hath his dwellyng,
 Right faste by the dore at his entring,
 And Theseus is lad unto his dethe;
 And forth unto this Minotaure he gethe,
 And by the teching of this Adriane
 He ovircame this best and was his bane;
 And out he comith by the clewe againe
 Ful privily whan he this best hath slaine,

And by the gailir gottin hath a barge,
 And of his wiv's trefure gan it charge,
 And toke his wife and eke her sustir fre,
 And eke the gailir, and with 'hem al thre
 Is stole away out of the londe by night,
 And to the countre of Enupie him dight,
 Thereas he had a frende of his knowing;
 There festin thei, there dauncin thei and sing,
 And in his armis hath this Adriane,
 That of the best hath kept him fro his bane,
 And get him there a noble barge anone,
 And of his countre folke a ful gret wone,
 And taketh his leve, and homwarde sailith he;
 And in an yle amiddis the wilde se,
 Thereas there dwellid nevir cature none
 Save wild bestis, and that ful many one,
 He made his shippe alonde for to sette,
 And in that yle halfe a daie he lette,
 And sayd, that on the londe he must him reste;
 His mariners have done right as him leste:
 And for to tellin shortly in this case,
 Whan Ariadne his wife aslepe was,
 For that her sustir fayrir was than she,
 He taketh her in his honde, and forth goth he
 To shyppe, and as a traitour stale away
 While that this Ariadne aslepe lay,
 And to his countre warde he sailith blive,
 A twenty dyvil way the winde him drive,
 And found his fathir drenchid in the se.
 Me lyfte no more to speke of him parde;
 These falsè lovirs poison be ther bane!

But I wol turne againe to Adriane,
 That is with slepe for werinesse ytoke,
 Ful sorowfully her hert may awake.

Alas! for the myne herte hath grete pite.
 Right in the dawning awakith she,
 And gropith in the bed, and fond right nought.

Alas, (quod she) that evir I was wrought!
 I am betrayid, and her here to rente,
 And to the stronde all barefote fast she wente,
 And cryid, Theseus, myn herte swete!
 Where be ye, that I may nat with you mete,
 And might thus with the bestis ben yslaine?

The halowe rockis answerde her againe;
 No man she sawe, and yet yshone the mone;
 And hye upon a rocke she wentin sone,
 And sawe his barge ysailing in the se;
 Colde woxe her hert, and right thus sayid she:

Mekir than ye finde I the bestis wylde.
 Hath he nat synne that he her thus begylde?
 She cried, O turne againe for routhe and sinne!
 Thy barge ne hath nat al his meinè inne.
 Her couverchese on a pole styked she
 Ascauncè that he shulde it wele yse,
 And him remembre that she was behinde,
 And turne againe, and on the stronde her finde.

But all for naught; his way he is ygone;
 And downe she fel a swowne upon a stone,
 And up she risse, and kissed in all her care
 The steppis of his fete there he hath fare,
 And to her bed right thus she spekith tho:

Thou bed, (quod she) that hast recevid two,
 Thou shalt answer of two and not of one;
 Where is the greter perte away gone?

Alas! wher shal I wretched wight become?
For though so be that botè none here come
Home to my countrè dare I nat for drede;
I can my selfin in this case nat rede.

What should I tellin more here complaining?
It is so long it were an hevy thing;
In her epistle Naso tellith all.
But shortly to the ende tellin I shall,

The goddis have her holpin for pyte,
And in the sygne of Taurus men may se
The stonis of her corowne shynè clere.
I will no more spekin of this matere,
But thus this falsè lovir can begile
His trew love; the devil quit him his while.

E c iii

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF PHILOMELA.

Thou yevir of the formis that hast wrought
 The fayrè world, and bare it in thy thought
 Eternally er thou thy werke began,
 Why madist thou to the flaundir of man?
 Or allbe that it was not thy doying,
 As for that ende to making soche a thing,
 Why suffredest thou that Tereus was bore,
 That is in love so false and so forswore,
 That fro this world up to the first hevin
 Corruptith whan that folke his name nevin?
 And as to me, so grisly was his dede,
 That whan that I this soule storie rede
 Myne eyin wexin foule and fore also,
 Yet lasteth the venyme of so long ago
 That it enfectith him that wolde beholde
 The storie of Tereus of which I tolde.
 Of Thrace was he the lorde, and kyn to Marte,
 The cruil god that stante with bloody darte;
 And weddid had he with full blisful chere
 King Pandion's fairè doughtir dere
 That hight Progne, the floure of her countre,
 Though Juno liste not at the fest to be
 Ne Hymen, that the god of Weddyng is,
 But at the festè redy ben iwis
 The Furis three, with all ther mortall bronde.
 The oule all night above the balkis wonde,
 That prophete is of wo and of mischaunce.
 This revill, full of song and full of daunce,
 Lasted a fourtènight or little lasse:
 But shortlie of this storie for to passe,
 (For I am werie of hym for to tell)
 Five yere his wife and he togithir dwell,
 Till on a daie she gan so fore to long
 To sene her sustir, that she sawe not long,
 That for desire she ne wist what to saie,
 But to her husbonde gan she for to praie,

For Godd'is love, that she mote onis gonne
 To sene her sustre', and come ayen anon,
 Or ellis but she motè to her wende
 She praied him that he would astir her sende;
 And this was daie by daie all her praieere,
 With all humbleste of wifehode, worde, and chere.

This Tereus let make his shippis yare,
 And into Grece hymself is forthe ifare:
 Unto his fathir in lawe gan he praie
 To vouchesafin that for a moneth or twaie
 That Philomela his wive's sustir might
 On Progne' his wife but onis have a sight,
 And she shall come to you again anon,
 My self with her I will bothe come and gon,
 And as my hert's life I will her kepe.

This olde Pandion, this kyng, gan to wepe
 For tendirnesse of hertè for to leve
 His doughtir gon, and for to yeve her leve;
 Of all this worlde he lovid nothyng so;
 But at the lastè leve hath she to go,
 For Philomela with salt teris eke
 Gan of her fathir his grace to beseke
 To sene her sustir, that her longith so,
 And hym enbracith with her armis two:
 And therewithal so yonge and faire was she,
 That whan that Tereus sawe her beaute,
 And of arraie that there was none her liche,
 And yet of beaute was she to so riche,
 He cast his fierie herte upon her so
 That he woll have her how so that it go,
 And with his wilis knelid and so praied
 Till at the last Pandion thus ysaid:

Now sonne, (quod he) that art to me so dere,
 I the betake my yonge doughtir here,
 That bereth the keie of all myne hert'is life,
 And grete me well my doughtir and thy wife,

And yeve her levè somtyme for to pleie,
That she maie se me onis or I deie.
And sothly he hath made hym richè fest,
And to his folke the moste and eke the lest
That with him came, and yave him yestis grete,
And him conveyith through the mastirstrete
Of Athenis and to the se hym brought,
And tournith home, no malice he ne thought.
The oris pullith forth the vessil fast,
And into Thrace arrivith at the last,
And up into a forest he her led,
And to a cave full privily hym sped,
And in this darkè cave, if that her lest
Or ne list nought, he bad her for to rest,
Of whiche her herte agrose, and sayid thus :

Where is my sustir, brothir Tereus?
And there withall she wept full tendirlic,
And quoke for fere all pale and pituousslic,
Right as the lambe that of the wolfe is bitten,
Or as the culver that of the egle is smitten,
And is out of his clawis forthe escaped,
Yet it is still aferde and fore awhaped,
Lest it be hent eftsonis; so fate she :
But uttirlic it maie none othir be,
By force hath this traitour ydoen a dede
That he hath rest her of her maidinhede
Maugre her hed, by strength and by his might.

Lo, here a dede of men, and that aright !
She cryith Sustir with full loudè steven,
And Fathir dere ! o helpe me God in heven !
All helpith not : and yet this falsè these
Hath doen his lady yet a more mischese,
For fere lest that she should his shamè crie,
And doen him opinlic a vilanie,
And with his swerd her tong of kerfith he,
And in a castill made her for to be
Full privily in prisone evirmore,
And kept her to his usage and his store,
So that she ne might nevyr more asterte.

O sely Philomela ! wo' is thine herte,
Huge ben thy sorowis, and wondir smerte ;
God wreke the, and sende the thy bone !
Now it is time I make an endè sone.

This Tereus is to his wife icome,
And in his armis hath his wife inome,
And pitoussly he wept, and shoke his hedde,
And swore her that he found her sustir dedde,
For whiche this felie Progne hath soche wo
That nigh her sorowfull herte brake atwo :

And thus in teris let I Progne dwell,
And of her sustir forthe I woll you tel.

This wofull ladie lernid had in youth
So that she workin and enbraudin couth,
And wevin in her stole the radèvore,
As it of women hath ben wovid yere ;
And, sothly for to saine, she hath her fill
Of mete and drinke, of clothing at her will,
And couth eke rede well inough and endite,
But with a pennè she ne could not write,
But lettirs can she wevin to and fro,
So that by that the yere was all ago
She had ywovin in a stamen large
How she was brought fro Athens in a barge,
And in a cave how that she was ybrought,
And all the thyng that Tereus ywrought
She wave it wel, and wrote the storie' above
How she was servid for her sustir's love ;
And to a knave a ring she yave anon,
And prayid him by signis for to gon
Unto the Quene, and berin her that clothe,
And by signis swore him many an othe
She should him yevin what she gettin might.

This knave anon unto the Quene him dight,
And toke it her, and all the manir tolde :
And when that Progne hath this thing behold
No worde she spake for sorowe and for rage,
But fainid her to gon on pilgrimage
To Bacchus temple' ; and in a little stounde
Her dombe sustir ysittyng hath she founde,
Weping in the castill her self alone ;
Alas the wo, the constraint, and the mone,
That Progne upon her dombe sustir maketh !
In armis everiche of 'hem othir taketh :
And thus I let 'hem in ther sorowe dwell,
The remènaunt is no charge for to tell,
For this is all and some, thus was she served
That nevyr ought agiltid ne deserved
Unto this cruill man that she of wiste.
Ye maie beware of men if that you liste,
For all be that he woll not for his shame
Doin as Tereus to lese his name,
Ne serve you as a murtherer or a knave,
Full little while shullin ye trewe him have,
That woll I sain, al wer he now my brother,
But it so be that he maie have none other.

E c iiii

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF PHYLLIS.

By prove as well as by authorite
 That wickid fruite commeth of a wickid tre
 That maie ye find if that it likith you;
 But for this ende I speke this as now,
 To tellin you of false Demophoon;
 In love a falsir herd I never non
 But it werin his fathir Theseus;
 God for his grace fro soche one kepin us!
 Thus these women yprayin that it here;
 Now the' effecte tourne I of my matere.
 Destroyid is of Troie the cite;
 This Demophon came sailyng in the se
 Toward Athenis, to his paleis large;
 With him came many a ship and many' a barge
 All full of folke, of whiche full many one
 Is wounded fore, and sike, and wo begone,
 And thei have at the siegè long ilaine;
 Behind him came a winde and eke a raine
 That shofe so fore his faile ne might not stonde,
 Hym were levir then all the worlde a londe;
 So huntith hym the tempest to and fro,
 So dark it was he could no where ago,
 And with a wave to brustin was his stere;
 His ship was rent so lowe in soche manere
 That carpenter ne coude it not amende;
 The se by night as any torche brende
 For wode, and possith him up and down,
 Till Neptune hath of hym compassioun,
 And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and thei all,
 And madin him opou a londe to fall
 Whereof that Phyllis lady was and quene,
 Lycurgus doughtir, fairir unto sene
 Then is the floure again the brightè sonne:
 Unneth is Demphon to londe iwonne,
 Weke and eke werie, and his folke forpined
 Of werineffe, and also enfamined,
 And to the deth he was almoste idriven:
 His wifè folke counsaile have him yeven

To sekin helpe and succour of the Quene,
 And lokin what his grace mightin bene,
 And makin in that lande some chevefaunce,
 And kepin him fro wo and fro mischaunce,
 For sike he was and almoste at the deth,
 Unnethis might he speke or drawin breth,
 And lieth in Rhodopeia hym to reste.
 When he may walkin him thought it was beste
 Unto the courte to sekin for succour;
 Men knewe him wele, and diddin hym honour,
 For at Athenis duke and lorde was he,
 As Theseus his fathir hath ibe,
 That in his tyme was of grete renoun,
 No man so grete in all his regioun,
 And like his fathre' of face and stature,
 And false of love, it came hym of nature,
 As doeth the foxe Renarde, the fox'is sonne,
 Of kinde he could his oldè fathir wonne
 Withoutin lore, as can a drake swimme
 When it is caught and caried to the brimme.
 This honourable Phyllis doth him chere;
 Her likith well his porte and his manere;
 But I am all agrotid here beforne
 To write of 'hem that in love ben forsworne,
 And eke to hastin me in my Legende,
 Whiche to performè God me grace yfende,
 Therefore I passin shortly in this wise.
 Ye have well herd of Theseus the gife
 In the betraying of faire Adriane,
 That of her pite kept him fro his bane;
 At short wordis, right so Demophoon
 The same waie and the same pathe hath gon
 That did his falsè fathir Theseus,
 For unto Phyllis hath he swornè thus,
 To weddin her, and her his trouth yplight,
 And pikid of her all the gode he might,
 Whan he was whole and founde, and had his reste,
 And doeth with Phyllis what so that him left,

As well I could, if that me listè so,
Tellin of all his doying to and fro.

He faied that to his cowntre mote hym faile,
For there he would her weddyng apparaile
As fill to her honour and his also:
And opinly he toke his levè tho,
And to her swore that he would not sojourne,
But in a moneth again he would retourne,
And in that londe let make his ordinaunce
As very lorde, and toke the obeisaunce
Well and humbly, and his shippis ydight,
And home he goith the next waie he might,
But unto Phyllis again came he nought,
And that hath she so harde and fore ibought,
Alas! as the storie doeth us recorde,
That she was her owne deth right with a corde,
When that she saw that Demophon her traied;
But first wrote she to him, and fast him praid
He would come and delivir her of pain,
As I reherfin shall a worde or twain;
Me listè not to vouchsafe on him to swinke,
Dispendin ou him a penne full of ynke,
For false in love was he, right as his fire,
The devil set ther foulis both on fire!
But of the lettre' of Phyllis woll I write
A worde or twain, although it be but lite.

Thine hostesse, (quod she) o Demophon!
Thy Phyllis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rhodopeie upon you mote complain,
Ovir the terme yfet betwixt us twain
That ye ne holdin forwarde as ye faied;
Your ancre, whiche ye in our havin laied,
Hight us that ye would comin out of doubt
Or that the monè onis went about,
But timis fower the mone hath hid her face
Sens thilkè daie ye wentin fro this place
And fowir timis light the worlde again;
But for all that yet shall I sothly sain
Yet hath the streme of Scython not ybrought
From Athenis the ship, yet came it nought;
And if that ye the termè rekin would
As I or othir true lovirs doe should,
I plainin not (God wot) before my daie.
But all her lettir writin I ne maie
By ordir, for it were to me a charge;
Her lettir was right long, and thereto large,

But here and there in rhyme I have it laied
There as me thought that she hath wel yfaied.

She faied, The sailis comith not again,
Ne to the worde there n'is no fey certain;
But I wot why ye comin not, (quod she)
For I was of my love to you so fre;
And of the goddis that ye have yswore
If that ther vengeaunce fall on you therefore
Ye be not suffisaunt to bere the pain;
To mochil trustid I, well maie I sain,
Upon your linage and your fairè tong,
And on your teris fasly out ywrong:
How coud ye wepin so by craft? (quod she)
Maie there soch teris evir fainid be?

Now certis if ye would have in memorie
It oughtin be to you but little glorie
To have a felie maidin thus betraied:
To God (quod she) praie I, and oft have praied,
That it be now the gretist price of all
And moste honour that er you shall befall;
And when thine old auncetirs paintid be,
In whiche men maie ther worthinesse yse,
Then praie I God thou paintid be also,
That folke maie redin fortheby as thei go,

Lo! this is he that with his flattiry
Betrayid hath and doen her villany
That was his truè love in thought and dede!

But sothly of o poinct yet maie thei rede,
That ye ben like your fathir as in this,
For he begilid Ariadne' iwis
With fuche an arte and soche a subtilte
As thou thy selvin hast beguilid me;
As in that poinct, although it be not feire,
Thou solowist certain, and art his heire:
But sens thus sinfully ye me begile
My bodis mote ye sene within a while
Right in the haven of Athenis fletyng
Withoutin sepulture and burying,
Though ye ben hardir then is any stone.

And when this lettir was forth sent anone,
And knewe how brotill and how fals he was,
She for dispaire forbid her self, alas!
Suche sorowe' hath she for she beset her so.
Beware ye women of your subtill fo,
Sens yet this daie men maie ensample se,
And trustith now in love no man but me.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF HYPERMNESTRA.

In Grece whilom were dwelling brethrene two,
Of whiche that one was callid Danao,
That many' a sonne hath of his bodie wonne,
As soche false loviris oftimis conne.

Emongis his sonnys all there was one
That aldirmoste he loved of everychone,
And when this child was borne this Danao
Shope him a name, and callid hym Lino;
That othir brothir callid was Egiste,
That was of love as false as er him liste;
And many' a daughtir gate he in his life,
Of whiche he gate upon his righte wife
A doughtir dere, and did her for to call
Hypermnestira, the youngist of 'hem all,
The whichè childe of her nativite
To alle gode thewis yborne was she,
As likid to the goddes or she was borne
That of the shewe she should be the corne:
The werdis that we clepin Destine
Hath shapin her that she must nedis be
Pitous, and sad, and wise, and true as stele;
And to this woman it accordith wele,
For though that Venus yave her grete beute
With Jupiter compownid so was she
That conscience and trouthe, and drede of shame,
And of her wifhode for to kepe her name,
This thought her was felicity as here:
And Red Mars was at that tyme of the yere
So feble that his malice is him rafte,
Repressid hath Venus his cruill crafte,
And what with Venus and othir oppression
Of housis Mars his venime is adon,
'That Hypermnestira dare not handle' a knife
In malice, though she shouldin lese her life;
But nathèlesse as hevin gan tho turne,
Two bad aspectis hath she of Saturne,
That made her for to dyin in prision;
And I shall astir makin mencion

Of Danao and Egistis also,
And though so be that thei were brethrin two;
For thilke tyme n'as sparid no linage,
It likid 'hem to makin mariage
Betwixt Hypermnestira and him Lino;
And castin in soche a daie it shall be so,
And full accordid was it uttirly,
The' araic is wrought, the tyme is faste by;
And thus Lino hath of his fathir's brother
The doughtir wedded, and ech of 'hem hath other:
The torchis brennin and the lampis bright,
The sacrificis ben full redy dight,
Th' ensence out of the fire out rekith sote,
The floure the lese, is rent up by the rote
To makin garlandis and crounis hie;
Full is the place of found of minstrelcie,
Of songis amouros of mariage,
As thilkè tyme was the plain usage;
And this was in the paleis of Egiste,
That in his hous was lord right as him liste;
And thus that daie thei drivin to an ende,
The frendis takin leve, and home thei wend:
The night is come, the bride shall go to bed,
Egistis to his chamber fast him sped,
And privily he let his doughtir call
When that the hous voidid was of 'hem all;
He lokith on his doughtir with glade chere,
And to her spake as ye shall astir here:

My right doughtir, the tresour of mine herte!
Sens first that daie that shapin was my sherte,
Or by the Fatall Sustir had my dome,
So nye myne herte nevir thing ne come,
As thou my Hypermnestira, doughtir dere!
Take hede what thy fathir sayith the here,
And werke astir thy wisir evirmo,
For aldirfirst doughtir I love the so
That all the worlde to me n'is halfe so lese,
Ne I n'olde redè the to thy mischese

For all the gode undir the coldè mone;
And what I mene it shal be said right sone,
With protestacion, as faine these wise,
That but thou doe as I shall the devise
Thou shalt be ded, by him that al hath wrought:
At shortè wordis, thou ne scapist nought
Out of my paleis or that thou be dede
But thou consent and werke astir my rede;
Take this to the for full conclusioun.
This Hypermnestra cast her eyin doun,
And quoke as doeth the lese of aspis grene,
Ded wext her hew, and like ashin to sene,
And sayid; Lorde and fathir, all your will,
Astir my might, God wote I shall fulfill,
So it be to me no confusion.

I n'ill (quod he) have non exception,
And out he caught a knife as rasour kene;
Hide this (quod he) that it be nat isene,
And when thine husbonde is to bed ygo,
While that he slepith cut his throte atwo,
For in my dreame it is ywarnid me
How that my nevewe shall my bane ybe,
But whiche I n'ot, wherefore I woll be fiker;
If thou saie naie we two shall have a biker,
As I have saied, by him that I have sworne.
This Hypermnestra' hath nigh her wit forlorn,
And for to passe harmelesse out of that place
She grauntid him, there was non othir grace.
And therewithall a coltrill takith he,
And saied, Hereof a draught or two, or thre,
Yeve him to drinke when he goith to reste,
And he shall slepe as long as er the leste,
The narcotikes and apies ben so strong,
And go thy waie, lest that him thinke to long.
Out cometh the bride, and with full sobre chere,
As is of maidins oftin the manere,
To chambir brought with revil and with song:
And shortlie, leste this talè be to long,
This Lino and she beth bin brought to bed,
And every wight out at the dore him sped.
The night is wastid, and he sell aslepe;
Full tendirly beginnith she to wepe;
She rist her up, and dredefully she quaketh,
As doeth the braunch that Zephyrus yshaketh;

And husht were all in Aragone that cite:
As colde as any froste now wexith she,
For pite by the herte strainid her so,
And drede of deth doith her so moche wo,
That thryis doune she fill; in soche a were
She rist her up, and stekereth here and there,
And on her handis fastè lokith she;
Alas! quod she, shall myne handes blodie be!
I am a maidin, and by my nature,
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture,
Myne haundis ben not shapin for a knife,
As for to revin no man fro his life:
What devill have I with the knife to do?
And shall I have my throte ycorve atwo?
Then shall I blede, alas! and be yshende:
And nedis of this thing mote have an ende;
Or he or I mote nedis lese our life:
Now certis (quod she) sens I am his wife,
And hath my feithe, yet is it bette for me
For to be dedde in wisely honeste
Then be a traitour living in my shame:
Be as be maie, for ernest or for game,
He shall awake, and rise and go his waie
Out at this guttir er that it be daie;
And wept full tendirly upon his face,
And in her armis gan him to embrace,
And him she roggith and awakith soft;
And at the window lepe he fro the loft
When she hath warnid him and doen him bote.
This Lino swift ywas and light of fote,
And from his wife he ran a full gode pace:
This felie woman is so weke, alas!
And helplessse, so that er she ferrè went
Her cruill fathir did her for to hent.
Alas, Lino! why art thou so unkinde?
Why ne hast thou remembrid in thy minde
And takin her and led her forthe with the?
For when she sawe that gone awaie was he,
And that she ne might not so fast ygo,
Ne folowin him, she fate doune right tho
Til she was caught and fettrid in prison;
This Tale is saied for this conclusion.

A PRAISE OF WOMEN.

Al tho that lyfte of women ill to speke,
And sayin of 'hem worse than they deserve,
I pray to God that ther neckis to breke,
Or on some yll dethe mote tho janglirs sterue,
For every man were holdin 'hem to serve,
And do 'hem worship, honour, and servise,
In every manir they best coude devise.

For we ought first to think on what manere
Thei bring us forth, and what pain thei endure
First in our byrth, and sith fro yere to yere
How busily they done ther busy cure

To kepe us fro every myfavinture
In our youthhed, whan that we have no might
Our selfe to kepe neythir by day nor night.

Alas! howe may we say on 'hem but wele
Of whom we were yfostred and ybore,
And ben all our socoure, and trewe as stele,
And for our sake ful ofte they suffre fore?
Without women were al our joye ylore,
Wherefore we ought al women to obey
In al godenesse; I can no more ysay.

This is wel knowin, and hath ben or this,
That women ben the cause of al lightnesse,
Knighthode, norture, eschewing al malis,
Encrese of worship and of worthinesse,
Therto curteys meke, grounde of alle godenesse,
Glad and mery, and trewe in every wise
That any gentle' hert can thinke or devise.

And though any would trust to your untruth,
And to your faire wordis would aught assent,
In gode faith methinkith it wer grete ruth
That othre' women should for ther gilt be shent
That ner knew ne wist nought of ther entent,
Ne list not to here the faire wordes ye write,
Whiche ye you paine fro daie to daie t' endite.

But who maie beware of your tales untrue
That ye so busilie painte and endite?
For ye will swerin that ye nevir knewe
Ne sawe the woman neither moche ne lite,
Save only her to whom ye had delite
As for to serve of all that er ye sey,
And for her love must ye nedis dey.

Then wil ye swere that ye knew ner before
What Love was, ne his dredful observaunce,
But now ye felin that he can wounde sore,
Wherefore ye put you' into her govirnaunce

Whom Love hath ordeined you to serve and dople-
saunce

With al your might your lityl liv'is space,
Whiche endith sone but if she doe you grace;
And then to bedde will ye you sone ydrawe,
And sone your selvis sicke ye will then faine,
And swerin fast your ladie hath you flawe,
And brought you sodainly in so high pain
That fro your deth maie no man you restrain,
With a dangerous loke of her eyin two,
That to your deth must ye nedis go.

Thus will ye morne, thus will ye sighin sore,
As though your hert anon in two wold brest,
And swerin fast that ye maie live no more,
Myne ownè ladie, that might if ye lest
Bryngin myne hertè somedele into rest,
As if you list mercie on me to have,
Thus your untrouth will evir mercie crave.

Thus woll ye plainin tho you nothing smerte
These innocent cretures for to begile,
And swere to 'hem so woundid is your herte
For love of them that ye maie live no while;
Scarflie so long as one might go a mile;
So hyith Deth to bryng you to an ende
But if your soverain lady list you' amende.

And if she comfort you in any wise
For routhe for pite' of your false othis sere,
So that she weneth it be as you devise,
And wenith your herte be as she maie here,
Thus to comfort and somewhat do you chere,
Then woll these janglirs deme of her full ill;
And faine ye have her fully at your will.

Lo, how redie ther tongis ben and prest
To spekin harme of women causiflesse!
Alas! why might ye not as well saie the best
As for to demin 'hem thus giltiflesse?

In your herte iwis there' is no gentllesse
That of your own gilt liste thus women fame;
Now by my trouth me thinke ye be to blame,

For of women comith this worldly wele,
Wherefore we ought worship 'hem evirmore,
And though it mishap one we ought to hele,
For it is all thorough our false lore,
That daie and night we pain us evirmore
With many' an othe these women to begile
With false talis and many' a wickid wile.

And if falshe should be reckened and told
It n'ere in women iwis full trouth were
Not as in men is by a thousande fold,
Fro all vicis iwis thei standin clere,
In any thing that er I could of here,
But if entifyng of these men it make,
That 'hem to flatteren connin nevir flake.

I would fain wete where evir ye coud here
Without mens tising women did amis;
There ye get 'hem ye lie fro yere to yere,
And many a gabbyng ye make to 'hem iwis,
For I could nevir here ne knowen er this
Where evir ye coude finde in any place
That evir women besought you of grace.

There ye you painin with al your full might,
With all your herte and all your businesse,
To plesin 'hem aye both by daie and night,
Praying 'hem of ther grace and gentilnesse
To have pite upon your grete distresse,
And that thei woldin on your pain have routh,
And fle you not, sithin ye mene but trouth.

Thus maie sein that thei ben faultlesse,
And innocent to all your werkis flie;
And all your craftis that touchin falsnesse
Thei knowe 'hem not, ne maie 'hem not espie;
So swerin ye that ye must nedis die
But if thei wouldin of ther womanhedde
Upon your trouth rewe er that ye be dedde.

And then your lady and your hert'is quene
Ye callin 'hem, and therewith ye sigh fore,
And saie, My ladie, I trowe that it be fene
In what plite that I have livid full yore,
But now I hope that ye wollin no more
In these pains suffre me for to dwell,
For of all godenesse iwis ye be the well.

Lo, whiche a paintid processe can ye make
These harmlesse ceturis for to begile!
And when thei slepe ye painin you to wake,
And to bethinke you on many a wickid wile;
But ye shal se the daie that ye shall curse the while
That ye so busily did your entent
Hem to begile that falsshed nevir ment.

For this ye know wel, though I wouldin lie,
In women is all trouth and stedfastnesse,
For in gode faithe I nevir of 'hem sie
But moche worship, bounte, and gentilnesse,
Right commyng, faire, and full of mekenesse,
Gode and glad, and lowlie I you ensure,
Is this godelie and angelike cature.

And if it happe a man be in disese
She doeth her businesse and her full paine
With al her might him to comfort and plesse,
If fro his disese she might hym restrain:
In worde ne dede iwis she woll not faine;
With al her might she doth her businesse
To bryngin hym out of his hevinesse.

Lo, here what gentillesse these women have!
If we could knowe it for our rudenesse
How busie thei be us to kepe and save
Bothe in hele and also in sickenesse,
And alwaie right sorie for our distresse;
In evry manir thus shewe thei routh,
That in 'hem is all godenesse and all trouthe.

And sith we find in 'hem gentilnesse, trouth,
Worship, bounte, and kindnesse, evirmore,
Let nevir this gentillesse through your slouth
In ther kinde trouth be evir aught forlore
That in women is and hath ben full yore,
For in reverence of heven'is quene

We ought to worship all women that bene;
For of all catures that were get and borne
This wote ye well a woman was the best;
By her was recovered the blis we had lorne,
And through that woman shall we come to rest
And ben isayid, if that our self left;
Wherefore me thinkith if that we had grace
We oughten honour women in every place.

Therefore I rede that to our liv'is ende,
Fro this time forth while that we havin space,
That we have trespaced pursue to amende,
Praying our Ladië, the welle of all grace,
To bryngin us unto that blisfull place
There as she and all gode women shall be in fere,
In hevin above, emong the angils clere.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY.

M. Aleyn, Secretary to the King of France, formed this dialogue between a gentleman and a gentlewoman, who finding no mercy at her hand, dyeth for sorrow.

HALFE in a dreame, not fully well awaked,
The goldin Slepe me wrapped undir his wyng,
Yet not forthy I rose, and well nigh naked,
Al sodainly my self rememberyng
Of a mattir, levyng all othir thyng,
Which I must doe withoutin more delaie
For them whiche I ne durst not disobaie.

My charge was this, to translate by and by,
(All thyng forgive) as parte of my penaunce,
A boke callid *La bel Dame sans Mercy*,
Whiche Maistir Aleine made of remembraunce,
Chief Secretarie with the Kyng of Fraunce;
And hereupon a while I stode musyng,
And in my self greatly imaginyng

What wise I should perform the said processe
Considiryng by gode advisement
My unconnyng and my grete simpleness,
And ayenward the straite commaundement
Whiche that I had; and thus in myne entent
I was vexid and tournid up and doun,
And yet at last, as in conclusioun,

I cast my clothis on, and went my waie,
This foresaid charge having in remembraunce,
Till I came to a lustie grene valaie
Full of flouris, to se a grete plesaunce,
And so boldly, with ther benigne suffraunce
Which redin this boke, touching this matere
Thus I began, if it plesse you to here.

Not long ago, ridyng an esie paas,
I fell in thought of joyful desperate,
With grete disese and pain, so that I was
Of all lovirs the most unfortunate,
Sith by his darte moste cruill full of hate
The Deth hath take my ladie and maistresse,
And left me sole, thus discomfite and mate,
Sore languisbyng and in waie of distresse.

Then said I thus, It fallith me to cesse
Eithir to rime or ditees for to make,
And surely to makin a full promesse
To laugh no more, but wepe in clothis blake
My joyfull tyme (alas!) now doeth it slake,
For in my self I fele no manir ese,
Let it be written, soche fortune (as I take)
Which neithir me nor non othir doth plesse.

If it were so my wyll or myne entent
Constrainid were a joyfull thing to write,
My penne coud nevir knowin what it ment,
To speke thereof my tongue hath no delite;
Tho with my mouthe I laugh mochil or lite
Mine eyin should make a countenance untrue,
My herte also would have therof despise,
The wepyng teris have so large issue,

These sicke lovirs I leve that to 'hem longes,
Which lede ther life in hope of elegeaunce,
This is to saie, to make balades and songes
Every of 'hem as thei fele ther grevaunce,
For she that was my joye and my plesaunce,
Whose soule I praie God of his mercie save!
She hath my will, myne hert's ordinaunce,
Which lyith here within this tombe igrave.

For this tyme forthe tyme is to hold my pees;
It werieth me this mattir for to trete;
Let othir lovirs put 'hem selfe in prees,
Their seson is, my tyme is now forgete;
Fortune by strength the forcir hath unshete
Wherein was sperde all my worldly richesse,
And all the godis which that I have gete
In my best tyme of youth and lustinesse.

Love hath me kept undir his govirnaunce;
If I misdidd God graunt me forgivenesse!
If I did well yet felt I no plesaunce,
It causid neithir joye nor hevinessse,

For when she dyid that was my maistres
My welfare then ymade the same purchase;
The Deth hath shette my bondis of witnesse,
Which for nothing myne hert shal nevir pase.

In this grete thought fore troublid in my mind,
Alone thus rode I all the morrow tide,
Till at the last it happid me to finde
The place wherein I cast me to abide
When that I had no furthir for to ride,
And as I went my lodgyng to purvaie
Right sone I herd a little me beside,
In a gardin, where minstrels gan to plaie:

With that anone I went me backir more,
My self and I, me thought we were inow,
But twaine that wer my frendis here before
Had me espied, and yet I wote not how
Thei came for me; awaiewarde I me drowe,
Somwhat by force, somewhat by ther request,
That in no wise I coud my self rescowe,
But nedis I must come in and se the fest.

At my commyng the ladies everichone
Bad me welcome, God wote so gentillie,
And made me chere every one by one
A grete dele bettir than I was worthie,
And of ther grace shewed me grete curtisie
With gode disport, bicause I should not mourne:
That daie I bode still in ther companie,
Whiche was to me a gracious sojourn.

The bordis were spred in right lityl space,
The ladies sat eche as she semid best;
There were no dedly servautes in the place,
But chosin men, right of the godelyest,
And some there wer, peraventure most freshest,
That sawin ther judgis right full demure,
Withoutin semblaunt eithir to moste or lest,
Notwithstandyng thei had 'hem undir cure.

Emong all othir one I gan espie
Which in grete thought ful oftin came and went,
As one that had ben ravished uttirly,
In his language not gretly diligent;
His countinaunce he kept with grete turment,
But his desire sarre passid his reson,
For er his eye went astir his entent
Full many' a tyme when it was no seson.

To makin chere sorely hymself he pained,
And outwardly he fainid grete gladnesse;
To sing also by force he was constrained,
For no plesaunce but verie shamefastnesse,
For the complainte of his moste hevinesse
Came to his voice alwaie without request,
Like as the founne of birdis doeth expresse
When thei sing loude in frithe or in forest.

Othir there were that servid in the hall,
But none like hym, as astir myne advise,
For he was pale, and somewhat lene withall,
His speche also tremblid in ferfull wise,
And er alone but when he did servise;
All blacke he were, and no devise but plain;
Me thought by him, as my witte coud suffise,
His herte was nothyng in his owne demain.

To fest 'hem all he did his diligence,
And well he coud, right as it semid me,
But evirmore when he was in presence
His chere was doen, it a'olde none othir be;

His scholemaistir had soche auctorite
That all the while he bode still in that place
Speke cou'd he not, but upon her beaute
He lokid still with a right pitous face.

With that his hedde he tournid at the last
For to beholde the ladies everichone,
But er in one he set his eye stedfast
On her whiche that his thought was moste upon,
For of his eyen the shot I knewe anone,
Which ferfull was, with right humble requestes;
Then to my self I saied, by God alone
Soche one was I or that I sawe these jestes,

Out of the prese he went full esily
To make stable his hevie countinaunce,
And wote ye well he fighid wondirly
For his sorowes and wofull remembrance,
Then in hymself he made his ordinance,
And forthwithall came to bryng in the messe,
But for to judge his moste wofull penance
God wote it was a pitous entremesse.

Astir dinir anone thei 'hem avaunced
To daunce above the folk everychone,
And forthwithal this hevie man he daunced
Somtime with twaine and somtimis with one;
Unto 'hem all his chere was astir one,
Now here, now there, as fell by avinture,
Bur er emong he drewe to her alone
Whiche that he moste drede of livyng cature.

To mine advise gode was his purveiaunce
When he her chose to his maistresse alone,
If that her herte were set to his plesaunce
As moche as was her beauteous persone,
For who so evir setteth his trust upon
The report of the eyen withoutin more
He might be dedde and gravin undir ston
Or he should his hert'is ese restore.

In her failid nothyng that I coud gesse
One wise nor othir, privie nor aperte;
A garison she was of godelinesse,
To make a frontier for a lovirs herte;
Right yong and freshe, a woman full coverte,
Assurid wele of porte and eke of chere,
Wel at her ese, withoutin wo or smerte,
All underneth the standerde of Dangere.

To se the fest it wried me full sore,
For hevie joye doeth fore the herte travaile,
Out of the prese I me withdrawe therfore,
And set me doune alone behinde a traile
Full of levis, to se a grete mervaile,
With grene wrethis iboundin wondirly,
The levis were so thicke withoutin faile
That thoroughout no man might me espie.

To this ladie he came full curtisly
When he thought time to daunce with her a trace,
Set in an herbir made full plesantly,
Thei restid 'hem fro thens but lityl space,
Nigh 'hem were none of a certain compace,
But onely thei, as farre as I coud se;
Save the traile there I had ychose my place
Ther was no more betwene 'hem two and me.

I herd the lovir fighyng wondir fore,
For aie the more the forir it hym sought,
His inward paine he coud not kepe in store,
Nor for to speke so hardie was he nought;

His leche was nere, the gretir was his thought :
He musid fore to conquere his desire,
For no man maie to more penaunce be brought
Then in his hete to bryng hym to the fire.

The herte began to swell within his chest,
So fore strainid for anguishe and for pain,
That all to pecis almoste it to brest,
When both at ones so fore it did constrain.
Desire was bolde, but shame it gan refrain,
That one was large, the othir was full close ;
No little charge was laied on hym certain
To kepe soche werre and have so many fose.

Full oftin times to speke himself he pained,
But shamefastnesse and drede saied evir naie,
Yet at the last so fore he was constrained,
When he full long had put it in delaie,
To this ladie right thus then gan he saie,
With dredefull voice, wepyng, halfe in a rage ;
For me was purveied an unhappie daie
When I first had a sight of your visage :

I suffre pain, God wote, full hote brenning,
To cause my deth, all for my true servise,
And I se well ye recke thereof nothing,
Nor take no hede of it in no kinde wise,
But when I speke astir my best advise
Ye reke it nought, but make thereof a game,
And though I sewe so grete an entirprise
Yet peirith not your worship nor your fame.

Alas ! what should it be to' you prejudice
If that a man doe love you faithfully ?
To your worship eschewyng every vice,
So I am yours, and will be verily ;
I challenge nought of right, and reson why,
For I am whole submit to your service ;
Right as you list it be right so will I,
To binde my self where I was in fraunchise.

L'amant.

Though it be so that I can not deserve
To have your grace, but alwaie live in drede,
Yet suffre me you for to love and serve
Without mangre of your moste godelihede ;
Both faith and trowth I give your womanhede
And my service without any callyng ;
Love hath me bound withoutin wage or mede
To be your man and leve all othir thyng.

La Dame.

When this ladie had herd al this language
She gave answer full soft and demurely,
Without chaungyng of colour or corage,
Nothyng in hast, but full mesurably ;
Me thinkith, Sir, your thought is grete foly ;
Purpose ye nought your labour for to cese,
For thinkith not whilis ye live and I
In this mattir to set your herte in pefe.

L'amant.

Ther maie none make the pece but onely ye,
Which are the ground and cause of all this war,
For with your eyen the lettirs writtin be
By whiche I am defied and put asarre ;
Your plesaunt loke, my very lod-starre,
Was made heraude of thilke same defiaunce
Whiche uttirly behight me for to barre
My faithfull trust and all myne affyaunce.

La Dame.

To live in wo he hath grete fantasie,
And of his hert also but slipper holde,
That onely for beholding of an eye
Can not abide in pece, as reson wolde ;
Other or me if ye list ye maie beholde ;
Our eyen are made to loke, why should we spare ?
I take no kepe neithir of yong ne olde ;
Who felith smart I counsaile hym beware.

L'amant.

If it be so one hurte on othir fore
In his defeute that felith the grevaunce,
Of very right a man may do no more,
Yet reson would it were in remembraunce,
And sith Fortune onily by her chaunce
Hath causid me to suffre all this pain
By your beautie, with all the circumstaunce,
Why list ye have me in so grete disdain ?

La Dame.

To your persone ne have I no disdain,
Nor nevir had truelie, ne nought will have,
Nor right grete love nor hatred in certain,
Nor your counsaile to knowe so God me save ;
If that soche love be in your minde igrave,
That lityl thyng maie doe you displeaunce,
You to begile or make you for to rave,
I will not causin no soche encombraunce.

L'amant.

What er it be that me hath thus purchased
Wenyng hath not decevid me certain,
But fervent love so fore hath me ichased
That I unware am castin in your chaine ;
And sith so is, as Fortune list ordaine,
All my welfare is in your handis fall,
In eschewyng of more mischevous paine
Who sonist dieth his care is left of all.

La Dame.

This sicknesse is right esie to endure,
But fewe peple it causith for to die,
But what thei mene I knowe it very sure,
Of more comfort to drawe the remedie ;
Soche be there now plainyng full pitouslie
That fele, God wote, not althir gretist pain ;
And if so be love hurte so grevouslie,
Lesse harme it wer one sorowful then twain.

L'amant.

Alas ! Madame, if that it might you pefe,
Moche bet it were by waie of gentilnesse
Of one sorie to make twain well at ese
Then hym to destroe that liveth in distresse,
For my desire is neithir more nor lesse
But my service to doe for your plesaunce,
In eschewyng all manir doublenesse
To make two joies in stede of one grevaunce.

La Dame.

Of love I seke neithir plesaunce nor ese,
Nor have I therein no grete affyaunce ;
Though ye be sick it doeth me nothing pefe,
Also I take no hede of your plesaunce ;
Chese who so will ther hertis to avaunce,
Free am I now and fre will I endure ;
To be rulid by mann's govirnaunce
For yerthly gode naie, that I you ensure.

L'amant.

Love, which that joy and sorow doth depart,
Hath set the ladies out of all servage,
And largely doeth graunt 'hem for ther part
Lordship and rule of every maner of age;
The pore servaunt nought hath of advantage
But what he maie get onely by purchesse,
And he that ones to Love doeth his homage
Full oftin tymes dere bought is the richesse.

La Dame.

Ladies, be not so simple, thus I mene,
So dull of witte, so sottid in folie,
That for wordis which said be of the splene,
In faire language paintid full plesauntlie,
Whiche ye and mo holde scholis of dailie,
To make 'hem all grete wondirs to suppose,
But sone thei can awaie their heddis wrie,
And to faire speche lightly ther eris close.

L'amant.

There is no man that janglith busilie,
And setteth his herte and al his minde therfore,
That by reson maie plain so pitouffie
As he that hath moche hevinesse in store;
Whose hedde is whole and saieth that it is sore
His fainid chere is harde to kepe in mewe,
But thought, whiche is unfainid evirmore,
The workis previth as the wordis shewe.

La Dame.

Love is subtile, and hath a grete awaite,
Sharp in working, in gabbing grete plesaunce;
And can hym venge of soche as by disceite
Would fele and knowe his secrete govirnaunce,
And makith 'hem to' obeie his ordinaunce
By cherefull waies, as in 'hem is supposed,
But when thei fallin into repentaunce
Then in a rage ther counsaile is disclosed.

L'amant.

Sith for as moche as God and eke Nature
Hath avauncid love to so hie degre,
Moche sharpe is the point, thus am I right sure,
Yet grevith more the faute, where er it be;
Who bath no colde of hete bath no deinte;
The' one for that othir askid is expresse;
And of plesaunce knowith none certainte
But it be one in thought and hevinesse.

La Dame.

As for plesaunce, it is not alwaie one,
That you think swete I think it bittir pain;
Ye maie not me constrain, nor yet right none,
Aftir your luste to love; that is but vain;
To chalenge love by right was nevir sein,
But herte assent, before bonde and promise,
For strength and force ne maie not er attain
A will that standeth encesid in franchise.

L'amant.

Right faire laide! God mote I nevir plesse
If that I seke othir right in this case
But for to shewe you plainly my disese,
And your mercie to' abide and eke your grace;

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If I purpose your honour to deface,
Or evir did, God and Fortune me shende,
And that I ner unrightfully purchace
One onelie joye unto my liv'is ende.

La Dame.

Ye and othir that swere soche othis faste,
And so condempne and cursin to and fro,
Full sikirly ye wene your othis laste
No lengir then the wordis ben ago,
And God and eke his sainctis laugh also;
In soche sweryng there is no stedfastnesse,
And these wretchis that have ful trust thereto
Aftir thei wepe and wailin in distresse.

L'amant.

He hath no courage of a man truelie
That sechith plesaunce worship to dispise,
Nor to be callid, for he' is not worthie
The yerth to touch, the aire in no kind wise,
A trustie herte, a mouthe without feintise,
Thus by the strength of every manir name,
And who that laieth his faith for little prise
He lesith both his worship and his fame.

La Dame.

A cursid herte, a mouthe that is curteise,
Full well ye wote thei be not accordyng,
Yet fainid chere right sone maie 'hem apeise,
Where of malice is set all ther working,
Full false semblaunt thei bere and true semyng,
Ther name, ther fame, ther tonguis, ben but fained,
Worship in 'hem is put in forgettyng,
Nought repentid, nor in no wise complained.

L'amant.

Who thinkith ill no gode maie him befall,
God of his grace graunt eche man his desert!
But for his love emong your thoughtis all
As thinke upon my wofull sorowes smert,
For of my paine whethir your tendir hert
Of swete pitie be not therewith agreved,
And of your grace to me were discovert,
That by your mene sone should I be releved.

La Dame.

A lightsome herte, a folie of plesaunce,
Are moche bettir the lesse while thei abide,
Thei make you think and bring you in a traunce,
But that fikenesse will sone be remedide;
Respite your thought, and put all this aside;
Full gode disporte ywerieth me all daie;
To helpe nor hurte my will is not aplide;
Who troweth me not I let hym passe awaie.

L'amant.

Who hath a birde, a faucon, or a hounde,
That soloweth hym for love in every place,
He cheriseth him and kepith him ful sound,
Out of his sight he will not hym enchace,
And I, that set my wittis in this cace
On you alone, withoutin any chaunge,
Am put undir, moche farthir out of grace,
And lesse set by, then othir that be straung.

F f

La Dame.

Though I make chere to every man about
For my worship and for myne own franchise,
To you I n'ill doe so withoutin doubt,
In eschewyng all manir prejudise,
For wote ye well Love is so little wise,
And in bileve so lightly will be brought,
That he takith all at his owne devise
Of thing God wote that servith him of nought.

L'amant.

It I by love and by my true servise
Lese the gode chere that straungirs have alwaie
Whereof shall serve my trouthe in any wise
Lesse then to him that cometh and goeth al daie,
Whiche holdeth of you nothyng, that is no naie?
Also in you is lost, as to' my femyng,
All curtisie, whiche of reson will saie
That *Love for love* were lawfull desiring.

La Dame.

Curtisie is alyid wondir nere
To worship, whiche hym lovith tendirly,
And he will not be bounde for no praiere,
Nor for no giftes, I saie you verily,
But his gode chere depart full largily
Where hym lykith, as his concept will fall;
Guerdon constrained, a gift doen thankfully,
These twain can ner accord, nor nevir shal.

L'amant.

As for guerdon, I seke none in this cace,
For that deserte to me it is to hie,
Wherefore I aske your pardon and your grace,
Sith me behovith deth or your mercie;
To give the gode where it wantith truly
That were reson and a curtise manere,
And to your own moche bettir were worthy
Then to straungirs to shew 'hem lovely chere.

La Dame.

What cal ye gode? fain would I that I wist;
That plesith one an othir smertith sore,
But of his owne to large is he that list
Give moche and lesin his gode name therfore;
One should not make a graunt, little ne more,
But the request were right well accordyng:
If worship be not kept and set before
All that is leste is but a little thyng.

L'amant.

Into this worlde was foundin nevir none,
Nor undir hevin creature ibore,
Nor nevir shall, save onely your persone,
To whom your worship touchith halfe so fore
But me, whiche have no seson lesse ne more
Of youth ne age but still in your service;
I have no eyen, no wit, nor mouthe, in store,
But all be givin to the same office.

La Dame.

A ful grete charge hath he withoutin faile
That his worship kepith in sikirnesse,
But in daungir he settith his travail
That fessith it with othirs businesse;

To hym that longith honour and noblesse
Upon none othir should not be awaite,
For of his owne so moche hath he the lesse
That of othir moche foloweth the conceite.

L'amant.

Your eyen hath set the print which that I sele
Within my herte, that where so er I go
If I doe thyng that sounith unto wele
Nedes must it cum from you and fro no mo;
Fortune will this, that I for wele or wo
My life endure, your mercy abidyng,
And verie right will that I thinke also
Of your worship above all othir thyng.

La Dame.

To your worship se well, for that is nede,
That ye spende not your seson all in vain;
As touchyng myne I rede you take no hede,
By your follie to put your selfe in pain;
To ovircome is gode and to restrain
An herte which is decevid follilie,
For *Worse it is to breke then bowe certain;*
Bettir to bowe then to fall sodainly.

L'amant.

Now, faire ladie! thinke sith it first began
That Love hath set mine herte undir his cure
It nevir might, ne truelie I ne can,
None othir serve while I shall here endure,
In most fre wise thereof I make you sure,
Which maie not be withdraw, this is no naie;
I must abide all manir advinture,
For I ne maie put to nor take awaie.

La Dame.

I holde it for no gift in sothfastnesse
That one offirith where it is forsake,
For soche a giste' is abandonyng expresse,
That with worship ayen maie not be take;
He hath an herte full fell that list to make
A gift lightlie that put is to refuse,
But he is wise that soche concept will flake,
So that hym nede neithir studie ne muse.

L'amant.

He should not muse that hath his service spent
On her whiche is a ladie honourable,
And if I spende my time to that entent
Yet at the lest I am not reprovable
Of fainid harte, to thinke I am unable,
Or I mistoke when I made this request,
By whiche Love hath of enterprise notable
So many hertis gottin by conquest.

La Dame.

If that ye liste doe astir my counsaile
Seche a fairir and of more highir fame,
Whiche in service of love will you prevaile,
Astir your thought, accordyng to the same;
He hurtith bothe his worship and his name
That follily for twain himself will trouble,
And he also lesith his astir game
That surely can not set his poinctis double.

L'amant.

This your counsaile, by ought that I can se,
Is bettir said than doen, to myne advise,
Though I beleve it not forgive it me:
Mine herte is soche, so whole without feintise,
That I ne maie give credence in no wise
To thyng whiche is not sounyng unto truth:
Othir counsaile I se' is but fantasie
Save of your grace to shewe pitie and ruth.

La Dame.

I holde hym wise that workith no folie,
And when hym list can leve and part therfro,
But in connyng he is to lerne truelie
That would himself conduite and can not so;
And he that will not astir counsaile doe
His fute he puttith into disperaunce,
And all the gode that should yfall hym to
Is lost and dedde clene out of remembraunce.

L'amant.

Yet woll I shewe this mattir faithfullie
Whillis I live, what evir be my chaunce,
And if it hap that in my truthe I die
Then deth shall doe to me no displeaunce,
But when that I by your hard suseraunce
Shall die so true, and with so grete a pain,
Yet shall it doe me moche the lesse grevaunce
Then for to live a false lovir certain.

La Dame.

Of me get ye right nocht, this is no fable,
I will to you be neithir hard nor straite,
And right will not no man customable
To thinke ye should be sure of my conceite;
Who sechith sorowe his be the receite;
Othir counsaile can I not sele nor se,
Nor for to lerne I cast me not to' awaite,
Who will thereof let him assaie for me.

L'amant.

Ones must it be assaied, that is no naie,
With soche as be of reputacion,
And of true love the right honour to paie
Of fre hartis gottin by due raunsome,
For frewil holdith this opinion,
That it is grete duresse ond discomforte
To kepe a herte in so straite a prision
That hath but one bodie for his disporte.

La Dame.

I knowe so many causis marveilous
That I must nede of reson thinke certain
Soche avinture is wondir perilous,
And yet well more the coming backe again,
Gode or worship thereof is seldome sene,
Where I ne will make any soche araie,
As for to finde a plesaunce but baraine
When it shall cost so dere the first assaie.

L'amant.

Ye have no cause to doubt of this matter,
Nor you to meve with no soche fantasie,
To put me farre all out as a straunger,
For your godenesse can thinke and well advise

That I have made aprise in every wise,
By whiche my truthe sheweth opin evidence;
My long abidyng and my true service
Maie well be known by plain experience.

La Dame.

Of verie right he maie be callid true,
And so must he be take in every place,
That can discerne and let as he ne knewe,
And kepe the gode if he it maie purchase;
For who that praieth or swereth in any case
Right well ye wote in that no trowth is preved;
Soch hath there ben and are that gettin grace,
And lese it sone when thei have it acheved.

L'amant.

If truthe me cause, by vertue soverain,
To shewe gode love and alwaie find contrarie,
And cherishe the whiche fleeth me with the pain,
This is to me a lovely adversarie,
When that Pitie, whiche long on slepe doth tarie,
Hath set the fine of all my hevinesse,
Yet her comfort, to me moste necessarie,
Shall set my will more sure in stablenesse.

La Dame.

The woful wight what maie he think or say,
The contrarie of all joye and gladnesse,
A sicke bodie, his thought is ferre alwaie
From 'hem that felin no fore nor sickenesse;
Thus hurtis ben of divers businesse,
Whiche love hath putt unto grete hinderaunce,
And truthe also put in forgetfulnesse,
When thei full fore begin to sigh askaunce.

L'amant.

Now God defende but he be harmelesse
Of all worship or gode that maie befall
That to werst tournith by his leudenesse
A gift of grace or any thyng at all
That his ladie vouchsafe upon hym call,
Or cherish hym in honourable wise;
In that defaute what er he be that fall
Deservith more than deth to suffre twise.

La Dame.

There is no judge ifet on soche trespase,
By whiche of right love maie recovered be,
One cursith fast, an othir doth manace,
Yet dyith none, as farre as I can se,
But kepe ther course alwaie in one degre,
And evirmore ther labour doeth encrese
To bryng ladies, by ther grete subtilte,
For othirs gilte, in sorowe and disese.

L'amant.

All be it so one doeth so grete offence
And is not dedde nor put to no justice,
Right well I wote hym gainith no defence,
But he must ende in full mischevous wise,
And all ever saied God will hym dispise,
For falsshed is all full of cursidnesse,
That his worship may ner have entirprise
Where it reignith and hath the wilfulnesse.

La Dame.

Of that have thei no grete fere now a daise,
Soche as will saie and maintain it thereto,
That stedfast truthe nothyng for to praise
In 'hem that kepe it long in wele or wo,
Their busie hertis passin to and fro,
Thei be so well reclaimid to the lure,
So well lernid 'hem to withholde also,
And al to chaunge when love should best endure.

L'amant.

When one hath set his herte in stable wise
In soche a place as is bothe gode and true
He should not flit, but doe forth his service
Alwaie withoutin chaunge of any newe:
As sone as love beginnith to remewe
All plesauce goeth anone in lityl space;
As for my partie that shall I eschue
While that the soule abidith in his place.

La Dame.

To love truly there as it ought of right
Ye maie not be mistakin doubtlesse,
But ye be foule discevid in your sight
By your light understanding as I gesse,
Yet maie we well repele your businesse,
And unto reson have some attendaunce,
Moche bettir than to abide by simplenes
The feble foccouris of disperaunce.

L'amant.

Reson, counsaile, wisedome, and gode advise,
Ben undir love arrestid everichone,
To whiche I can accorde in every wise,
For thei ben not rebell but still as stone;
'Ther will and myne be medlid all in one,
And therwith boundin with so strong a chain,
That as in 'hem departyng shall be none,
But pitie breke the mightie bonde atwain.

La Dame.

Ye love not your self, what evir ye be,
That in love stande subject in every place,
And of your wo if ye have no pite
Othirs pite bileve not to purchase,
But be fullie assured, as in this cace,
I am alwaie undir one ordinaunce;
'To havin bettir trust not astir grace,
And all that levith take to your plesauce.

L'amant.

I have my hope so sure and so stedfast
That soche a ladie should not lacke pitie,
But now, alas! it is shrit up so fast
That Daungir sheweth on me his crueltie,
And if she se the virtue faile in me
Of true service, though she doe faile also
No wondir were; but this is my surete,
I must suffre whiche waie that er it go.

La Dame.

Leve this purpose, I rede you for the best,
For the lengir ye kepe it is in vain,
The lesse ye get as of your hert's rest,
And to rejoyce it shall you ner attain;

When ye abide gode hope to make you fain
Ye shall be founde asottid in dotage,
And in the ende ye shall knowe for certain
That hope shall paie the wretchis for ther wage.

L'amant.

Ye saie as fallith moste for your plesauce,
And your powir is grete, all this I se,
But hope shall ner out of my remembraunce,
By whiche I fele so grete adversite,
For when Nature hath set in you plente
Of all godenesse, by vertue and by grace,
He ner assemblid 'hem, as semid me,
To put Pitie out of his dwellyng place.

La Dame.

Pitie of right ought to be resonable,
And to no wight do grete disavauntage,
There as is nede it should be profitable,
And to the pitous shewyng no damage:
If a ladie will doe so grete outrage
To shewe pitie and cause her owne debate,
Of soche pitie comith dispitous rage,
And of soche love also right dedly hate.

L'amant.

To comfort 'hem that live all comfortlesse
That is no harme, but comfort to your name,
But ye that have a herte of soche duresse,
And a faire ladie, I must affirme the same,
If I durst saie, ye winne all this defame
By crueltie, whiche sittith you full ill,
But if pitie, whiche maie all this attain,
In your high herte maie rest and tary still.

La Dame.

What er he be that saith he lovith me,
And paraventure I love well it be so,
Ought he be wrothe, or should I blamid be,
Though I did not as he would have me doe?
If I medlid with soche or othir moe
It might be callid pitie mercilesse,
And aftirward if I should live in wo
Then to repent it were to late I gesse.

L'amant.

O marble herte! and yet more harde parde,
Whiche mercie maie not perce for no labour,
More strong to bowe then is a mighty tre,
What availeth you to shewe so grete rigour!
Pleseth it you more to se me die this hour
Before your eyen, for your disport and plaie,
Then for to shewe some comfort and foccour
To respite deth, whiche chalith me alwaie?

La Dame.

Of your diseafe ye may have allegeaunce,
And as for myne I let it ovir slake,
Also ye shall not die for my plesauce,
Nor for your hele I can no suretie make;
I will not hurte my self for othirs sake;
Wepe thei, laugh thei, or sing thei, I waraunt
For this mattir so will I undirtake
That none of 'hem shall make therof avaunt.

L'amant.

I can not skill of love by God alone,
I have more cause to wepe in your presence,
And well ye wote avaintour am I none,
For certainly I love bettir silence:
One should not love by his hert's credence,
But he were sure to kepe it secretlie,
For a vauntour is of no reverence
When that his tongue is his moste enemye.

La Dame.

Male bouch in court hath grete commaundement,
Eche man studieth to saie the worst he maie,
These false lovirs in this tyme now present
Thei servin best to jangle as a jaie;
The moste secreete iwis yet some men saie
How he mistrustid is in some partise,
Wherefore to ladies when men speke or saie
It should not be bilevid in no wise.

L'amant.

Of gode and ill shall be and is alwaie,
The world is soche; *The yerth is not al plain*;
Thei that be gode the prose sheweth every daie,
And othir wise grete villonie certain;
It's not reson though one his tongue distain
With cursid speche to doe hymself a shame
That soche refuse should wrongfully remain
Upon the gode renomid in ther fame.

La Dame.

Soch as be nought, when thei here tidinges new
That eche trespas shall lightly have pardon,
Thei that pursuin to be gode and true
Will not set by none ill disposicion,
To continue in every gode condicion
Thei are the first that fallin in damage,
And full frely the hertis habandon
To lityl faithe with soft and faire language.

L'amant.

Now knowe I well of verie certainte
If one doe truelie yet shall he be shente,
Sith all manir of justice and pite
Is banished out of a ladies entente;
I can not se but all is at one stente,
The gode, the ill, the vice, and eke the virtue;
Soche as be gode soche have the punishmente
For the trespas of 'hem that live untrue.

La Dame.

I have no powir you to do grevaunce,
Nor to punishe none othir creature,
But to eschewin the more encombraunce,
To kepe us from you all I hold it sure,
For False Semblaunce bath a face full demure,
Lightlie to catche these ladies in a waite,
Wherefore we must, if we will here endure,
Make right gode watch: lo! this is my conceite.

L'amant.

Sith that of grace a godely worde not one
Maie now be had, but alwaie kept in store,
I appele to God, for he maie here my mone,
Of the duresse which grevith me so fore,

And of pite I complaine furthirmore,
Whiche he forgate in all his ordinaunce,
Or els my life to have endid before,
Whiche so sone am put out of remembraunce.

La Dame.

My herte nor I have doen you no forfeite
By whiche ye should complaine in any kinde;
Nothyng hurtith you but your own conceite;
Be judge your self, for so ye shall it finde:
Thus alwaie let this sinke into your minde
That your desire shall ner recovered be;
Ye noye me fore in wastyng all this winde,
For I have saied inough, as semith me.

This wofull man rose up in all his paine,
And departid with wepyng countinaunce,
His wofull herte almoste to braste in twaine,
Full like to die, walkyng forthe in a traunce,
And sayid, Deth, come forthe, thy self avaunce,
Or that myne herte forget his propertie,
And make shortir all this wofull penaunce
Of my pore life, full of adversitie.

Fro thens he went, but whithir wist I nought,
Nor to what part he drewe in sothfastnesse,
But he no more was in his ladie's thought,
For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse;
And astirward one tolde me thus expresse,
He rent his heer for anguishe and for pain,
And in hymself toke so grete hevinessse
That he was dedde within a daie or twain.

L'ENVOY.

The true lovirs thus I beseeche you all
Soche adventres flie 'hem in every wise,
And as peple defamid ye 'hem call,
For thei truelie do you grete prejudice
His castelles strong stuffid with ordinaunce,
For thei have had long tyme by their office
The whole cuntry of Love in obeisaunce.

And ye ladies, or what estate ye be,
Of whom Worship hath choise his dwellyng place,
For Godd's love doe no soche crueltie,
Nor in no wise ne folowe not the trace
Of her that here is namid right wisely,
Whiche by reson me semith in this case
Maie be callid *La belle Dame sans Mercy*.

Go, lityl Boke, God sende the gode passage!
Chese well thy waie, be simple of manere,
Loke thy clothyng be like thy pilgrimage,
And specially let this be thy praier
Unto 'hem all that the will rede or here,
Where thou art wrong after ther helpe to call
The to correcte in any parte or all.

Praie 'hem also with thine humble servise
Thy boldenesse to pardon in this case,
For els thou art not able in no wise
To make thy self appere in any place;
And furthirmore beseeche 'hem of ther grace
By ther favour and supportacion,
To take in gre this rude Translacion,

The which God wote standith full destitute
Of eloquence, of metre, and colours,
Like as a best nakid without refute

THE ASSEMBLE OF LADIES.

A gentlewoman dreameth that she seeth a greate number of Ladies put up their billes of complaint before a judge, who promifeth to relieue their grievances.

In September, at the fallinge of the lefe,
The freshe feson was altogidir done,
And of the corne was gathirid the shefe,
In a gardine, aboute twayne aftir none,
Ther were Ladies walking, as was ther wone,
Foure in nombre, as to my minde doth fall,
And I the fifthe, the simplist of 'hem al.

Of gentilwomen faire there were also
Disporting 'hem everiche aftir her gise,
In crosse aleis walking by two and two,
And some alone, aftir ther fantasies;
Thus occupied we were in diuerse wise,
And yet in trouthe we were nat al alone,
There werin knightes and squiris many one.

Whereof I served? one of 'hem askid me:
I said ayen, as it fel in my thought,
To walke aboute the mase in certainte,
As a hedeless woman that nothing rought.
He askid me ayen whom that I fought,
And of my colour why I was so pale?
Forsothe (quod I) and therby lithe a tale.

That must me wete, (quod he) and that anone;
Tel on, let se, and make no tarying,
Abide, (quod I) ye ben a hastie one;
I let you wete it is no lityl thing,
But for bicause ye have a grete longing
In your desire this processe for to here
I shal you tel the plaine of this matere.

It happid thus' that in an astringone
My felauship and I by one assent,
Whan al othir besinessis were done,
To passe our time into this mase we went,
And toke our waies eche aftir our entent,
Some went inward and went they had gon out,
Some stonde in the mid and loked all about.

And, soth to say, some were ful ferre behinde,
And right anon as ferforthe as the best,
Othir ther were so masid in ther minde
Al waies were gode for 'hem both est and west;
Thus went they forth and had but lityl rest,
And some ther courage dyd 'hem fore assaile,
For very wrathe they dyd step o'er the raile;

And as they fought 'hem selvin to and fro,
I gate my self a lityl avauntage,
Al forweried I might no furthir go,
Though I had won right grete for my viage,
So came I forthe into a straite passage,
Which brought me to an herbit faire and grene,
Ymade with benchis ful crafty and clene;
That as me thoughtin there might no cecture
Deuise a bette by dewe proporcioun,
Safe it was closid wel I you ensure,
With masonrye of compace enviroun,
Ful secretly with stairis goyng down
In myddes the place with turning whele certain,
And upon that a potte of margelaine,

With margerettes growinge in ordinaunce
To shewe 'hem selfe as folke went to and fro,
That to beholde it was a grete plesaunce,
And how they were accompainid with mo,
Ne momblisnesse and sonenesse also,
The poure penfis were not dislogid there,
Ne, God wote ther place was every where.

The flore and bench was pavid faire and smothe
With stonis square of many diuers hewe,
So wel joynid that for to say the soth
Al semid one, that no one othir knewe,
And undirneath the strems newe and newe,
As silvir bright, springing in soche a wise,
That whence it came ye coude it not devise.

A lityl while ywas I al alone
Beholding wel this delectable place,
My felawship were coming everichone,
So muste we nedis abyde for a space,
Remembiring of many divers cace
Of tyme ypassid yore with fighis depe,
I set me downe, and there I fel aslepe.

And as I slept me thought there came to me
A gentylwoman metely of stature,
Of grete worship she semid for to be,
Atyrid wel. not high, but by mesure,
Her countinaunce full sad was and demure,
Her colours blewe al that she had upon;
Ther ne came no mo but her selfe alone.

Her gowne wel was embraudrid certainly
With stonis sette astir her owne devise
In her purfillis, her worde by and by
Bien & Loyalement, as I coude devise;
Than praide I her in any manir wise
That of her name I might have remembraunce;
She said she was callid Perseveraunce.

So furthirmore to spekin was I bolde,
Where she dwellid I prayed her for to say?
And she againe ful curtisly me tolde,
My dwelling is and hath be many a day
With a lady. What lady? I you pray.
Of gret estate, thus warne I you (quod she),
What cal ye her? Her name is Loyalte.

In what office stonde ye or what degre?
(Quod I to her) that would I wete right faine.
I am, (quod she) unworthy though I be,
Of her chambre her ushir in certaine,
This rodde I bere as for a tokin plaine,
Lyke as ye knowe the rule in soche service
Apertaining is to the same office.

She chargid me by her commaundement
To warne you and your felawes everichone
That ye shulde come there as she is present
For a counsaile whiche shall be nowe alone,
Or sevin dayis be comin and gone;
And furthirmore, she bad that I shulde say
Excusis there might be none nor delay.

Anothir thing was not forget behinde,
Whiche in no wise I wolde but that ye knewe;
Remembre wel and bere it in your minde
Al your felawes and ye must come in blewe
Everblyche, your matirs for to sewe,
With more, whiche I pray you to thinke upon,
Your wordis on your selvis everychon.

And be not abashed in no manir wise,
As many ben, in soche an high presence;
Make your request as ye can best devise,
And she gladly wol yeve you audience:
Ther is no grese nor no manir offence
Wherin ye fele that your herte is dispised
But with her help right sone ye shal be esed.

I am right glad (quod I) ye tel me this,
But ther is non of us that knoweth the waie.
As of your way (quod she) ye shal not mis,
Ye shal have one to gyde you day by day
Of my felawes, I can not bettir say,
Soche one as shal tel you the way ful right,
And Diligence this gentilwoman hight,

A woman of right famous govirnaunce,
And wel cherished, I tel you in certaine,
Her selsauship shal do you grete plesaunce;
Her porte is soch, her manirs trewe and plaine,
She with glad chere wold do her besy paine
To bring you there. Now farewel; I have done.
Abyde, said I, ye may not go so sone.

Why so? (quod she) and I have ferre to go,
To yeve warning in many divers place
To your felawes and so to othir mo,
And well ye wote I have but lityl space,
Now yet, (quod I) ye must tel me this cace,
If ye shal any men unto us cal,
Not one (quod she) may come amonges you all.

Not one, than? said I: eigh, *Benedicite!*
What have I done? I pray you tel me that.
Nowe by my lyfe I trowe but wel, (quod she)
But er I can byleve there is somwhat,
And for to saye you trouthe more can I nat;
In questions I may nothing be to large;
I meddle must no furthir then my charge.

Than thus, (quod I) do me to undirstande
What place is there this lady is dwelling?
Forsothe (quod she) and one fought al this lande
Fairir is none, though it were for a king,
Devysid wel, and that in every thing,
The tourishe ful plesaunt shal ye finde,
With phanis fresh turning with every wynde;
The chambris and the parlirs of a sorte,
With bay windowes godely as may be thought,
As for daunsing and othir wise disporte
The galeries be all right well ywrought,
That wel I wote if ye were thydir brought,
And take gode hede therof in every wise,
Ye wol it thinke a very paradise.

What hight the place? (quod I) now say me that
Plesaunt Regarde, (quod she) to tell you plaine.
Of very trouthe, (quod I) and wote ye what?
It may right wel be callid so certaine;
But furthirmore this wold I wit right fain,
What I shulde do as sone as I come there,
And astir whom that I may best enquire?

A gentilwoman portir of the yate
There shal ye finde, her name is Countinaunce,
If ye so hap ye come erly or late
Of her wer gode to have some acquaintaunce,
She can you tel howe ye shal you avaunce,
And howe to come to her ladye's presence;
To her wordis I rede ye geve credence.

Now it is time that I shulde parte you fro,
For in gode faithe I have grete busynesse.
I wote right wel (quod I) that it is so,
And I thanke you of your grete gentilnesse,
Your comforte hath yevin me hardinesse,
That nowe I shal be bolde withoutin faile
To do' astir your advice and gode counsaile.

Thus partid she, and I lefte all alone;
With that I sawe (as I behelde aside)
A woman come, a verie godely one,
And forth withal as I had her aspide
Me thought anone it should be the gide,
And of her name anone I did enquire;
Ful womanly she yave me this answere:

I am (quod she) but a simple creture,
Sent from the courte, my name is Diligence;
As sone as I myght come, I you ensure,
I taried not astir I had licence:
And now that I am come to your presence,
Loke, what service I can you do or may
Commaundith me; I can no furthir say.

I thankid her, and prayed her to come nere,
Bycause I woulde se how she was araide;
Her gown was blew, dressid in gode manere,
With her devise, her worde also, that saide
Tant que je puis, and I was wel apaide;
And than wist I, withoutin any more,
It was ful trewe that I had herde before.

Though we toke now before a litil space
It were ful gode (quod she) as I coude gesse.
Howe farre (quod I) have we unto the place?
A daye's journey, (quod she) but litil lesse;
Wherefore I rede that now we outwarde dresse
For I suppose our felawship is past,
And for nothings I wolde not we were the' last.

Then departid we' at springing of the daye,
And forthe we wente a softe and esy pace,
Til at the last we were on our journey
So far outwarde that we might se the place;
Nowe let us rest (quod I) a litil space,
And say we as devoutly as we can
A Pater noster for Saint Julian.

With all my herte; I assent with gode wil;
Moch bettir shal we spede whan we have done.
Than taried we and said it every dyl;
And whan the day was past farre astir none
We sawe a place, and thidir came we sone,
Whiche rounde aboute was closid with a wal,
Seming to me full like an hospitall.

There found I one had brought all min aray,
(A gentil woman of mine acquaintaunce)
I have niervaile (quod I) what manir way
Ye had knowlege of al this ordinaunce.
Yes, yes, (quod she) I herde Perseveraunce
Howe she warnid her felawes everichone,
And what aray ye shouldin have upon.

Nowe for my love (quod I) this I you praye,
Sith ye have take upon you all the paine,
'That ye wolde helpe me on with mine araye,
For wit ye wel I wolde be gone right faine.
Al this prayir us nedith not certaine,
(Quod she againe;) come of, and hye you sone,
And ye shal se anone it shal be done.

But this I doute me gretly, wote ye what?
That my felawes be passid by and gone.
I warnè you (quod she) that are they nat,
For here they shal assemble everichone,
Notwithstandinge I counsaile you anone
Make you redy, and tary you no more,
It is no harme though ye be there before.

So than I dressid me in mine araye,
And asked her whethir it were wel or no?
It is right well (quod she) unto my pay,
Ye nede not care to what place er ye go:
And whilies that she and I debatid so
Came Diligence and sawe me al in blewe;
Sistir, (quod she) right wel broke ye your newe!

Discrecion Purveyour.

Than wente we forth and met an avinture
A yonge woman, an officir seminge;
What is your name? (quod I) tell, gode creture,
Discrecion, (quod she) without lesinge.
And where (quod I) is your most abidinge?
I have (quod she) this office of purchase,
Chefe Purveyour that longith to this place.

Acquaintaunce Herbyger.

Fair love! (quod I) in all your ordinaunce
What is her name that is the herbigere?
Forsothe (quod she) her name is Acquaintaunce,
A woman of right gracious manere.
Then thus, (quod I) what straungirs have ye here?
But fewe (quod she) of high degre ne lowe,
Ye be the first, as ferforth as I knowe.

Countinaunce Porter.

Thus with talis we came streight to the yate,
This yonge woman departid was and gone,
Came Diligence, and knockid fast thereat,
Who is without? (quod Countinaunce anone.)
Truly, (quod I) fayre sistir, here is one.
Which one? (quod she) and therewithal she lough.
I Diligence; ye knowe me wel ynoughe.

Than opened she the gate, and in we go;
With wordis faire she saide full gentilly,
Ye are welcome ywis; are ye no mo?
Nat one (quod she) save this woman and I.
Now than (quod she) I pray you hertily
Takith my chaumbre for a while to rest
Til your felawis come; I holde it best.

I thanked her, and forth we go everichone
Til her chambre withoutin wordis mo,
Came Diligence and toke her leve anone.
Where er ye lyst (quod I) nowe may ye go,
And I thanke you right hertily also
Of your labour, for whiche God do you mede;
I can no more, but Jesu be your spede!

Than Countinaunce thus askid me anone,
Your felawship where be they all? (quod she.)
For sothe (quod I) they' are cominge everichone,
But where they are I knowe no certainte,
Without I may 'hem at his windowe se;
Here wil I stande a waitinge here amonge,
For wel I wote they wil not hence be longe.

Thus as I stode musing ful busily,
I thought to take gode hede of her aray;
Her gowne was blewe, this wote I verily,
Of gode facyon, and furrid wel with gray,
Upon her sleve her worde, this is no nay,
Whiche saide thus, as my penna can endite,
A moy, qui voy, writin with lettirs white.

Then forth withal she came streight unto me,
Your wordes (quod she) fain wold I that I knewe.
Forsothe (quod I) ye shal wel knowe and se,
And for my worde I have none, this is trew;
It is ynough that my clothing be blewe,
As here before I had commaundement,
And so to do I am right well content.

Largeffe Stewarde.

But tell me this I pray you hertilye,
The steward here, say me what is her name?
She hight Largeffe, I say you furily,
A faire lady, and of right noble fame,

Whan ye her se ye wil reporte the same,
And undir her to byd you welcomè al
There is Belchier, marshal of the hal.

Now, al this while that ye here tary still
Your own matirs ye may wel have in mind;
But tel me this, have ye brought any bill?
Ye, ye, (quod I) and els I were behinde;
Where is there one, tel me, that I may finde
To whom that I may shewe my matirs plaine?
Surely (quod she) unto the chambirlaine.

Remembraunce Chambirlaine.

The chambirlaine, (quod I) and say ye trewe?
Ye, verily, (said she;) by myne advise
Ben nat aferde; unto her lowlye sewe.
It shal be done (quod I) as ye devyse,
But I must knowe her name in any wise.
Trewly (quod she) to shewe you in substance,
Withouten fainyng, her name is Remembraunce.

The secretarye may not be forget,
For she dothe right moche in every thinge,
Wherefore I rede when ye have with her mete
Your matere whole tel her without fainyng;
Ye shal her synde ful gode and ful lovinge.
Tel me her name (quod I), of gentilnesse.
By my gode sothe (quod she) Avisenesse.

That name (quod I) for her is passing gode,
For every byl and schedule she must se.
Nowe gode, (quod I) come stande there as I stode,
My felawes be cominge; yondir they be.
Is it in jape, or say ye sothe? (quod she)
In jape! nay, nay, I say you for certayne;
Se how thei come togethir twain and twaine.

Ye say ful sothe, (quod she) that is no nay,
I se coming a godely company.
They ben loch folke, (quod I) dare I to say,
That lyst to love, thinkith it verily,
And for my love I pray you saythfully
At any tyme whan they upon you call
That ye woll be gode frende unto 'hem all.

Of my frendship (quod she) they shal not misse,
And for their ese to put therto my paine.
God yelde it you! (quod I) but take you this,
Howe shal we know who is the chambirlayne?
That shal ye wel know by her word certaine.
What is her worde, systir? I pray you say.
Plus ne purroye, thus writith she alwaye.

Thus as we stole togydir she and I,
Even at the yate my felawes were echone,
So met I 'hem (as me thought was godely)
And bade 'hem welcome al by one and one;
Then came forth Countinaunce to us anone,
Ful hertily, Fair sistirs al, (quod she)
Ye be right welcome into this countre.

I counsayle you to take a litil rest
In my chambre, if it be your plesauce;
Whan ye be there me think it for the best
That I go in and cal Perseveraunce,
Bycause she is one of your acquaintaunce,
And she also wil tel you every thinge
Howe ye shal be rulir of your cominge.

My felawes al and I, by one advise,
Were wel agreed to do lyke as she sayde;
Than we began to dresse us in our gise,
That folke shoulde say we were not unpurveide,
And gode wagirs among us there we laide

Which of us was atirid moste godelest,
And of us al whiche shulde be praisid best.

The portir came and brought Perseveraunce,
She welcomid us in carteis manere;
Thinke not long (quod she) of your attendance,
I wil go speke unto the herbigere,
That she may purvey for your lodging here,
Than wil I go unto the chambirlaine
To speke for you, and come anone againe.

And whan that she departid was and gone,
We sawe folkis coming without the wal,
So gret peple, that nombre coude we none,
Ladies they were, and gentil women al,
Clothid in blewe, echone her worde withal,
But for to knowe her worde or her devise
They came so thicke I ne might in no wise.

With that anone came in Perseveraunce,
And where I stode she came streight unto me;
Ye ben (quod she) of min olde acquaintaunce,
You to enquire the boldir wolde I be
What worde they bere eche astir her degre;
I you pray tel it me in secret wise,
And I shal kepe it close on warrantise.

We ben five ladies (quod I) al in fere,
And gentil women four in company,
When they begin to opin ther matere
Than shal ye knowe ther wordis by and by;
But as for me I have none verily,
And so I tolde Countinaunce here before;
Al min aray is blewe, what nedith more?

Nowe then (quod she) I wol go backe againe
That ye may have knowlege what ye shuld do,
In soth (quod I) if ye wolde take the paine,
Ye dyd right moche for us if ye dyd so,
The rathir spede the sonir may we go;
Grete coste alway there is in taryng,
And longe to sewe it is a very thinge.

Then partid she and came againe anone;
Ye must (quod she) come to the chambirlaine,
We be nowe redy (quod I) everychone
To folowe you whan er ye list certaine;
We have none eloquence, to tel you plaine,
Beseching you we may be so excused
Our trewe meaning that it be not refused.

Then went we forth astir Perseveraunce;
To se the prees it was a wondir cace,
There for to passe it was a grete combraunce,
The peple stode so thicke in every place:
Nowe stande ye stil (quod she) a litil space,
And for your ese somewhat I shal assay
Yf I can make you any bettir way.

And forth she gothe among 'hem everychon,
Making a way that we might thorough passe
More at our ese, and whan she had so done
She beckende us to come where as she was,
So astir her we folowed more and las;
She brought us streight unto the chambirlayne,
There leste she us, and than she went againe.

We salued her, as reson woulde it so,
Ful humble beseching her gret godenesse
In our mattirs that we had for to do
That she wolde be gode lady and maistresse.
Ye be welcome, (quod she) in sothfastenesse,
And se, what I can do you for to plesse
I am redy, that may be to your ese.

We folowed her unto the chambir dore;
Sistirs, (quod she) come ye in aftir me:
But wete ye wel there was a pavid flore
The godlyist that any wight might se;
And furthirmore about than lokid we
On eche cornir and upon every wal,
Whiche was ymade of burel and crystal.

Wherein was graven of stories many one
Firste how Phyllis, of womanly pite,
Dyed piteously for love of Demophone,
Next aftir was the story of Thilbe,
Howe that she slewe her selfe undir a tre;
Yet sawe I more, howe in right pitous caas
For Antony was slaine Cleopatras;

Upon the othir side was Hawes the shene,
Ful untrewly discevid in her baine;
There was also Annelida the Quene,
Upon Arcite howe fore she did complaine!
Al these stories were gravid there certaine,
And many mo than I reherse you here;
It were to longe to tel you al in fere.

And bicause that the wallis shone so bright
With fine umple they were al ovir sprad,
To the entent folke shulde not hurte ther fight,
And thorough it the stories might be radde;
Than furthirmore I went as I was lad,
And there I sawe withoutin any faile
A chaire yset with ful riche aparaile;

And five stagis it was set fro the grounde,
Of cassidony ful curiously wrought,
With foure pomelles of golde, and very rounde,
Set with saphirs as gode as coude be thought,
That wot ye what? if it wer thorough fought
As I suppose fro this countie to Inde
Anothir soche it were right harde to finde:

For wete ye wel I was right nere to that,
So as I durst, beholding by and by,
Above there was a riche clothe of estate
Ywrought with the nedle ful straungely,
Her worde thereon, and thus it said truely,
En Dieu est, to tel you in wordis fewe,
With grete lettirs, the bettir I 'hem knewe.

Thus as we stode a dore opened anone,
A gentilwoman semely of stature,
Bering a mace, came out her selfe alone,
Sothely me thought her a godely cature;
She spake nothings to lowde, I you ensure,
Nor hastily, but with godely warninge
Make rome, (quod she) my lady is cominge.

With that anone I sawe Perseveraunce
Howe she helde up the tapet in her hande,
I sawe also in godely ordinaunce
This gret lady within the tapet stonde,
Comyng outwarde I wol ye undirstande,
And aftir her a noble company,
I coude not tel the nombre sikirly.

Of ther namis I wolde nothing enquire,
Furthir than soche as we wolde sewe unto,
Save a lady whiche was the chauncellere,
Attemperaunce, sothely her name was so,
For us nedith with her have moche to do
In our mattirs, and alway more and more;
And so forthe to tellin you furthirmore

Of this lady, her beaute to discrive
My conninge is to simple verily,
For nevir yet the dayis of my live
So inly faire I have sene none trewly,
In her estate assurid uttirly;
There wantid nought, I dare you well assure,
That longid to a most godely cature.

And furthirmore, to speke of her araye,
I shal tel you the manir of her gowne;
Of clothe of golde ful riche, it is no nay,
The colour blewe, of right godely facyoun,
In taberde wise, the sleeves hanging adown,
And what purfil there was, and in what wise,
So as I can I shal it you devise:

Aftir a forte the collir and the vente,
Lyke as armine is made in purfilinge,
With grete perlis ful fine and orient,
They were couchid all aftir one worching,
With diamondes in stede of powdiring,
The slevis and the purfill of a fise,
They werin made alike in every wise.

Aboute her necke a forte of faire rubyes,
In white flouris of right fine enamaile,
Upon her hed set in the fairest wise
A circle of grete balais of entaile,
That in ernest, to speke withoutin faile,
For yonge and olde and every manir age
It was a worlde to loken on her visage.

Thus coming forth to sit in her estate,
In her presence we kneled down everychone,
Presenting our byllis; and wote ye what?
Ful humbly she toke 'hem by one and one:
Whan we had done than came they al anone
And did the same eche aftir her manere,
Kneling at ones and rising al in fere.

Whan this was don, and she set in her place,
The chambirlaine she did unto her cal,
And she godely coming to her apace,
Of her entent knowing nothing at al,
Voyde hacke the prese (quod she) up to the wall,
Make large rome, but loke that ye do not tary,
And take these byllis to the secretaire.

The chambirlaine did her commaundement,
And came againe as she was byd to do,
The secretaire there beyng present
The byllis were delivered her also,
Not onely ours but many othir mo,
Than the lady with gode advise againe
Anone with al callid her chambirlaine.

We wol (quod she) the first thing that ye do
The secretaire ye make come anone
With ther bilis, and thus we wil also
In our presence she rede 'hem everychon,
That we may takin gode advise theron
Of the ladies that ben of our counsaile;
Loke this be done withoutin any faile.

Whan the chambirlaine wiste of her entent
Anone she did the secretaire call;
Let your bilis (quod she) be here present,
My lady' it wil. Madame (quod she) I shal.
And in presence she wil that ye 'hem call.
With right gode wil I am redy (quod she)
At her plesure, whan she commaundith me.

And upon that was made an ordinaunce
They that came first ther byllis shulde be red,
Ful gentilly than said Perseveraunce,
Reson it wil that they were sonist spedde;
Anone withal, upon a tapet spredde,
The secretarye layde 'hem downe echone;
Our byllis first she redde tho one by one.

The first lady bering in her devise
Sans que jamays, thus wrote she on her byl,
Complaining sore, and in ful pitous wise,
Of promisse made with faithful hert and wyll,
And so brokin ayenst al manir skil,
Without deserte alwaies on her partie,
In this matir desiring remedye.

Her next fol'owing her word was in this wise,
Un sans changer, and thus she did complaine,
Though she had be guerdoned for her service
Yet nothing like as she that toke the paine,
Wherfore she coude in no wise her restraine,
But in this case sewe until her presence,
As reson wolde, to havin recompence.

So furthirmore, to speke of othir twaine,
One of 'hem wrote aftir her fantasy
Onques puis lever, and for to tel you plaine,
Her complaint was ful pitous verily,
For, as she said, there was grete reson why;
As I can remembre in this matere
I shal you tell the processe al in fere.

Her byl was made complaining in her gise,
That of her joye, her comforte, and gladnesse,
Was no suretie, for in no manir wise
She said therein no point of stablenesse;
Now yl, now wele, out of al sikirnesse,
Ful humbly desiring of her high grace
Sone to shewe her remedy in this case.

Her felawe made her bil, and thus she said,
In plaining wise, There as she lovid best,
Whethir that she were wrothe or weie apaide,
She might not se whan that she wole fainest,
And fulle wrothe she was in very ernest;
To tel her worde, as ferforth as I wote,
Entierement vostre, right thus she wrote.

And upon that she made a grete request
With hert and wil, and al that might be done,
As until her that might redresse it best,
For in her minde there might she finde it sone
The remedy of that whiche was her bone,
Reherfing that that she had saide before,
Beseeching her it might be so no more.

And in like wise as they had done before
The gentylwomen of our company
Put ther byllis; and for to tell you more,
One of 'hem wrote *C'est sans dire* verily,
And her matere wholly to specify
Within her byl she put it in writinge,
And what it said ye shall yhave knowinge.

It said, God wote, and that ful pitously,
Lyke as she was disposid in her herte,
No misfortune that she toke grevously,
Al one to her was the joy and the smerte,
Sometime no thanke for al her gode deserte,
Othir comforte she wantid none coming,
And so usid it grevid her nothing;

Desiring her and lowly beseeching,
That she wolde for her seke a bettir way,
As she that had yben her daies lyving
Stedfast and trewe, and wil be so alway:
Of her felawe somewhat I shal you say,
Whose byl was red the nexte forthe withal,
And what it ment reherfin you I shal.

Ex Dieu est she wrote in her devise,
And thus she said withoutin any faile,
Her trouthe ne might be takin in no wise,
Like as she thought, wherfor she had mervaille,
For trouthe somtyme was wont to take availe
In every mattere, but al that' is ago,
The more pyte that it is suffrid so. [plain,

Moche more there was, wherof she shuld com-
But she thought it to gret an encombraunce
So moche to write, and therfore in certain
In God and her she put all her affiaunce,
As in her worde is made a remembraunce,
Beseeching her that she wolde in this case
Shewe unto her the favour of her grace.

The thirde she wrote reherfing her grevaunce,
Ye, wote ye what a pitous thing to here?
For as me thought she felt grete displeaunce,
One might ryght wel perceve it by her chere;
And no wondir, it fate her passyng nere,
Yet lothe she was to put it in writinge,
But *Nede wol havin course in every thinge*.

Soyes assure, this was her word certain,
And thus she wrote within a litil space;
There she lovid her labor was in vaine,
For he was set al in anothir place,
Ful humilly desiring in that case
Some gode conforte her sorowe to appese,
That she might livin more at hert'is ese,

The fourth surely me thought she likid wele,
As in her porte and in her behavinge,
And *Bien moneste*, as ferre as I coude sele,
That was her worde, tyl her belonging,
Wherfore to her she praied above al thing
Ful hertily, to ay you in sustance,
That she wold sendin her gode Countinaunce,

Ye have reherfid me these byllis all,
But nowe let se somewhat of your entent;
It may so hap paravinture ye shal;
Nowe I pray you while I am here present
Ye shal have knowlege parde what I ment,
But thus I say in trouthe, and make no fable,
The case it selfe is inly lamentable;

And wel I wote that ye wol thynke the same,
Lyke as I say, whan ye have herde my byl;
Now gode, tel on; I hate you by Saint Jame;
Abyde a while, it is not yet my wil,
Yet must ye wete by reson and by skil,
Sith ye' have knowlege of that was don before,
And thus it is said, without wordis more:

Nothing so lese as deth to come to me,
For final ende of my sorowes and paine;
What shuld I more desire as semith ye?
And ye knewe al aforne it for certaine
I wote ye wolde, and for to tel you plaine,
Without her helpe that hath al thinge in cure
I can nat thinke that it may long endure.

As for my trouth it hath be provid wele,
To say the sothe, and I can say no more,
Of ful longe tyme, and suffrid every dele
In pacience, and kepe it all in store,
Of her godenesse beseeching her therfore
That I might have my thanke in soche a wise
As my deserte yservith of justise.

Whan these billis were rad everychone
The ladie toke a gode advisement,
And 'hem to answerin by one and one
She thought it was to moche in her entent,
Wherefore she yave to 'hem commaundement
In her presence to come both one and al
To yeve 'hem her answer in generall.

What dyd she than suppose ye verily?
She spake her selfe, and said in this manere:
We have wel sene your byllis by and by,
And some of 'hem be pitous for to here,
We wol therefore ye knowe al this in fere,
Within shorte tyme our court of parlyment
Here shal be holde in our palays presente,

And in al this wherin you find you greved
There shal ye finde an opin remedy,
In soche a wise as ye shal be releved
Of al that ye reherfin here thoroughly;
As for the date, ye shal knowe verily
That ye may have a space in your coming,
For Diligence shal tel you by writing.

We thankid her in our most humble wise
Our felawship eche one by one assent,
Submittinge us lowly til her service,
For as we thought we had our travaile spent
In soche wise as we heldin us content;
Than eche of us toke othir by the fleve,
And forth withal as we shulde take our leve.

Al sodainly the watir sprange anone
In my visage, and therewithal I woke:
Where am I now? thought I; al this is gone,
Al amafid; and up I began to loke:
With that anon I went and made this Boke,
Thus simply reherfing the substaunce,
Bicause it shulde not be' out of remembraunce.

Now verily your dreame is passing gode,
And worthy to be had in remembraunce,
For though I stand here as longe as I stode
It shulde not to me be none encombraunce,
I toke therin so inly grete plesaunce;
But tel me now what ye the boke do cal,
For I muste wete. Wyth right gode wyl ye shal.

As for this boke, to say you very right,
And of the name to tel you' in certainte,
L'assemble de Dames, thus it hight.
How thinkin ye? That name is gode parde.
Nowe go; farewel; for they cal aftir me
My felawes al, and I must aftir sone:
Rede wel my dreame, for now my tale is done.

CHAUCER'S DREAM*.

Never before the year 1597 printed: that which heretofore hath gone under the name of his Dreame, is The Book of the Duchesse, or The Death of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster.

WHEN Flora, the quene of Plefaunce,
Had whole achievid th' obeyfaunce
Of the fresh and the new feson
Thorow out ev'ry region,
And with her mantle whole covert
That wintir made had discovert,
Of avinture withoutin light
In May I lay upon a night
Alone, and on my lady thought,
And how the Lord that her ywrought
Couth well entayle in imagery,
And shewid had grete maistiry,
When he in so litil a space
Made such a body and a face,
So grete beautie with swich fetures,
More than in othir creätures;
And in my thoughtis as I lay
Within a lodge out of the way,
Beside a well in a forest,
Where aftir hunting I toke rest,
Nature and kind so in me wrought
That halfe on flepe they me ybrought,
And gan to dreame to my thinking
With mind of knowliche like making,

* This Dreame, devised by Chaucer, semeth to be a covert report of the marriage of John of Gaunt, the king's sonne, with Blanch, the daughtir of Henry, Duke of Lancaster, who after long love (during the time wherof the poet faineth them to be dead) were in the end by consent of friends happily married, figured by a bird bringing in her bill an hearbe which restored them to lyfe againe. Here also is shewed Chaucer's match with a certain gentlewoman, who although she was a stranger, was notwithstanding so well liked and loved of the Lady Blanch and her lord, as Chaucer himselfe also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage between them. *Urry.*

For what I dremid, as me thought,
I saw it, and I sleptin nought,
Wherefore is yet my full beleve
That some gode spirit that ilke eve,
By mene of some curious port,
Bare me where I saw payne and sport;
But whether it were I woke or slept
Well wot I oft I lough and wept;
Wherefore I woll in remembraunce
Put whole the payne and the plefaunce,
Which was to me axin and hele;
Would God ye wist it everydele,
Or at the lest ye might o night
Of such anothir have a sight
Although it were to you a payne,
Yet on the mo'row ye would be fayne,
And wish that it might long endure,
Then might ye say ye had gode cure,
For he that dremes and wenes he se
Mochil the bettir yet maie he
Ywit what, and of whom, and where.
And eke the lasse it woll hindere
To thinke I se this with mine eene,
Iwis this may not dremé kene,
But signe or a signifaunce
Of hasty thing founing plefaunce;
For on this wise upon a night,
As ye have herd, withoutin light,
Not all wakyng ne full on flepe,
About such hour as lovirs wepe
And crie aftir ther ladies grace,
Befell me tho this wondir cace,
Which ye shall here, and all the wise,
So wholly as I can devise:

In playne English evill writtin,
 For slepe writir, well ye wittin,
 Excusid is though he do mis,
 More than one whiche that waking is,
 Wherefore here of your gentilnesse
 I you requyre my boistounesse
 Ye lettin passe as thinge rude,
 And herith what I woll conclude,
 And of the' endityng taketh no hede,
 Ne of the termes, so God you spede,
 But let all passe as nothing were,
 For thus befell, as you shall here.

Within an yle methought I was
 Where wall and yate was all of glasse,
 And so was closid round about
 That levelesse none come in ne out,
 Uncouth and straunge to behold,
 For every yate of fine gold
 A thousand fanis aie turning
 Entunid had, and briddes sing
 Divers, and on eche fane a paire
 With opin mouth again the aire;
 And of a sute were all the toures,
 Subtily corvin astir floures,
 Of uncouth colours during aye,
 That nevir ben none sene in May,
 With many a small turret hie;
 But man on live could I non sie,
 Ne ceturis, save ladies play,
 Which werin such of ther array
 That as me thought of godelihed
 They passeden all and womanhed,
 For to behold them daunce and sing
 It semid like none erthly thing,
 Such was ther uncouth countinaunce
 In every play of right usaunce,
 And of one age everichone
 They semid all save onely one,
 Which had of yeris suffisaunce,
 For she might neythir sing ne daunce,
 But yet her countenaunce was so glad,
 And she so fewe yeris had had,
 As any ladie that was there,
 And as litil it did her dere
 Of lustines to laugh and tale
 As she had full stuffid a male
 Of disportis and new playis;
 Faire had she ben in her dayis,
 And maistresse semid well to be
 Of all that lusty companie,
 And so she might, I you ensure,
 For one the conningist cature
 She was, and so said everichone,
 That er her knew, there failid none,
 For she was sober, and well avised,
 And from every fault disguised,
 And nothing used but faith and truth;
 That she n'as young it was grete ruth,
 For every where and in ech place
 She govirnid her, that in grace
 She stode alway with pore and riche,
 That a word was none her liche,
 Ne halfe so' able maistress to be
 To such a lusty companie.

Befell me so, when I avised
 Yhad the yle that me suffised,
 And whole th' estate every where
 That in the lusty yle was there,
 Which was more wondir to devise
 Than is the joyous paradise,
 I dare well say, for floure ne tre,
 Ne thing wherein plesaunce might be,
 There faylid none, for every wight,
 Had they desirid day and night
 Richis and hele, beauty and ese,
 With every thing that them might plesse,
 But thinke and have, it cost no more;
 In such a country, there before
 Had I not ben ne herdin tell
 That livis creature might dwell,
 And when I had thus all about
 The yle avised thoroughout
 The state, and how they were arayed,
 In my hert I wexe well appayed,
 And in my selfe I me assured
 That in my body' I was well ured,
 Sithin I might have such a grace
 To se the ladies and the place,
 Which were so faire, I you ensure,
 That to my dome though that Nature
 Would evir strive and do her paine
 She should not con ne mow attaine
 The lest feture for to amend,
 Though she would all her conning spende,
 That unto beautie might availe,
 It were but paine and lost travaile,
 Such part in ther nativite
 Was then alargid of beautie;
 And eke they had a thing notable
 Unto ther deth ay durable,
 And was, that ther beauty should dure,
 Which was nevir sene in cature,
 Save onily there (as I trow)
 It ne hath not be wist ne know,
 Wherefore I praise with ther conning
 That during beautie, rich thing,
 Had they ben of ther lives certaine
 They had ben quite of every paine.
 And when I wend thus all have sene
 The state, the riches, that might bene,
 That me thought impossible were
 To se one thing more than was there
 That to beautie or glad conning
 Serve or availe might any thing,
 All sodainly as I there stode
 This lady, that couth so much gode,
 Unto me came with smiling chere,
 And said, *Benedicite!* this yere
 Saw I nevir man here but you;
 Tell me how ye come hidir now,
 And your name, and where that ye dwell,
 And whom ye seke eke mote ye tell,
 And how ye come be to this place;
 The soth well told my cause you grace,
 And ellis ye mote prisoner be
 Unto the ladies here and me,
 That have the governaunce of this yle;
 And with that word she gan to smile,

And so did all the lusty rout
Of ladies that stode her about.
Madame, (quod I) this night ypast
Lodgid I was and slepte fast
In a forest beside a well,
And now am here, how should I tell?
Wot I not by whose ordinance,
But onely Fortune's purveiance,
Which puttith many, as I gesse,
To travaile, paine, and businesse,
And lettith nothing for ther truth,
But some fleeth eke, and that is ruth,
Wherefore I doubt her brittilnes,
Her variance and unstedfastnes,
So that I am as yet afraid,
And of my beyng here amaid,
For wondir thing it semith me
Thus many fresh ladies to se
So faire, so cunning, and so yong,
And no man dwelling them among;
N'ot I not how I hidir come,
Madame, (quod I) this all and some:
What should I faine a long processe
To you, that seme such a princeesse?
What plesith you commaund or say,
Here I am redy to obay
To my powir, and all fulfill,
And prisonir bide at your will,
Till you duly enformid be
Of evèry thing ye aske me.

This lady there right well apaid
Me by the hande ytoke, and said,
Welcome, prisoner adventurus,
Right glad am I ye have said thus,
And for ye doubt me to displese
I will assay to do you ese:
And with that word, ye, right anon,
She and the ladies everichon
Assemblid, and to counsaile went,
And astir that sone for me sent,
And to me said on this manere,
All word for word, as ye shall here:
To se you here us thinke marvaile,
And how withoutin bote or faile,
By any subtilty or wyle,
Ye get have entre in this yle,
But not for that yet shall ye se
That we gentill women ybe,
Loth to displein any wight,
Notwithstanding our gretè right;
And for ye shall well undirstond
The oldè custome of this lond,
Which hath continued many yere,
Ye shall well wete that with us here
Ye may not bide, for causis twaine
Which we be purposed you to faine.

The one is this; our ordinance,
Which is of long continuance,
Ne woll not, sothly we you tell,
That no man here among us dwell,
Wherefore ye mote nedis retourne;
In no wise may you here sojourne.

The othir is eke, that our quene
Out of the relme, as ye maie se,

Is, and may be to us a charge
If we let goe you here at large,
For whichè cause the more we doubt
To doe a fault while she is out,
Or suffir that may be noysance
Againe our old accustomedance.
And when I had these causis twaine
Yherd, o God! what mochil paine
All sodainly about mine hert
There came at onis, and how smert!
In creping soft as who should stele
Or doe me robbe of all mine hele,
And made me in my thought so afraid
That in courage I stode dismaid;
And standing thus, as was my grace,
A lady came more than apace,
With a huge preise her about,
And told how that the quene without
Was arivid, and would come in;
Well were they that hidir might twin;
They hied so they would not abide
The bridiling ther horse to ride,
By five, by sixe, by two, by thre;
There was not one abode with me;
The quene to mete everichone
They went, and bode with me not one;
And I went astir a soft pafe,
Imagining how to purchase
Grace of the quene there to abide
Till gode fortune some happy guide
Me sendin might, that would me bring
Where I was borne, to my wonning,
For way ne fote ne knew I none,
Ne whithirward I n'ist to gone,
For all was se about the yle;
No wondir though me list not smile,
Seing the case uncouth and straunge;
And so in like a perilous chaunge,
Imagi'ning thus walking alone
I saw the ladies everichone,
So that I might somewhat offer,
Sone astir that I drew me nere,
And tho I was ware of the quene,
And how the ladies on ther knene
With joyous words gladly advised
Her welcomed so that it suffised
Though she the princes whole had be
Of all environed is with se;
And thus avising with chere sad
All sodainly I was right glad,
That gretir joy, as mote I thrive,
I trow had nevir man on live
Than I tho, ne an hert more light,
When of my lady I had sight,
Which with the quene ycome was there,
And in one clothing both they were;
A knight also there well befene
I saw that come was with the quene,
Of whom the ladies of that yle
Had hugè wondir a long while,
Till at the last right sobirly
The quene her self full cunningly,
With softè wordis in gode wise,
Said to the ladies yong and nise,

My sistirs, how it hath befall
 I trow ye know it one and all
 That of long time here have I bene
 Within this yle biding as quene,
 Living at ese, that nevir wight
 More parfit joy havin ne might,
 And to you ben of govirnance
 Such as you found in whole plesance,
 In evèry thing as ye know
 Aftir our custome and our low,
 Which how they first yfoundin were
 I trow ye wote all the manere;
 And who the quene is of this yle,
 As I have ben this longe while,
 Ech sevin yeres mote of usage
 Visitt the heavenly armitage
 Which on a rock so high ystonds,
 In strangè se out from all londs,
 That to makin the pilgrimage
 Is called a long peri'lous viage,
 For if the wind be not gode frend
 The journey duris to the end
 Of him whiche that it undirtakes;
 Of twenty thousand one not scapes;
 Upon which rock growith a tre
 That certaine yeres beres applis thre,
 Which thre applis who so may have
 Ben from all displeaunce ysave
 That in the sevin yere may fall,
 This wote ye well bothe one and all,
 For the first apple and the hext
 Which ygrowith unto you next
 Yhath thre vertues notable,
 And kepith youth aie durable,
 Beauty and loke evir in one,
 And is the best in everichone.

The second apple red and grene,
 Onely with lokis of your yene
 You nourishis in grete plesance
 Bettir than partridge or fesaunce,
 And fedis every liv'is wight
 Plesantly onely with the sight.

And the third apple of the thre,
 Which growith lowist on the tre,
 Who it beris ne may not faile
 That to his plesance may availe,
 So your plesure and beauty rich
 Your during youth evir yliche,
 Your truth, your cunning, and your wele,
 Hath aye flourid, and your gode hele,
 Without sicknes or displeaunce,
 Or thing that to you was noyfaunce,
 So that you have as goddeses
 Livid above all princeffes:
 Now is befall, as ye may se,
 To gathir these said applis thre,
 I have not failed againe the day
 Thithirwardis to take the way,
 Wening to spede as I had oft;
 But when I come I find aloft
 My sistir, which that here ystands,
 Having those applis in her hands,
 Avising them, and nothing said,
 But lokid as she were well paid;

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And as I stode her to behold,
 Thinking how my joyis were cold
 Sith I those applis have ne might,
 Evin with that so came this knight,
 And in his armes of me aware
 Me toke, and to his ship me bare,
 And said, though him I ner had sene
 Yet had I long his lady ben,
 Wherefore I shoud with him ywend,
 And he would to his liv'is end
 My servant be, and gan to sing
 As one that had wonne a rich thing:
 Tho were my spirits fro me gone
 So sodainly everichone
 That in me apperid but deth,
 For I felt neithir life ne breth,
 Ne gode ne harmè none I knewe;
 The sodaine paine me was so new,
 That had not the hasty grace be
 Of this lady, that fro the tre
 Of her gentilnesse so hyid
 Me to comfort I had dyid,
 And of her thre applis she one
 Into mine hand there put anone,
 Which brought againe my mind and breth,
 And me recovered from the deth;
 Wherefore to her so am I hold
 That for her all things do I wold,
 For she was lech of all my smert,
 And from grete paine so quite mine hert,
 And, as God wote, right as ye here
 Me to comfort with frendly chere
 She did her prowesse and her might;
 And truly eke so did this knight
 In that he couth, and oftin said
 That of my wo he was ill paid,
 And cursed the ship that them there brought,
 The mast, the mastir that it wrought;
 And as ech thing mote have an end,
 My sistir here, your brothir frend,
 Con with her words so womanly
 This knight entrete and conningly,
 For mine honour and his also,
 And said that with her we shoud go
 Both in her ship, where she was brought,
 Which was so wondirfully wrought,
 So clene, so rich, and so araid,
 That we were both content and paid;
 And me to comfort and to pleser,
 And mine hert for to put at ese,
 She toke grete paine in litil while,
 And thus hath brought us to this yle,
 As ye may se; wherfore echone
 I pray you thanke her one and one
 As hertly as ye can devise
 Or imagine in any wise.
 At once there tho men mightin seen
 A world of ladies fall on kneen
 Fore my lady, that there about
 Was left none standing in the rout,
 But altogether they went at ones
 To knele; they spared not for the stones,
 Ne for estate, ne for ther blode;
 Well shewid there they couth much gode:

G g

To my lady they made such fest,
 And with such wordis, that the left
 So frendly and so faithfully
 Ysaide was and so cunningly,
 That wondir was, seing ther youth,
 To here the language that they couth,
 And wholly how they governed were
 In thanking of my lady there,
 And saide by will and maundement
 They were at her commaundement,
 Which was to me as grete a joy
 As winning of the toun of Troy
 Was to the hardy Grekis strong
 When they it wan with siegè long,
 To se my lady' in such a place,
 And so recevid as she was.
 And when they talkid had a while
 Of this and that, and of the yle,
 My lady and the ladies there,
 Altogithir as they ywere,
 The quene her self began to play,
 And to the agid lady say,
 Now semith you not gode it were,
 Sith we be altogithir here,
 To ordaine and devise the best
 To set this knight and me at rest,
 For *Woman is a feble wight*
 To *reere a warre against a knight*;
 And sith he here is in this place,
 At my lest in dangir or grace,
 It were to me grete villany
 To do him any tiranny;
 But faine I would, now will ye here,
 In his owne country that he were,
 And I in pece and he at ese;
 This were a way us both to plesse;
 If it might be I you beseeche
 With him hereof you fall in speche.
 This lady tho began to smile,
 Avising her a litil while,
 And with glad chere she saide anone,
 Madam, I will unto him gone,
 And with him speke, and oftin fele
 What he desiris every dele:
 And sobirly this lady tho
 Her selfe, and othir ladies two
 She toke with her, and with sad chere
 Saide to the knight on this manere;
 Sir, the grete princes of this yle,
 Whom for your plesance many a mile
 Ye fought have, as I undirstond,
 Till at the last ye have her fond
 Me sent hath here, and ladies twaine,
 To herin all thing that ye faine;
 And for what cause ye have her fought
 Faine would she wote, and whole your thought,
 And why you do her all this wo,
 And for what cause you be her fo,
 And why of every wight unware
 By force ye to your ship her bare,
 That she so nigh ywas agone
 That mind ne spech ne had she none,
 But as a painfull creature
 Dying abode her advinture,

That her to se indure that paine
 Here we all say unto you plaine
 Right on your selfe ye did amisse,
 Seing how she a princes is.
 This knight, the which ycowth his gode,
 Right of his truth mevid his blode,
 That pale he woxe as any led,
 And lok't as tho he wold be ded;
 Blode was there none in nothir cheke,
 Wordlesse he was, and semid sicke;
 And so it provid well he was,
 For without moving any paas,
 All sodainly as thing dying,
 He fell at onis downe fowning;
 That for his wo this lady fraid
 Unto the quene her hyed, and saide,
 Cometh on anon, as have you blisse,
 But ye be wise; thing is amisse;
 This knight is ded or will be sone,
 Lo! where he lyith in a swone
 Withoutin word or answiring
 To that I have saide any thing;
 Wherefore I doubt moche that the blame
 Might be hindiring to your name,
 Which flourid hath so many yere,
 So longè that for nothing here
 I would in no wise that he dyed,
 Wherefore it gode were that ye hyed,
 His life to savin at the lest;
 And astir that his wo be cest
 Commaundith him to voide or dwelly,
 For in no wise dare I more mell
 Of thing wherein such perill is
 As like is now to fall of this.
 This quene right tho, full of grete fere,
 With all the ladies present there,
 Unto the knight came where he lay,
 And made a lady to him say,
 Lo! here the quene; awake, for shame!
 What will you doe? is this gode game?
 Why lye you here? what is your mind?
 Now is well sene your wit is blind,
 To se so many ladies here
 And ye to make none othir chere;
 But as ye set them all at nought
 Arise for his love that you bought.
 But what she saide a word not one
 He spake, ne answere gave her none.
 The quene of very pittie tho,
 Her worship and his life also
 To savin, there she did her paine,
 And quoke for fere, and gan to faine,
 For woe, alas! what shall I doe!
 What shall I say this man unto?
 If he die here lost is my name:
 How shal I play this perillous game?
 If any thing be here amisse
 It shall be saide it rigour is,
 Whereby my name impayrin might;
 And like to die eke is this knight:
 And with that word her hand she laid
 Upon his brest, and to him saide,
 Awake, my knight! lo! it am I
 That to you speke: now tell me why

Ye fare thus, and this paine endure,
 Seing you be in country sure,
 Among such frends that would you hele,
 Your hert'is ese eke and your wele?
 And if I wist what you might ese,
 Or know the thing that you might plesse;
 I you ensure it should not faile
 That to your hele you might availe;
 Wherefore with all my hert I pray
 Ye rise, and let us talke and play:
 And se how many ladies here
 Be comin for to make gode chere!
 All was for nought, for still as stone
 He lay, and word ne spoke he none;
 Long while was or he might braid;
 And of all that the quene had said
 He wist no word; but at the last
 O mercy! twise he cryid fast,
 That pittie was his voice to here,
 Or to behold his painefull chere,
 Which was not feined was well to sein
 Both by his visage and his eyn,
 Which on the quene at once he cast,
 And fighid as he would to brast,
 And astir that eke he shright so
 That wondir was to se his wo,
 For sithin that payne was first named,
 Was ner more wofull payne attained;
 For with voyce did he gan to plaine,
 And to himselfe these wordis faine;
 I, wofull wight full of malure,
 And worse than ded, and yet I dure,
 And maugre any paine or deth
 Against my will I fele my breth:
 Why n'am I ded, sith I ne serve,
 And sith my lady will me sterve?
 Where art thou, Deth? art thou agast?
 Well shall we mete yet at the last
 Though thou the hide it is for nought;
 For where thou dwelst thou shalt be sought:
 Maugre thy subtill double face
 Here will I die right in this place:
 To thy dishonour and myn ese
 Thy mannir is no wight to plesse:
 What nedis the, sith I the seche,
 So the to hide, my paine to eche?
 And well wost thou I will not live
 Who would me all this world here give,
 For I have with my cowardise
 Lost joy, and hele, and my servise,
 And made my soveraigne lady so
 That while she lives I trow my so
 She will be evir to her end;
 Thus have I neither joy ne frend.
 Wote I not whethir hast or sloth
 Hath causid this now by my troth,
 For at the hermitage full hie,
 When I her saw first with myne eye,
 I hyid till I was aloft,
 And made my pace small and soft,
 Till in mine armes I had her fast,
 And to my ship bare at the last,
 Wherof she was displeid so
 That eadles there semid her wo,

And I thereof had so grete fere
 That me repent that I come there,
 Which hast I trow gan her displese,
 And is the cause of my disese.
 And with that word he gan to cry,
 Now Deth, Deth, come, twyis or thry,
 And motrid I n'ot what of sloth:
 And even with that the quene of routh
 Him in her armis toke, and sayd,
 Now, mine owne knight! be' not ill apayd
 That I a lady to you sent
 To have knowledge of your entent,
 For in gode faith I men't but well,
 And would ye wist it every dele,
 Nor will not do to you ywis;
 And with that word she gan him kisse,
 And prayed him rise, and said she would
 His welfare by her truth, and told
 Him how she was for his disese
 Right sory, and faine would him plesse,
 His lyfe to save. These wordis tho
 She said to him, and many mo,
 In comforting, for from the paine
 She would he were delivered faine.
 The knight tho up ycast his een,
 And when he saw it was the quene
 That to him had these wordis said,
 Right in his wo he gan to braid,
 And him up dressis for to knele,
 The quene avising wondir wele;
 But as he rose he ovirthrew,
 Wherefore the quene yet est anew
 Him in her armis auone toke,
 And pitously gan on him loke;
 But for all that nothyng she sayd,
 Ne spake not like she were well payd,
 Ne no chere made nor sad ne light,
 But all in one to every wight
 There was sene conning with estate
 In her without hoysse or debate,
 For save onely a loke piteous
 Of womenhed undispiteous,
 That she showid in continance,
 Far semed her hert from obeisance,
 And not for that she did her reine
 Him to recovir from the peine,
 And his hert for to put at large,
 For her entent was to his barge
 Him for to bryng agaynst the eve,
 With certeine ladies, and take leve,
 And pray him of his gentilnesse
 To suffer her thenceforth in pece,
 As othir princis had before,
 And from thenceforth for evirmore
 She would him worship in all wise
 That gentilnesse ymight devise,
 And payne her wholly to fulfill
 In honour his plesure and will
 And during thus this knightis wo,
 Present the quene and othir mo,
 My lady' and many' an othir wight,
 Ten thousand shippis at a sight
 I saw come oer the wavy flode
 With sayle and ore, that as I stode

Them to behold I gan marvaile
 From whom might come so many' a faile,
 For sith the tyme that I was bore
 Such a navie there n'ere before
 Had I not sene, ne so arayed,
 That for the sight my hert yplayed
 Aye to and fro within my brest
 For joy; long was or it would rest;
 For there was saylis full of floures,
 Aftir castils with huge toures,
 Yfeming full of armis bright,
 That wondir lusty was the sight,
 With large toppis and mastis long,
 Richly depeint, and reare among
 At certaine timis gan repayre
 Smale birdis doune from the aire,
 And on the shippis bounds about
 Yfate and song with voyce full out
 Ballades and layes right joyously,
 As they cowth in ther harmony,
 That you to write that I there fe
 Mine excuse is it may not be;
 For why? the mattir were to long
 To name the birds and write ther song;
 Whereof anon the tydings there
 Unto the quene sone brought ywere,
 With many' alas and many, a doubt,
 Shewing the shippis there without:
 Tho gan the agid lady wepe,
 And said, Alas! our joy on slepe
 Sone shal be brought, ye, long or night,
 For we discried ben by this knight,
 For certes it may none othir be
 But he is of yond companie,
 And they be come him here to seche;
 And with that word her faylid speche.
 Without reme'dy we be destroid,
 Ful oft said all, and gan conclude
 Wholy at onis at the last
 That best was shit ther yatis fast,
 And arme them all in gode langage,
 As they had done of old usage,
 And of fayre wordis make ther shot;
 This was ther counsaile and the knot,
 And othir purpose toke they none,
 But armid thus forth they all gone
 Toward the wallis of the yle;
 But or they comin there long while
 They mettin the grete lord of bove
 That callid is the god of Love,
 That them avisid with such chere,
 Right as he with them angry were:
 Avayled them not ther wals of glasse;
 This mighty lord let not to passe
 The shutting of ther yatis fast;
 All they had ordained was but wast;
 For when his ships had foundin land
 This lord anon, with bow in hand,
 Into this yle with huge prese
 Yhyid fast, and would not cese
 Till he came there the knight ylay:
 Of quene ne lady by the way
 Toke he no hede, but forth he past,
 And yet all followed at the last.

And when he came where lay the knight
 Well shewid he he had grete might,
 And forth the quene callid anone
 And all the ladies everichone,
 And to them said, Is not this routh,
 To se my servaunt for his trouth
 Thus lene, thus sicke, and in this payne,
 And wot not unto whom to playne,
 Save onely one withoutin mo,
 Which might him hele, and is his fo?
 And with that word his hevy brow
 He shewid the quene, and lokid row,
 This mighty lord forth tho anone
 With o loke her faultis echone
 He can her shew in litil spech,
 Commaunding her to be his lech.
 Withoutin more, shortly to say,
 He thought the quene sone should obay,
 And in his hond he shoke his bow,
 And said right sone he would be know;
 And for she had so long refused
 His service, and his lawes not used,
 He let her wit that he was wroth,
 And bent his bow, and forth he goth
 A pace or two, and evin there
 A large draught up to his ere
 He drew, and with an arrow ground
 Both sharpe and newe the quene a wound
 He gave that perfed unto the hert,
 Which aftirward full fore gan smert,
 And was not whole of many yere;
 And even with that Be of gode chere,
 My knight, quod he; I will the hele,
 And the restore to parfite wele,
 And for ech payne thou hast endured
 To have two joies thou art enured:
 And forth he passid by the rout,
 With sobir chere walking about,
 And what he said I thought to here;
 Well wist he whiche his servaunts were:
 And as he passid anon he fond
 My lady', and her toke by the hond,
 And made her chere as a goddes,
 And of Beaute called her Princes,
 Of Bounty eke gave her the name,
 And sayd there was nothyng to blame
 In her, but she was vertuouse,
 Saving she would no pity use,
 Which was the cause that he her sought
 To put that far out of her thought;
 And sithin she had whole richesse
 Of womanhed and frendlinesse,
 He said it was nothing fitting
 To void Pity his owne leggyng;
 And gan her prech and with her play,
 And of her beauty told her aie,
 And said she was a creature
 Of whom the name should endure,
 And in his bokis full of plesaunce
 Be put for er in remembraunce;
 And as me thoughtin more frendly,
 Unto my lady and godelily
 He spake than any that was there;
 And for the' applis I trow it were

That she had in possession;
 Wherefore long in procession
 Many a pace arme undir other
 He welke, and so did with none other:
 But what he would commaund or say
 Forwith nedis all must obay,
 And what he desired at the lest
 Of my lady was by request:
 And when they long together had bene
 He brought my lady to the quene,
 And to her said, So God you spede
 Shew grace and consent, that is nede.
 My lady, tho full conningly,
 Right well avised and womanly,
 Downe gan to knele upon the floures
 Which Aprill nourished had with shoures,
 And to this mighty lord gan say,
 That plesith you I woll obay,
 And me restraine from othir thought;
 As ye woll al thyng shall be wrought:
 And with that word kneeling she quoke.
 That mighty lord in armes her toke,
 And said, You have a servaunt, one
 That truir living is ther none,
 Wherefore gode were, seing his trouth,
 That on his painis ye had routh,
 And purpose you to here his spech,
 Fully avised him to lech,
 For of one thyng ye may be sure,
 He will be yours while he may dure.
 And with that word right on his game
 Me thought he lough, and told my name,
 Which was to me marvaile and fere,
 That what to do I ne wist there,
 Ne whethir was me bet or none
 There to abide or thus to gone,
 For well wend I my lady wold
 Imagin or deme I had told
 My counsaile whole, or made complaint
 Unto that lord, that mighty faint,
 So verily ech thing unsought
 He said as he had knowne my thought,
 And told my trouth and mine unese
 Bet than I couth have for mine ese,
 Though I had studied all a weke:
 Well wist that lord that I was seke,
 And would be lechid wondir faine;
 No man me blame, mine was the paine.
 And when this lord had all ysaide,
 And long while with my lady plaide,
 She gan to smile with spirit glade;
 This was the answere that she made,
 Which put me there in double peine,
 That what to do ne what to seine
 Wist I not, ne what was the best;
 Ferre was my hert then fro his rest,
 For as I thought that smiling signe
 Was token that the hert encline
 Would to requestis resonable,
 Because *Smiling is favorable*
To every thing that shall thrive,
 So thoughtin I tho anon blive
 That *Worldlesse answere in no toun*
Was tane for obligacioun,

Ne callid surety in no wise
 Amongst them that callid ben wife:
 Thus was I in a joyous dout,
 Sure and unfurist of that rout:
 Right as mine hert ythought it were
 So more or lesse wexin my fere,
 That if one thought ymade it wele
 Anothir sheat it everydele,
 Till at the last I couth no more,
 But purposed as I did before
 To serve truly my lyv'is space,
 Awaiting er the yere of grace,
 Which may yfall yet or I sterve,
 If that it plesse her that I serve,
 And servid have, and woll do ever,
 For thyng is none that me is lever
 Than is her service, whose presence
 Mine heven is whole, and her absence
 An hell all full of divers paines,
 Whych to the deth full oft me straines.
 Thus in my thoughtis as I stode,
 That unneth felt I harme ne gode,
 I saw the quene a litil paas
 Come where this mighty lord ywas,
 And knelid downe in presence there
 Of all the ladies that there were,
 With sobir continuaunce avised,
 In few wordis that well suffised,
 And to this lord anon present
 A bill, wherein whole her entent
 Was writtin, and how she besought,
 As he knew every will and thought,
 That of his godhed and his grace
 He would forgyve all old trespase,
 And undispleid be of time past,
 For she would evir be stedfast,
 And in his service to the deth
 Use every thought while she had breth,
 And sight and wept, and said no more,
 Within was writtin all the fore:
 At whyche bill the lord gan smyle,
 And said he would within that yle
 Be lord and syre both est and west,
 And call'd it there his new conquest.
 And in grete counsell toke the quene;
 Long were the talis them betwene:
 And ovir her bill he red thrise,
 And wondir gladly gan devise
 Her fetures faire and her visage,
 And bad gode thrift on that image,
 And saide he trowid her compleint
 Should astir cause her be corseint;
 And in his sleve he put the bill,
 Was there none that yknew his will,
 And forthe he walke apace about,
 Beholding all the lusty rout,
 Halfe in a thought with smiling chere,
 Till at the last, as ye shall here,
 He turned unto the quene ageine,
 And said, To morne here in this pleine
 I woll that ye be and all yours,
 That purposed ben to were flours,
 Or of my lusty colour use,
 It may not be to you excuse,

Ne to none of yours in no wise,
 That able be to my servise;
 For as I said have here before
 I will be lord for evirmore
 Of you, and of this yle, and all,
 And of all yours that havin shall
 Joy, pece, or ese, or in plesaunce
 Your livis use without noysaunce;
 Here will I in state be yfene,
 And turned his visage to the quene,
 And you give knowledge of my will,
 And a full answer of your bill.
 Was there no nay, ne wordis none,
 But very' obeisaunt semed echone;
 The quene and othir that were there
 Well semid it they had grete fere,
 And there toke lodging every knight,
 Was none departid of that night,
 And some to rede old romances
 Them occupied for thier plesances,
 Some to make verelaies and laies,
 And some to othir diverse plaies,
 And I to me a romance toke,
 And as I reding was the boke,
 Methought the sphere had so run
 That it was rising of the sun,
 And such a pres into the plaine
 Assemble gone, that with grete paine
 One might for othir go ne stand,
 Ne none take othir by the hand,
 Withoutin they distourbid were,
 So huge and gret the pres was there.

And astir that within two houres
 This mighty lord clad all in floures
 Of divers colours many' a paire
 In his estate up in the aire
 Well nigh two fathom, as his hight,
 He set him there in all ther sight,
 And for the quene and for the knight,
 And for my lady' and every wight,
 In hast he sent, so that ner one
 Was there absent, but come echone;
 And when they thus assemblid were,
 As ye have herd me say you here,
 Without more tarrying on hight,
 There to be sene of every wight,
 Up stode among the pres above
 A counsaylir, servaunt of Love,
 Which semid well of gret estate,
 And shewid there how no debate
 Othir then godely might be used
 In gentilnesse and be excused,
 Wherefore he said his lord's will
 Was every wight there should be still
 And in pees, and of one accord,
 And thus commaundid at a word,
 And can his tongue to swiche language
 To turne, that yet in all mine age
 Herd I never so conningly
 Man speke, ne halfe so faithfully,
 For every thing he said there
 Semid as it infelid were,
 Or approvid for very trew;
 Swiche was his cunning language newe,

And well according to his chere,
 That where I be me thinke I here
 Him yet alway, when I mine one
 In any place may be alone:
 First con he of the lusty yle
 All the estate in lityl whyle
 Reherse, and wholly every thing
 That causid there his lord's comming,
 And every wele and every wo,
 And for what cause eche thing was so
 Well shewed he there in ese spech,
 And how the sicke had nede of lech;
 And that whiche whole was and in grace
 He told plainly why ech thing was,
 And at the last he con conclude,
 Voidid every language rude,
 And said, That prince, that mighty lord,
 Or his departing would accord
 All the parties were there present,
 And was the fine of his entent,
 Witnesse his presence in your sight,
 Which sits among you in his might;
 And knelid downe withoutin more,
 And not o word yspake he more.

Tho gan this mighty lord him dresse,
 With chere avised, to do largeffe,
 And said unto this knight and me,
 Ye shall to joy restorid be,
 And for ye have ben true ye twaine
 I graunt you here for every paine
 A thousand joies every weke,
 And loke ye be no lengir seke,
 And both your ladies, lo'hem here!
 Take ech his own; beth of gode chere,
 Your happie day is new begun
 Sith it was rising of the sun,
 And to all othir in this place
 I graunt wholly to stand in grace
 That servith truely without slouth,
 And to avauncid be by trowth.
 Tho gan this knight and I downe knele,
 Wening to doin wondir wele,
 Seing, O lord! your grete mercy
 Us hath enriched so opynly
 That we deserve may never more
 The lest part, but evirmore
 With soule and body truely serve
 You and yours till that we ysterve:
 And to ther ladies there they stode
 This knight, that *couth so mikil gode*,
 Ywent in hast, and I also;
 Joyous and glad werin we tho,
 And al so rich in every thought
 As he that all hath and ought nought,
 And them besought in humble wise
 Us to accept to ther service,
 And shew us of ther frendly cheres,
 Which in ther tresure many yeres
 They keptin had, us to grete paine,
 And told how ther servauntis twaine
 We were, would be, and so had ever,
 And to the deth chaunge would we never,
 Ne doe offence, ne thinke like ill,
 But fill ther ordinaunce and will;

And made our othis freshe and new,
Our old service for to renew,
And wholly ther's for evirmore
We there become; what might we more?
And well awaiting that in slouth
We made no fault ne in our trouth,
Ne thought not do, I you ensure,
With our will, whilis we may dure.

This seson past, againe an eve
This lord of the quene toke his leve,
And said he would hastely returne,
And at gode leifure there sojourne,
Both for his honour and his ese,
Commaunding fast the knight to plesse,
And gave his statutes in papirs,
And orderit divers officirs,
And forth to ship the same night
He went, and sone was out of sight.
And on the morowe when the aire
Attemprid was and wondir faire,
Erly at rising of the sun,
Aftir the night away was run,
Yplaying us on the rivage,
My lady spake of her voyage,
And said she madin small journies,
And held her in straunge counteries,
And forthwith to the quene went,
And shewed her wholly her entent,
And toke her leve with chere weping,
That pity was to se that parting;
For to the quene it was a paine,
As to a martyr new yflaine,
That for her woe, and she so tender,
Yet I wepe oft when I remember:
She offerid there to resigne
To my lady eight times or nine
Th' astate, the yle, shortly to tell,
If it might plesse her there to dwell,
And said, for evir her linage
Should to my lady doe homage,
And hers be whole withoutin more,
Ye, and all thers for evirmore.
Nay, God forbid! my lady eft,
With many cunning word and soft,
Said, that evir such a thing should bene
That I consent should that a quene
Of your estate, and so well named,
In any wise should be attamed,
But would be faine with all my hert,
What so befell or how me smert,
To doin thing that you might plesse
In any wise or be your ese,
And kissid there and bad gode night,
For which leve wept many a wight.
There might men here my lady praised,
And such a name of her araifed,
What of cunning and frendlineffe,
What of beauty with gentilnesse,
And what of glad and frendly cheres
That she usid in all her yeres,
That wondir was here every wight
To say well how they did ther might,
And with a pres upon the morow
To ship her brought, and what a sorow

They made when she should undir saile,
That and ye wist ye would mervaille.
Forth goeth the ship, out goeth the sond,
And I as a wode man unbond,
For doubt to be left behind there,
Into the se withoutin fere
Anon I ran, till with a waw
All sodenly I was oerthraw,
And with the watir to and fro
Backward and forward travailed so
That mind and breth nigh was ygone,
For gode ne harme ne knew I none,
Til at the last with hokis tweine
Men of the ship with mekil peine
To save my life did such travaile
That and ye wist ye would mervaille,
And in the ship me drewe on hie,
And saidin all that I would die,
And laid me long downe by the mast,
And of ther clothis on me cast;
And there I made my testament,
And wist my selfe not what I ment,
But when I said had what I would,
And to the mast my wo all told,
And tane my leve of every wight,
And closed mine eyen and lost my sight,
Avised to die without more spech,
Or any remedy to sech
Or grace new, as was grete nede,
My lady of my paine toke hede,
And her bethought how that for trouth
To se me die it were grete routh,
And to me came in sobir wise,
And softly said, I pray you rise;
Come on with me; let be this fare;
All shall be wel; have ye no care;
I will obey ye and fulfill
Wholly in al that lordis will
That you and me not long ago
Aftir his list commaundid to,
That there againe no resistance
May be withoutin gret offence,
And therefore now loke what I say,
I am and will be frendly aye;
Rise up, behold this avauntage,
I grauntin you in heritage
All peceably withoutin strive
During the dayis of your live;
And of her applis in my fleve
One she yput, and toke her leve
In wordis few, and said, God hele
He that all made you fend, and wele
Wherewith my pains all at ones
Token such leve, that all my bones,
For the new durense plesaunce,
So as they couth desired to daunce,
And I as whole as any wight
Up rose with joyous hert and light,
Whole and unsicke, right wele at ese,
And all forget had my disese,
And to my lady where she plaid
I went anone, and to her said;
He that all joies perions to plesse
First ordainid with parfite ese,

And every plesure can depart,
 Send you, Madame, as large a part,
 And of his godis such plenty,
 As he has done you of beauty,
 With hele, and all that may be thought,
 He send you all as he all wrought.
 Madame, (quod I) your servaunt trew
 Have I ben long, and yet will new,
 Withoutin chaunge or repentaunce
 In any wise or variaunce,
 And so will do, as thrive I ever,
 For thing is none that me is fever.
 Than you to plesse how er I fare,
 Mine hert's lady and my welfare,
 My life, mine hele, my lech also
 Of every thing that doth me wo,
 My helpe at nede, and my surete
 Of every joy that longs to me,
 My succours whole in alle wise
 That may be thought or man devise,
 Your grace, Madame, such have I found,
 Now in my nede, that I am bound
 To you for er, so Christ me save,
 For hele and live of you I have,
 Wherefore is resoun I you serve
 With due obeisaunce till I sterve,
 And ded and quicke be evir yours,
 Late, erly, and at alle hours.
 'Tho came my lady small alite,
 And in plaine English con confite,
 In wordis few whole her entent
 She shewed me there, and how she ment
 To me ward in every wise,
 Wholly she came at ther devise,
 Without processe or long travell,
 Charging me to kepin counsell,
 As I would to her grace attaine,
 Of which commaundement I was faine;
 Wherefore I passe oer at this time,
 For counsell cords not well in rime,
 And eke the oth that I have swore
 To breke me were bettir unhore;
 Why? for untrue for evirmore
 I should be hold, that nevirmore
 Of me in place should be report
 Thing that availe might, or comfort
 To mewardis in any wise,
 And eche wight wouldin me dispise.
 In that they couth, and me repreve,
 Which were a thing fore for to greye,
 Wherefore hereof more mencion
 Make I not now ne long sermon,
 But shortly thus I me excuse,
 To rime a counsell I refuse.
 Sailing thus two dayis or thre
 My lady towards her countre,
 Ovir the wavis high and grene,
 Which werin large and depe betwene,
 Upon a time me called and said,
 That of my hele she was well paid,
 And of the quene and of the yle
 She talkid with me a long while,
 And of all that she there had sene,
 And of th' estate and of the quene,

And of the ladies name by name,
 Two houres or mo this was her game,
 Till at the last the wind can rise,
 And blew so fast and in such wise
 The ship, that every wight can say
 Madame, er eve be of this day,
 And God tofore, ye shall be there
 As ye would fainist that ye were,
 And doubtith not within sixe hours
 Ye shall be there as all is yours:
 At which wordis she gan to smile,
 And said that was no longè while
 That they her set; and up she rose,
 And all about the ship she gose,
 And made gode chere to every wight,
 Till of the land she had a sight,
 Of whichè sight glad, God it wot,
 She was abashid and abote,
 And forth goeth, shortly you to tell,
 Where she accustomed was to dwell,
 And recevid was, as gode right,
 With joyous chere and hert'is light,
 And as a glad new avinture
 Plesant to evèry cature;
 With which landing tho I awoke,
 And found my chambir full of smoke,
 My chekis eke unto the eres,
 And all my body, wet with teres,
 And all so feble' and in such wise
 I was, that unneth might I rise,
 So far travailid and so faint,
 That neithir knew I kirke ne faint,
 Ne what was what ne who was who,
 Ne avised what way I would go;
 But by an adventurous grace
 I rise and walkt, sought pace and pace,
 Till I a winding staire yfound,
 And held the vice aye in my hond,
 And upward softly so can crepe
 Till I came where I thought to slepe
 More at mine ese, and out of prece,
 At my gode leisure and in pece,
 Till somewhat I recomfort were
 Of the travill and the grete fere
 That I endurid had before,
 This was my thought withoutin more;
 And as a wight witlesse and faint,
 Without more in a chambir paint
 Full of stories old and divers,
 More than I can as now reherse,
 Unto a bed full sobirly,
 So as I mightin, full southly,
 Pace after other, and nothing said,
 Till at the last downe I me laid,
 And as my mind would give me leve
 All that I dremid had that eve
 Before that all I can reherse,
 Right as a child at schole his verse
 Doth astir that he thinketh to thrive,
 Right so did I for all my live,
 I thought to have in remembraunce
 Both the paine and eke the plessaunce,
 The Dreame whole as it me befell,
 Which was as ye herin me tell;

Thus in my thoughtis as I lay
 That happy or unhappy day,
 Ne wot I not, so have I blame,
 Of the two which shulde be the name,
 Befell me so that there a thought
 By proceffe new on slepe me brought,
 And me governed so in a while
 That ones againe within the yle
 Me thought I was, where of the knight
 And of the ladies I had sight,
 And were assemblid on a grene,
 Bothe knight and lady with the quene,
 At which assembly there was said
 How that they all content and paid
 Werin wholly as in that thing
 That the knight there should be the king,
 And they would all for sure witnesse
 Yweddid be both more and lesse,
 In remembraunce, withoutin more,
 Thus they consent for evirmore,
 And was concludid that the knight
 Departin should the samè night,
 And forthwith there toke his voiage
 To journey for his marriage,
 And returnin with such an host
 That weddid might be lest and most:
 This was concluded, written and seled,
 That it ne might not be repeled
 In no wise, but continue firme,
 And all should be within a terme,
 Without more excusation,
 Both fest and coronation.
 This knight, which had thereof the charge,
 Anon into a little barge
 Ybrought was late against an eve,
 Where of all he ytoke his leve,
 Which barge was as a man's thought
 Astir his plesure to him brought,
 The quene her selfe accustomed aye
 In the same barge oft for to play,
 It nedith neithir mast ne rothir,
 I have not herd of such another,
 No maistir for the govirnaunce,
 He saylid by thought and plesaunce,
 Withoutin labour est and west,
 All ywas one calme or tempest,
 And I went with at his request,
 And was the first praied to the fest.
 When he came into his countre,
 And passid had the wavy se,
 In an havin bothe depe and large
 He left his rich and noble barge,
 And to the court, shortly to tell,
 He went where he was wont to dwell,
 And was recevid, as gode right,
 As heire, and for a worthy knight,
 With all the statis of the lond,
 Which came anon at his first sond,
 With glad spiritis full of trouth,
 Loth to do fault, or with a slouth
 Attaint to be in any wise,
 Ther richis was ther old servise,
 Which evir trew had ben yfond
 Sith first inhabit was the lond;

And so recevid thei ther king
 That forgottin ywas no thing
 That ought to be done ne might plesse,
 Ne ther soveraine lord do ese;
 And with them so, shortly to say,
 As they of custome had done aye,
 For sevin yere past was and more,
 The father, the old, wife, and hore,
 King of the land, ytoke his leve
 Of all his barons on an eve,
 And told them how his dayis past
 Were all, and comin was the last,
 And hart'ily prayed 'hem to remember
 His sonnè, which yong was and tender,
 That borne ywas ther prince to be,
 If he returne to that ceuntre
 Might by adventure or by grace
 Within any shorte time or space,
 And to be true and frendly aye,
 As they to him had ben alway:
 Thus he them prayd withoutin more,
 And toke his leve for evirmore.
 Knowin was how tendir in age
 This yongè prince a grete viage
 Uncouth and straunge, honours to seche,
 Ytoke in hond with lityl speche,
 Which was to sekin a princes
 That he desired more than riches,
 For her grete name that flourid so
 That in that time there was no mo
 Of her estate, ne so well named,
 For borne was none that er her blamed,
 Of which princes somwhat before
 Here have I spoke, and some will more.
 So thus befell as ye shall here;
 Unto ther lord they made such chere
 That joy was there to be present
 To se ther troth and how they ment;
 So very glad they were ech one
 That them among there was no one
 Whiche that desired more riches
 Than for ther lord such a princes
 That they might plesse, and that were faire,
 For fast desired they an heire,
 And said grete surety were ywis.
 And as they were spekin of this
 The prince himselfin him avised,
 And in plaine English undisguised
 Them shewid wholly his journey,
 And of ther counsell can them prey,
 And told how he enfurid was,
 And how his day he might not passe
 Withoutin diffame and grete blame,
 And to him for evir a shame;
 And of ther counsell and avise
 There he prayith them once or twise,
 And that they would within ten daies
 Avise and ordaine him such waies,
 So that it were no displeaunce,
 Ne to this relme oer grete greivaunce,
 And that he might have to his fest
 Sixty thousand gestes at the lest,
 For his intent within short while
 Was to returne unto this yle

That he came fro, and kepe his day;
 For nothing would he be away.
 To counsaile tho the lords anon
 Into a chambir everychone
 Togithir went, them to devise
 How they might best and in what wise
 Purvey for their iord's plesauce,
 And the relm's continuaunce
 Of honor, which in it before
 Had continuid evirmore:
 So at the last they found the waies,
 How that within the next ten daies
 All might with paine and diligence
 Be done, and cast what the dispence
 Might draw, and, in conclusion,
 Made for ech thing provision.
 When this was done, wholly tofore
 The prince the lordis all before
 Come, and shewid what they had done,
 And how they couth by no reson
 Findin that within the ten daies
 He might departin by no waies,
 But would be fiftene at the lest
 Or he returne might to his fest:
 And shewed him every reson why
 It might not be so hastily
 As he desirid, ne his day
 He might not kepe by no way,
 For divers causis wondir grete;
 Which when he herd in such an hete
 He fell for sorow, and was seke,
 Still in his bed wholè that weke,
 And nigh the tothir for the shame,
 And for the doubt and for the blame
 That mightin on him be aret,
 And oft upon his brest he bet,
 And said, Alas! mine honour for aye
 Have I here lost clenely this day;
 Ded would I be; alas! my name
 Shall aye be more henceforth in shame,
 And I dishonoured and reprevèd,
 And nevir more shall be beleved:
 And made swich sorow, that in trouth
 Him to behold it was grete routh;
 And so endured the dayes fiftene,
 Till that the lords on an even
 Him come and told they redy were,
 And shewid in few wordis there
 How and what wise they had purvey'd
 For his estate, and to him said
 That twenty thousand knights of name,
 And fourty thousand without blame,
 All come of noble ligine,
 Togidir in a compane,
 Were lodgid on a river's side,
 Him and his plesure there t'abide.
 The prince tho for joy up arose,
 And where they lodgid were he goes
 Withoutin more that samè night,
 And these his suppir made to dight,
 And with them bode till it was dey,
 And forthwith to take his journey,
 Leving the streight, holding the large,
 Till he came to his noble barge:

And when this prince, this lustie knight,
 With his peple in armis bright
 Was comin where he thought to pas,
 And knew well none abiding was
 Behind, but all were there present,
 Forthwith anon all his intent
 He told them there, and made his cries
 Thorough his hostè that day twife,
 Commaunding every livis wight
 There being present in his sight
 To be the' morow on the rivage,
 Where he begin would his viage.
 The morow come, the cry was kept,
 But few was there that night that slept,
 But trussed and purveid for the morow,
 For fault of ships was all ther sorrow,
 For save the barge and othir two
 Of shippis ther saw I no mo:
 Thus in ther doubtis as they stode,
 Waxing the se, comming the flode,
 Was cried, To ship goe every wight,
 Then was but hie that hie him might;
 And to the barge me thought echone
 They went, without was left not one,
 Ne horse ne male, trusse ne baggage,
 Salad ne spere, gardbrace ne page,
 But was lodgid, and rome ynough;
 At which shipping me thought I lough,
 And gan to marvaile in my thought
 How evir such a ship was wrought,
 For what peple that can encrese,
 Ne ner so thicke might be the prese,
 But all had romè at ther will,
 There was not one was lodgid ill;
 For as I trowe my selfe the last
 Was one, and lodgid by the mast,
 And where I loked I saw such rome
 As all were lodgid in a towne.
 Forth goth the ship, said was the crede,
 And on ther knees for ther gode spede
 Downe knelid every wight a while,
 And prayid fast that to the yle
 They mightin comin in safety,
 The prince and all the company,
 With worship and withoutin blame,
 Of disclaundir of his gode name,
 Of the promise he should retourne,
 Within the time he did sojourne,
 In his londè biding his host,
 This was ther prayir lest and most:
 To kepe the day it might not ben
 That he' appointid had with the quene
 To returnin withoutin flouth,
 And so assurid had his trouth,
 For which default this prince, this knight,
 During the time slept not a night,
 Such was his wo and his difese,
 For doubt he should the quene displese.
 Forth goith the ship with such spede
 Right as the prince for his grete nede
 Desirin would after his thought,
 Till it unto the yle him brought,
 Where all in hast upon the sand
 He and his peple toke the land

With hertis glad and chere light,
 Wening to be in heven that night;
 But or they passid had a while,
 Entring in towardis that yle,
 All clad in blacke, with chere piteous,
 A lady which ner dispiteous
 Had be in all her life tofore
 With sory chere and hert to tore
 Unto this prince where he gan ride
 Ycome and said, Abide, abide,
 And have no hast, but fast retourne,
 No reson is ye here sojourne,
 For your untruth hath us diferied;
 Wo worth the time we us allied
 With you, that are so sone untrew;
 Alas the day that we you knew!
 Alas the time that ye were bore!
 For all this lond by you is lore;
 Accursed be he you hidir brought!
 For all our joy is turnd to nought;
 Your acquaintance we may complaine,
 Which is the cause of all our paine.
 Alas! Madame, quod tho this knight,
 And with that from his horse he light,
 With colour pale and chekis lene,
 Alas! what is this for to mene?
 What have ye said? why be ye wroth?
 You to displese I would be loth:
 Knowe ye not full well the promesse
 Which I made have to your princeesse,
 Which to perfourme is mine intent,
 So mote I spede as I have ment,
 And as I am her very trew,
 Withoutin change or thoughtis new,
 And al so fully her servand
 As creature or man livand
 May be to lady or princeesse,
 For she mine heven and whole richeesse
 Is, and the lady of mine hele,
 My worldis joy and all my wele.
 What may this be, whence coms this spech?
 Tell me, Madame, I you besech,
 For sith the first of my living
 Was I so ferefull of nothing
 As I am now to here you speke,
 For doubt I fele mine hert to breke:
 Say on, Madame, tell me your will;
 The remnaunt is it gode or ill?
 Alas (quod she) that ye were bore!
 For for your love this land is lore;
 The quene is ded, and that is rath,
 For sorow of your gret untruth:
 Of two partes of the lusty rout
 Of ladies that were there about,
 That wont werin to talk and play,
 Now are thei ded and elene away,
 And undir earth tane lodging newe;
 Alas that er ye were untrew!
 For when the time ye set was past
 The quene toke counsaile sone in hast
 What was to doe, and said Grete blame
 Your acquaintaunce cause would and shame,
 And the ladies of ther avise
 Prayid, for nede was to be wise,

In eschewing talis and songs,
 That by them makin would ill tongs,
 And sey they were lightly conquest,
 And prayid to a pore fest,
 And foully had ther worship weved,
 When so unwisely they conceived
 Ther richè tresour and ther hele,
 Ther famous name and ther wele
 To put in such an avinture,
 Of which the sclaudir ever dure
 Was like, without helpe of appele,
 Wherefore they nede had of counsele,
 For every wight of them would say,
 Ther clofid yle an opin way
 Was become to every wight,
 And well apprevd by a knight,
 Which he, alas! without payfaunce
 Had sone achevid th' obeisance:
 All this was moved at counsell thrife,
 And was concludid daily twise,
 That bet was die withoutin blame
 Than lose th' riches of ther name;
 Wherefore the deth'is acquaintaunce
 They chese, and left have ther plesaunce,
 For doubt to livin as repreved,
 In that they you so sone beleved,
 And made ther othes with one accord,
 That ete ne drinke, ne speke o word,
 They should nevir, but er weping
 Bide in a place without parting,
 And use ther dayis in penaunce,
 Without desire of allegeaunce,
 Of which the truth anon con preve;
 For why? the quene forthwith her leve
 Toke at them all that were present,
 Of her defaults fully repent.
 And dyid there withoutin more,
 Thus are we lost for evirmore;
 What should I more hereof reherse?
 Comin within, come se her herse
 Where ye shall se the piteous sight
 That er yet was shewin to knight,
 For ye shall sein ladies stond
 Ech with a grette rod in her hond,
 Yclad in black with visage white,
 Redy ech othir for to smite;
 If any be that will not wepe,
 Or who that makes countenance to slepe,
 They be so bet, that all so blew
 They be as cloth that died is new,
 Such is ther parfite repentance,
 And thus they kepe ther ordinance,
 And will do evir to the deth,
 While them enduris any breth.
 This knight tho in his armis twaine
 This lady toke, and gan her saine,
 Alas my birth! wo worth my life!
 And even with that he drew a knife,
 And thorough gown, doublet, and shert,
 He made the blode come from his hert,
 And set him doune upon the grene,
 And full-repent clofid his ene,
 And save that ones he drew his breth
 Without more thus he toke his deth;

For whichè cause the lusty host,
Which in a battaile on the cost
At once for sorrow such a cry
Gan rere throw the company,
That to the heven herd was the sowne,
And undir th' erth als fer adowne,
That wilde bestis for the fere
So sodainly afrayid were,
That for the doubt while they might dure
They ran, as of their lives unsure
From the wodis unto the plaine,
And from yalleys the high mountaine
They fought, and ran as bestis blind
That clene forgottin had ther kind.
This wo not cesed, to counsaile went
These lordis, and for that lady sent,
And of avise what was to done
They her besought she say would fone.
Weping full sore, all clad in blake,
This lady softly to them spake,
And said, My Lordis, by my trouth
This mischefe it is of your slouth,
And if ye had that judge would right
A prince that were a very knight,
Ye that ben of estate echone
Die for his fault should one and one;
And if he hold had the promesse,
And done that longes to gentilnesse,
And fulfilled the princes behest,
This hastie farme had ben a fest,
And now is unrecoverable,
And us a flaundir aye durable,
Wherefore I say, as of counsaile
In me is none that may avale,
But if ye list for remembraunce
Purvey and make such ordinaunce
That the quene whiche that was so meke,
With all her women dede or seke,
Might in your land a chappill have,
With some remembraunce of her grave,
Shewing her end with the pity
In some notable old city,
And nigh unto an highè way,
Where every wight might for her pray,
And for all hers that have been trew:
And even with that she changid hew,
And twise wishid after the deth,
And fight, and thus passid her breth.
Then said the lordis of the host,
And so concludid lest and most,
That they would in housis of thacke
Ther livis lede, and were but blacke,
And forsake all ther plesaunces,
And turne all joy to penaunces,
And bere the ded prince to the barge,
And namid them should have the charge;
And to the herse where lay the quene
The remnaunt went and doune on knene,
Holding ther honds, on high con crie,
Mercy, mercy! everich thrie,
And cursed the time that evir slouth
Should have soche mastirdome of trouth,
And to the barge a longè mile
They bare her forth, and in a while

Allè the ladies one and one
By companies were brought echone,
And past the se and toke the land,
And in new herfis on a sand,
Put and brought werin all anon
Unto a city closed with stone,
Where it yhad ben usid aye
The kingis of the land to lay,
After they raigned in honours,
And writ was which were conquerours,
In an abbey of nunnis blake,
Which accusomid were to wake,
And of usage rise ech a night
To pray for every livis wight:
And so befell, as is the guise,
Ordeint and said was the servise
Of the prince and eke of the quene
So devoutly as might yben,
And aftir that about the herfes
Full many orisons and verses
Withoutin note ful hertily
Said were, and that full softly
That all the night till it was day
The peple in the church con pray
Unto the holy Trinitie
Of those soulis to have pitie.

And when the night ypast and ronne
Was, and the newè day begonne,
The yong morow with rayis red,
Which from the sonne oer all con spred,
Atempirid clere was and faire,
And made a tyme of wholsome aire,
Befell a wondir case and strange
Among the peple, and gan change
Sone the word and every wo
Unto a joy, and some to two;
A bird all fedrid blew and grene,
With bright rayis like gold betwene,
As small thred ovir every joynt,
All full of colour strange and coint,
Uncouth, and wondirfull to sight,
Upon the quen'is herse con light,
And song full low and softly
Thre songis in her harmony,
Unlettid of every wight,
Til at the last an agid knight,
Which semid a man in grete thought,
Like as he set all thing at nought,
With visage and ein al forwept,
And pale, as a man long unslept;
By the herfis as he ystode
With hasty hondling of his hode
Unto a prince that by him past
Ymade the bridde somewhat agast,
Wherefore she rose and left her song,
And departed from us among,
And spred her wingis for to passe
By the place where he entrid was,
And in his hast, shortly to tell,
Him hurt, that backward downe he fell
From a window richly ypeint
With lives of many divers feint,
And bet his wingis and bled fast,
And of the hurt thus died and past,

And lay there well an hour and more,
 Till at the last of briddes a score
 Come and assemblid at the place
 Where the window ybrokin was,
 And made swiche wamentacioun
 That pity was to here the foun,
 And the warblis of ther throtis
 And the complaint of ther notis,
 Which from joy clene ywas reverfed;
 And of them one the glas sone perfed,
 And in his boke of colours nine
 An herbe he brought flourelesse, all grene,
 All full of small levis and plaine,
 Swart, and long with many a vaine,
 And where his fellow lay this dede
 This herbe he down laid by his hede,
 And dreslid it full softly,
 And hong his hed and stode thereby,
 Which herb in lesse than half an houre
 Gan oer all knit, and aftir floure
 Full out, and wexin ripe the fede,
 And right as one anothir fede
 Would, in his beke he toke the graine,
 And in his fellowes beke certaine
 It put, and thus within the third
 Up stode and prunid him the bird
 Which ded had be in all our sight,
 And both togethir forth ther flight
 Toke, singin from us, and ther leve
 Was none disturb 'hem would ne greve.
 And when they partid were and gone
 Th' abbessse the fedis sone echone
 Gathirid had, and in her hand
 The herbe she toke, well avifand
 The lese, the fede, the stalke, the floure,
 And said it had a gode favour,
 And was no common herb to find,
 And well approved of uncouth kind,
 And than othir more vertuouse;
 Who so have it might for to use
 In his nede flowre, or lese, or graine,
 Of ther hele might ybe certaine;
 And laid it downe upon the herse
 Where lay the quene, and gan reherse
 Echone to' othir that they had sene;
 And taling thus the fede wex grene,
 And on the drie herse gan to spring,
 Which me thought was a wondrous thing,
 And aftir that floure and new fede,
 Of which the peple all toke hede,
 And said it was some grete miracle,
 Or medicine fine more than triacle,
 And were well done there to assay
 If it might ese in any way
 The corsis, which with torchè light
 They wakid had there all that night:
 Sone did the lordis their consent,
 And all the peple' thereto content
 With esie words and litil fare,
 And made the quen'is visage bare,
 Which shewid was to all about,
 Wherefore in swone fell whole the rout,
 And were so fory most and lest
 That long of weping they not cest,

For of ther lord the remembraunce
 Unto them was such displeaunce
 That for to live they called a paine,
 So were they very true and plaine.
 And after this the gode abbessse
 Of the graine gan to chese and dresse
 Thre, with her fingirs clene and smale,
 And in the quen'is mouth by tale
 One aftir othir esly
 She put 'hem and full conningly,
 Which shewid sone such vertue
 That previd was the medi'cine true,
 For with a smiling countinaunce
 The quene uprofe, and of usaunce,
 As she was wont to every wight,
 She made gode chere, for whiche sight
The peple kneling on the stones
Thought they in heven were soule and bones;
 And to the prince where he ylay
 They went to make the same assay,
 And when the quene it undirstode,
 And how the medicine was gode,
 She previd she might have the graines
 To relevin him from the paines
 Which she and he had both endured,
 And to him went and so him cured,
 That streight within a litil space
 Lusty and freshe on live he was,
 And in gode hele, and whole of spech,
 And lough, and said, Gramercy, lech!
 For which the joy throughout the town
 So gret was that the bellis fown
 Afraied the peple a journey
 About the citie every way,
 And come and askid cause and why
 They rongin were so statily?
 And aftir that the quene th' abbessse,
 Made diligence or they would cesse,
 Such that of ladies sone a rout
 Sewing the quene was all about,
 And called by name echone and told,
 Was none forgettin young ne old;
 There mightin men se joyis new
 When the medicine fine and trew
 Thus restorid had every wight,
 So well the quenè as the knight,
 Unto full perfit joy and hele,
 That fleting they were in such wele
 As folke that wouldin in no wise
 Desire more parfit paradise.
 And thus when passed was the sorow,
 With mikil joye sone on the morow
 The king, the quene, and every lord,
 With all the ladies, by' one accord
 Helde a generall assembly:
 Gret cry was made through the country,
 The which aftir as ther intent
 Was turnid to a parliament,
 Where was ordainid and avised
 Evèry thing and wel devised
 That plesin might to most and lest,
 And there concludid was the fest
 Within the yle for to behold
 With full consent of young and old,

All in the same wise as before,
 As thing should be withoutin more,
 And thei shippid and thithir went,
 And into straungè relmis sent,
 To kingis, quenes, and ducheßes,
 To divers princes and princeßes,
 Of ther linage, and can them pray
 That it might like them at that day
 Of mariage, for ther disport,
 Come se the yle and them disport,
 Where should be joustis and turnaies,
 And armis done in othir waies,
 Signifying oer all the day
 Aftir Aprilis within May,
 And was avised that ladies tweine,
 Of gode estate and well bescine,
 With certaine knightis and squiers,
 And of the quen'is officers,
 In mannir of an embassade,
 With certain lettirs elosed and made,
 Should take the bargè and depart,
 And seke my lady every part
 Till they her found for any thing
 Both chargid have the quene and king,
 And as ther lady and maistres
 Her to beseke of gentilnes
 At the day there for to yben,
 And oft her recommaund the quene,
 And prayis for all loves to hast,
 For but she come all woll be wast,
 And the fest but a businesse
 Withoutin joy or lustinesse,
 And toke them tokins, and gode spede
 Praid God send 'hem aftir ther nede.
 Forth went the ladies and the knights,
 And were out fourtene daies and nights,
 And brought my lady in ther barge,
 And had well sped and done ther charge;
 Whereof the quene so herti'ly glad
 Was, that in soth such joy she had
 When that the ship approchid lond
 That she my lady on the sond
 Met, and in armis so constraine,
 That wondir was behold them twaine,
 Which to my dome during twelve houres
 Neithir for hete ne watry shoures
 Departid not no company
 Saving themselfe, but none them by,
 But gave them layfour at ther ese
 To reherfin joy and disese
 Aftir the plesure and couragis
 Of ther young and tendir agis;
 And aftir with many a knight
 Brought thei were where as for that night
 They partid not, for to plesaunce
 Content was hert and countinaunce
 Both of the quene and my maistresse,
 This was that night ther businesse;
 And on the morow with huge rowt
 This prince of lordis himi about
 Come, and unto my lady said,
 Of her comming glad and well paid
 He was, and full right conningly
 Her thankid and full hertily,

And lough and smiled, and said, Ywis
 That was in doubt in safety is;
 And commaundid do diligence,
 And spare for neithir gold ne spence,
 But make redy, for on the morow
 Yweddid, with Saint John to borow,
 He would ybe withoutin more,
 And let them wite this lese and more.
 The morow come, and the service
 Of mariage in such a wise
 Ysaid was, that with more honour
 Was nevir prince ne conquerour
 Ywedde, ne with such company
 Of gentilnesse in chivalry,
 Ne of ladies so gretè routs,
 Ne so beseen as all abouts
 They werin there, I certifie
 You on my life, withoutin lie.

And the fest hold was in tentis,
 As to tell you mine entent is,
 In a rome in a large plaine,
 Undir a wode in a champaine,
 Betwixt a rivir and a well,
 Where nevir had abbay ne fell
 Yben, ne kirke, house, ne village,
 In time of any man's age,
 And durid thre moniths the fest
 In one estate, and nevir cest
 From erly rising of the sonne
 Till the day spent was and yronne
 In justing, dauncing, lustinesse,
 And all that sowned to gentilnesse.

And as me thought the second morow,
 Whan endid was all oldè sorow,
 And in surety every wight
 Had with his lady slept a night,
 The prince, the quene, and all the rest,
 Unto my lady made request,
 And her besought oftin and praied
 To mewardes to be well apaied,
 And confidir mine oldè trowth,
 And on my painis havin routh,
 And me accept to her servise
 In such formè and in such wise
 That we both mightin be as one;
 Thus praied the quene and everichone;
 And for there should ne be no nay
 They stintin justing all a day
 To pray my lady, and requere
 To be content and out of fere,
 And with gode hert make frendly chere,
 And said it was a happy yere;
 At which she smiled, and said, Ywis
 I trow well he my servaunt is,
 And would my welfare, as I trist,
 So would I his, and would he wist
 How and I knewè that his trowth
 Continue would withoutin slouth,
 And be such as yehere report,
 Restraining both courage and sport,
 I couth consent at your request
 To be ynamid of your fest,
 And doin aftir your usaunce
 In obeying of your plesaunce:

At your request this I consent,
 To plesin you in your entent,
 And eke the sovèraine above,
 Commandid hath me for to love,
 And before othir him prefer,
 Against which prince may be no wer,
 For his powir ovir all raigneth,
 That othir would for nought him paineth;
 And sith his will and yours is one
 Contrary in me shall be none:
 Tho (as me thoughtin) the promise
 Of marriage before the mese
 Desirid was of every wight
 To be madin the same night,
 To put away all manir doubts
 Of every wight thereabouts;
 And so was do: and on the morow,
 When every thought and every sorrow
 Dislodgid was out of mine hert,
 With every wo and every smert,
 Unto a tent prince and princes
 Me thought brought me and my maistres,
 And said we werin at full age
 There to conclude our marriage,
 With ladies, knightis, and squiers,
 And a gret host of ministers,
 With instruments and sounes diverse,
 That long werin here to reherse;
 Which tent was church parochiall,
 Ordaint was in especiall
 For the fest and for the sacre,
 Where archbishop and archdiacre
 Ysongin full out the servise
 Aftir the custome and the guise
 And holie church's ordinaunce:
 And aftir that to dine and daunce
 Brought were we, and to divers plaies,
 And for our spedè ech wight praies,
 And merry was both most and lest,
 And said amendid was the fest,
 And were right glad lady and lord
 Of the marriage and th' accord,
 And wishid us hert's plesauce,
 In joy and hele continuaunce,
 And to the ministrils made request
 That in encrefing of the fest
 They wouldin touchin ther cordis,
 And with some new joyeux accordis
 Ymove the peple to gladnesse,
 And praidin of all gentilnesse
 Ech to painin them for the day
 To shew his cunning and his play:
 Tho began sownis mervelous,
 Entunid with accords joyous,
 Round about and in all the tents,
 With thousandis of instruments,
 That every wight to daunce them pained;
 To be merry was none that fayned;
 Which sowne me troublid in my slepe,
 That fro my bed anone I lepe,
 Wening to have be at the fest,
 But when I woke all was yfest,
 For there n'as lady ne cature,
 Save on the wals old portraiture
 Of horsmen, haukis, and houndis,
 And hurt dere all full of woundis,

Some like bittin, some hurt with shot,
 And as my dreme semed that was not.
 And when I wake and knew the trouth,
 And ye had seen, of very routh
 I trow ye would have wept a weke,
 For nevir man yet halfe so seke
 Iwent escapid with the life,
 And was for fault that sword ne knife
 I find ne might my life t' abridge,
 Ne thing that kervid ne had edge,
 Wherewith I might my wofull pains
 Have voidid with bleding of vains.
 Lo, here my blisse! lo, here my paine!
 Which to my lady' I do complaine,
 And grace and mercy her requere
 To end my wo and busie fere,
 And me accept to her servise,
 And to her service in such wise,
 That of my Dremè the substaunce
 Might turnin once to cognisaunce,
 And cognisaunce to very preve,
 By full consent and by gode leve;
 Or els withoutin more I pray
 That this same night or it be day
 I mote unto my Dreme retourne,
 And sleping so forthe aie sojourne
 Aboutin the yle of plesauce
 Undir my ladie's obeisaunce,
 In her service, and in such wise
 As it plesè her may to devise,
 And grace onis to be accept
 Like as I dremid when I slept,
 And dure a thousand yere and ten
 In her gode will. Amen, Amen!

L'ENVOY.

Fairist of faire, and godelyist on live!
 All my secre to you I plaine and thrive,
 Requiring grace, and of my fore complaint
 To be be helid or martirid as a saint,
 For by my trouth I swere, and by this boke,
 Ye may both hele and sle me with a loke.
 Go forth, mine ownè true hert innocent,
 And with humblenesse do thine observaunce,
 And to thy lady on thy knees present
 Thy service new, and think how grete plesauce
 It is to live undir the obeisaunce
 Of her which that may with her lokis soft
 Give the the blisse that thou desirist oft.
 Be diligent, awake, obey, and drede,
 And be not wild of thy countinaunce,
 But meke and glad, and thy nature yfede
 To do ech thing that may her doe plesauce;
 When thou shalt slepe have aie in remembraunce
 Th' image of her which may with lokis soft
 Give the the blisse that thou desirist oft.
 And if so be that thou her namè find
 Writtin in boke, or ellis upon wall,
 Loke that thou do, as servaunt true and kind,
 Thine obeisaunce as she were therewithall:
 Fayning in love is breeding of a fall
 From the grace of her whose lokis soft
 May give the blisse that thou desirist oft.
 Ye which that this ballade yredin shall
 I pray you that you kepe you fro the fall.

THE DREME OF CHAUCER*.

I HAVE grete wonder, by this light,
 How that I lyve, for day ne night
 I maye not slepin welny nought;
 I have so many' an ydle thought,
 Purely for the defaute of slepe,
 That by my trouth I take no kepe
 Of nothing howe it cometh or gothe,
 Ne me n'ys nothing lese nor lothe;
 Al is ilichè gode to me
 Joye or sorowe where so it be,
 For I have felinge in nothing,
 But as it were a masid thing
 Al day in pointe to fall adoun,
 For sorowful ymaginacioun
 Is alway wholly in my minde.

And well ye wote that againste kinde
 It were to livin in this wise,
 For nature ne wolde not suffise
 Unto none erthy creäture
 Not longè tymè to endure
 Withoutin slepe and be in sorowe,
 And I ne may ne night ne morowe
 Slepyn, and this melancolye
 And drede I havin for to die;
 Defaute of slepe add hevinesse
 Hath slaine my spirite of quicknesse,
 That I have lost al lustihed;
 Soche fantasies ben in mine hed
 So I n'ot what is best to do:
 But men might askin me whi so
 I may not slepe, and what me is?

But nathêles who askith thys
 Lefeth his askyng trewily;
 My selvin can not telling why
 The sothe, but trewly, as I gesse,
 I holde it be a sikènesse

* By the person of a mourning knight sitting under an oak, is meant John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the deth of one whom he entirely loved, supposed to be Blanch the Dutchesse, Urry.

That I have suffrid this eyght yere,
 And yet my bote is ner the nere,
 For there is phisicien but one
 That may me hele; but that is done;
 Passin we ovir until este;
 That wil not be mote nedes be leste:
 Our first matir is gode to kepe.

So whan sawe I might not slepe
 Til now of late this othir night
 Upon my bedde I sate upright,
 And bade one rechm me a boke,
 A romauncè and it me toke
 To rede, and drive the night away;
 For why? me thought it betir play
 Than play either at cheffe or tables.

And in this boke were writtin fables
 That clerkis had in olde time
 And other poetes put in rhyme
 To rede, and for to be in minde,
 While men lovid the lawe of kinde:
 This boke ne spake but of soche thinges
 Of quenis livis and of kinges,
 And many othir thingis smale;
 Amonge al this I fond a tale
 Whiche that me thought a wondir thing.

This was the tale. There was a king
 That hight Ceix, and had a wife
 The best that mightin berin lyfe,
 And this quenè hight Alcyone;
 So it befil thereaftir sone
 This king wol wendin ovir se:
 To tellin shortly whan that he
 Was in the se thus in this wise
 Soche a tempest began to ryse
 That brake ther mastre and made it fal,
 And cleftre ther ship and dreint 'hem al,
 That nevir was founde, as it telles,
 Ne borde ne man, ne nothing elles:
 Right thus this king yloste his life.

Nowe for to spekin of his wife.

'This ladie that was leste at home
 Hath wondir that the kinge ne come
 Home, for it was a longe terme;
 Anone her herte began to yerne,
 And for that her thought evirmo
 It was not wele, her thoughtin so,
 She longid so aftir the king,
 That certes it were a pitous thing
 To tell her hertely sorowful lyfe
 Whiche that she had this noble wife,
 For him she lovid aldirbest;
 Anon she sent both est and west
 To seke him but they founde him nought.

Alas (quod she) that I was wrought!
 And where my lorde my love be ded
 Certis I n'yl nevyr ete bred,
 I make a vowe to my God here,
 But I mowe of my lordè here.

Soch sorowe this lady to her toke,
 That trewly I, that made this boke,
 Yhad soche pite and soche routh
 To rede her sorowe, that by my trouthe
 I farid the worse al the morowe
 Aftir to thinkin on her sorowe.

So whan that she coude here no worde
 That no man myghtin finde her lorde
 Ful ofte she swouned, and saide Alas!
 For sorow ful nigh wode she was,
 Ne she ne coude no rede but one,
 But downe on knees she fate anone
 And wept, that pitie was to here.

A! mercy, my swete lady dere!
 Quod she to Juno, her goddesse,
 Helpith me out of this distresse,
 And yeve me grace my lorde to se
 Sone, or to wete where so he be,
 Or howe he fareth, or in what wise,
 And I shal make you sacrifice,
 And wholly yours become I shal,
 With gode wil, body, herte, and al;
 And but thou wolte this, lady swete!
 Sendin me grace to slepe, and mete
 In my slepe some certaine swevin
 Where through that I may knowe evin
 Whethir my lorde be quicke or ded

With that worde she hinge down the hed,
 And fel in a swonne as colde as stonè;
 Her women caught her up anone,
 And broughtin her in bed al naked,
 And she for wepid and forwaked
 Was wery, and thus the ded slepe
 Yfel on her or she toke kepe,
 Through Juno that had herde her bone,
 That madin her to slepe sone;
 For as she praide right so was don
 In dede, for Juno right anon
 Ycallid thus her messangere
 To do' her craunde, and he come nere:
 Whan he was come she bad him thus;

Go, bet (quod Juno) to Morpheus,
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of Slepe;
 Nowe understande wel, and take kepe,
 Say thus on my behalfe, that he
 Go fast into the gretè se,

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And bid him that on allè thinge
 He take up Ceix body the kinge,
 That lieth ful pale and nothings rody;
 Byd him crepin into the body,
 And do it gone to Alcyone
 The quene, there she lyith alone,
 And shewe her shortely' it is no nay
 Howe it was dreint this othir day,
 And do the body speke right so
 Right as it was wonnid to do
 The whilis that it was alyve:
 Goith nowe fast, and hye the blive.

This messanger toke leve and went
 Upon his way, and nevyr' he stente
 Tyl he came to the darke valey
 That stante betwixt in rokis twey,
 There nevyr yet grewe corne ne gras,
 Ne trè, ne nothing that ought was,
 Ne best ne man, ne nothing elles,
 Save that there werin a fewe welles
 Came renning fro the clyffes adowne
 That made a dedly slepinge sowne,
 And rennin downe right by a cave
 That was undir a rocke ygrave
 Amyd the valey wondir depe
 There as these goddis lay aslepe,
 Morpheus and Eclympasteyre,
 That was the god of Slep'is heire,
 That slepte and did none othir werke.

This cave ywas also as derke
 As hel pitte; ovr all aboute
 They had gode leysire for to route
 To vye who mightin slepe best;
 Some hinge ther chinne upon ther brest,
 And slepte upright ther hed yhed,
 And some lay nakid in ther bed,
 And sleptin whiles their dayis last.

This messaunger come renning fast,
 And cried, Ho, ho! awake anone!
 It was for naught; there herde him none;
 Awake, (quod he) who lyith there?
 And blewe his horne right in ther ere,
 And cried Awakith! wondir hie.

This god of Slepe with his one eye
 Cast up, and asked Who clepith there?
 It am I, (quod this messangere)
 Juno bade that thou shouldist gone,
 And toldin him what he should done
 As I have tolde you here before,
 It is no nede reherse it more,
 And wente his way whan he had saide.
 Anone this god of Slepe abraide
 Out of his slepe and gan to go,
 And did as he had bidde him do;
 He toke up the ded body sone,
 And bare it forthe to Alcyone
 His wife, the quene, there as she lay,
 Right even a quartir before day,
 And stode right at her bedd'is fete,
 And callid her right as she hete
 By name, and said; My swetè wife!
 Awake, let be your sorowful lyfe,
 For in your sorow there lyth no rede,
 For certes, swetè love! I am but dede;

H h

Ye shall me ner on lyve yse :
 But, gode swete herte ! I praye that ye
 Bury my body ; soche a tide
 Ye mowe it finde the se beside :
 And farewel swete ! my world 'is blisse !
 I pray that God your sorowe lyffe :
 To lytel while our blisse ylasteth.

With that her eyin up she casteth,
 And sawe naught. Alas ! for sorowe
 She died within the thirde morowe.

But what she said more in that swowe
 I may nat tellin you as now ;
 It were to longe for to dwel :
 My first matere I wil you tel
 Wherfore I have ytolde this thinge
 Of Alcyone and Ceix the kinge.

For this moche dare I sayin well,
 I had be dolvin everidel,
 And ded, right through defaute of slepe,
 Yf I ne had red and take kepe
 Of this ilke tale next before,
 And I wil tellin you wherfore,
 For I ne might for bote ne bale
 Slepyn or I had redde this tale
 Of this ydreinte Ceix the kinge,
 And of the goddis of Slepinge,

Whan I had red this tale wele,
 And overloked it everidele,
 Me thought wondir if it were so,
 For I had ner herde speke or tho
 Of no goddis that couldin make
 Men for to slepe ne for to wake,
 And I ne knewe ner God but one,
 And in my game I said anone,
 (And yet me lyst right il to pley)
 Rather than that I shuldin dey
 Thorough defaute of slepinge thus
 I woldin gyve thilke Morpheus,
 Or that goddesse hight Dame Juno,
 Of some wight els, I ne rought who,
 To make me slepe and have some rest
 I wil give him the althir best
 Yeste that er he abode his lyve
 And hereonwarde right now as blyve,
 If he woll make me slepe a lite,
 Of downe of pure doves white
 I wol yeve him a fethir bed
 Rayid with gold, and right wel cled
 In fine blacke sattin doutremere,
 And many a pilowe, and every bere
 Of clothe of Raines to slepe on softe,
 Him thare not nede to turnin ofte;
 And I wol yeve him al that falles
 To his chambre, and to his halles,
 I wol do painte 'hem with pure golde,
 And tapite 'hem ful many folde;
 Of one sute this shal he yhave,
 If that I wiste where were his cave,
 If he can make me slepin sone,
 As did the goddesse Quene Alcyone;
 And thus this ylke god Morpheus
 May winnin of me mo fees thus
 Than er he wanne; and to Juno
 That 'is his goddesse I shal so do,

I trowe that she shal holde her paid.

I had unneth that worde isaide,
 Right thus as I have toldin you,
 Than sodeinly, I ne wiste howe,
 Soche a luste anone me ytoke
 To slepe, that right upon my boke
 I fel aslepe, and therwith even
 Me mette so inly soche a sweven,
 So wondirfull, that nevir yet
 I trowe no man ne had the wit
 To connin wel my swevin rede,

No, nought Joseph withoutin drede
 Of Egypt, he which that rad so
 The king 'is metinge Pharao,
 No more than coude the leste of us,

Ne nat scarfly Macrobenus,
 He that wrote al the avision
 Whiche that he met Kinge Scipion,
 The noble man, the Affrican,
 Soche mervailis fortunid than
 I trowe, arede my dremis even;
 Lo ! thus it was, this was my sweven :

Me thoughtin thus, that it was Maye,
 And in the dawning there I lay
 Me met thus in my bed al naked,
 And lokid forthe, for I was waked
 With smal foulis a gret hepe,
 That had afraied me out of my slepe
 Through noise and swetnesse of ther songe;
 And as me met they fate amonge
 Upon my chambre rose without,
 Upon the tyles ovre al about,
 And evêriche songe in his wise
 The mozte swete and solempne servise
 By note that evir man I trowe
 Had herde, for some of 'hem songe lowe,
 Some high, and al of one accorde :
 To tellin shortly, at o worde,
 Was nevir herde so swete a steven,
 But it had be a thinge of heaven,
 So merie a sowne, so swete entunes,
 That certis for the towne of Tewnes
 I n'olde but I had herde 'hem singe,
 For al my chambre gan to ringe
 Through singin of ther harmony,
 For instrument nor melody
 Was no where herde yet halfe so swete,
 Nor of acorde halfe so mete,
 For there was none of 'hem that fained
 To singe, for eche of 'hem him paid
 To finde out many crafty notes,
 They ne ysparid nat ther throtes;
 And, soth to faine, my chambre was
 Ful wel depaintid, and with glas
 Were al the windowes wel yglased
 Ful clere, and nat an hole ycrased,
 That to beholde it was grete joy,
 For wholly al the story of Troy
 Was in the glaifinge ywrought thus,
 Of Hector and Kinge Priamus,
 Achilles, and Kinge Lamedon,
 And eke Medea and Jason,
 Of Paris, Heleine and Lavine;
 And all the walles with colours fine

Were paintid, bothe texte and glose,
 And al The Romaunte of the Rose :
 My wyndowes werin shet ech one,
 And through the glasse the sunne yshone
 Upon my bed with bright bemis,
 With many glad gildy stremis ;
 And eke the welkin was so faire,
 Blewe, bright, and clere, ywas the ayre,
 And ful attempre', in sothe it was,
 For neithir colde ne hote it n'as,
 Ne' in al the welkin was no clowde.

And as I lay thus, wondir lowde
 Me thought I herde an huntir blowe
 T' assay his gret horne, and to knowe
 Whethre' it was clere or horse of fowne ;

And I herde goynge up and downe
 Men, horsis, houndes, and othir thinge,
 And al men spekin of huntinge,
 How they wolde sle the harte with strength,
 And how the harte had upon length
 So moche enbosed, I n'ot nowe what.

Anon right whan I herdin that,
 How that they wolde on huntinge gone,
 I was right glad, and up anone
 I toke my horse, and forth I wente
 Out of chambre ; I nevir stente
 Tyl I come to the felde without,
 There ovirtoke I a grete rout
 Of huntirs and of foresters,
 And many relaies and limers,
 That hied 'hem to the forest fast,
 And I with 'hem : so at the last
 I askid one lad, a lymere,
 Say, felowe, who shal huntin here ?
 (Quod I) and he answered ayen,
 Sir, the Emperour Octonyen,
 (Quod he) and he is here faste by.

A goddes halfe, in gode tyme, (quod I)
 Than go we fast, and gan to ride :
 Whan we come to the forest side
 Ev'ry man ydyd right sone
 As unto huntinge fel to done.

The maistir hunte anone fote hote
 With his clere horne yblewe thremote
 At the uncouplinge of his houndis.
 Within a while the harte founde is :
 I halowed and rechafid fast
 A longe time : and so at the last
 This harte rousid and stale away
 Fro al the houndes a privy way.

The houndes had ovirshot him all,
 And were on a defaulte yfal,
 Therwith the hont full wondir fast
 Yblewe a forloyn at the laste :
 I was go walkid fro my tre,
 And as I went there came by me
 A whelpe, that fawned me as I stode,
 That had folowed and coude no gode ;
 It came and crepte to me as lowe,
 Right as it had me wele yknowe,
 Helde down his hed and joynd his eres,
 And laide al smothe adowne his heres.

I wolde have caught it up anone ;
 It fled, and was fro me ygone ;

As I folowed and it forth went,
 Downe by a floury grene it went
 Ful thick of grasse ful softe and swete,
 With flouris sele fare undir fete,
 And lytil used, it semid thus,
 For bothe Flora and Zephyrus,
 They two that makin flouris growe,
 Had made ther dwelling there I trowe,
 For it was on for to beholde
 As though the erthe there envye wolde
 To be gayir than is the heaven,
 To havin mo flouris soche seven
 As in the welkin sterris be,
 It had forget the povirte
 Of Wintir, through his coldè morowes
 That made it suffre, and his sorowes
 All was forieten, and that was sene,
 For all the wode was woxin grene,
 Swetnesse of dewe had made it waxe.

It is no nede eke for to axe
 Where there were many grene greves,
 Or thicke of trees so ful of leves,
 And every tree stode by him selve
 Fro othir wel ten fote or twelve,
 So grete trees and so huge of strength,
 Of fourty' or fifyth fadome length,
 All clene withoutin bowe or sticke,
 With croppis brode, and eke as thicke ;
 They werin not an ynche asonder,
 That it was shadde ovir all under ;
 And many' an hart and many' an hinde
 Was both before me and behinde,
 Of fawnis, sowirs, buckis, does,
 Was ful the wodge, and many roes,
 And many squirrilis, that sete
 Ful high upon the trees and ete,
 And in ther manir madin festes :
 Shortly, it was so ful of bestes
 That though Argus the noble countour
 Yfate to rekin in his countour,
 And rekin with his figures ten,
 For by tho figures newe al ken
 If they be crafty, reken and nombre,
 And tel of every thing the nombre,
 Yet shulde he faile to rekin even
 The wonders me met in my sweven :
 But forthe I romed right wondir faste
 Downe through the wode ; so at the laste
 I was ware of a man in blacke,
 That fote, and had yturned his backe
 Unto an ooke and huge tre ;
 Lord ! tho thought I, who may that be ?
 What eylich him to sittin here ?
 And anon right I went him nere ;
 Than founde I sitte evin upright
 A wondir faire welfaring knight,
 By the manir me thoughtin so
 Of gode mokil, right yonge therto,
 Of the' age of foure-and-twenty yere,
 Upon his berde but litil here,
 And he was clothid al in blacke ;
 I stalkid even unto his backe ;
 And there I stode as stil as ought,
 The sothe to say he saw me nought ;

For why? he hinge his hed adowne,
 And with a dedly sorowful sowne
 He made of rime ten verses or twelve
 Of a complainte unto himselfe,
 The moste pite and the most routh
 That evir I herde, for by trouthe
 It was grete wondir that Nature
 Might suffre any creature
 To have soche sorow' and he not ded;
 Ful pitous pale, and nothing red,
 He said a lay, a manir songe,
 Withoutin note, withoutin songe,
 And was this, for ful wel I can
 Reherse it; right thus it began:

I have of sorowe so grete wone,
 That joye ne get I nevir none,
 Nowe that I se my lady bright,
 Which I have loved with all my might,
 Is fro me ded, and is agone,
 And thus in sorowe' leste me alone:
 Alas! o Dethe! what eylyth the
 That thou n'oldist have takin me
 Whan that thou toke my lady swete?
 Of all godenes she had none mete,
 That was so faire, so freshe, so fre,
 So gode, that men may wel yse.

Whan he had made thus his complainte
 His sorowful hert gan fast fainte,
 And his spiritis wexin dede,
 The blode was fledde for pure drede
 Downe to his herte to makin him warme,
 For wel it feled the herte had harme,
 To wete eke why it was adradde,
 By kinde, and for to make it gladde,
 For it is membre principal
 Of the body, and that made al
 His hewe ychaunge, and wexin grene
 And pale for there no blode is sene
 Within no manir lymme of his.

Anon therwith, whan I sawe this,
 He farde thus yvil there he sete,
 I went and stode right at his fete,
 And grette him, but he spake right nought
 But arguid with his owne thought,
 And in his witte disputid faste
 Bothe why and howe his lyfe might laste,
 Him thought his sorowes were so smerte,
 And lay so colde upon his herte.

So through his sorowe' and holy thought
 Made him that he ne herde me nought,
 For he had welnye lost his minde,
 Though Pan, that men clepe god of Kinde
 Were for his sorowes ner so wrothe.

But at the last, to faine right sothe,
 He was ware of me howe I stode
 Before him and did of my hode,
 And had gret him as I best coude
 Debonairly and nothing loude;
 He said, I pray the be not wrothe,
 I herde the not, to faine the sothe,
 Ne I sawe the not, Sir, truely.

Ah, gode Sir! tho no force (quod I)
 I am right sory' if I have ought
 Distroublid you out of your thought;

Forieve me if I have myffetake.

Yes, the amendes is light to make,
 (Quod he) for there lithè non therto;
 There is nothing missaide nor do.

Lo howe godely yspake this knight,
 As it had be anothir wight,
 And made it neithir tough ne queint!
 And I sawe that, and gan me' aqueint
 With him, and founde him so trefable,
 Right wondir skylful and reso'nable,
 As me thoughtin, for all his bale,
 Anon right I gan finde a tale
 To him, to loken where I might ought
 Have more knowleging of his thought.

Sir, (quod I) this game is ydone,
 I holde that this hart be ygone,
 These huntis can him no where se.

I do no force therof, (quod he)
 My thought is theron ner a dele.
 By' our Lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele,
 Right so me thinkith by your chere;
 But, Sir, o thing wollin ye here?
 Me thinketh in gret sorowe' I you se,
 But certis, Sir, and if that ye
 Wolde aught discovir me your wo
 I wolde, as wise God helpe me so,
 Amende it if I can or may,
 Ye mowin prove it by assay,
 For by my trouthe, to make you whole
 I wol do al my powir whole;
 And telleth me of your sorowes smert,
 Paraunter it may ese your herte,
 That semeth ful syke undir your side.

With that he loked on me aside,
 As who saithe nay, that n'yl not be.

Graunt mercy, my gode frende! (quod he)
 I thanke the that thou woldist so,
 But it may ner the rather be do;
 No man ne may my sorowe glade,
 That maketh my hewe to fal and fade,
 And hath myn understanding lorne,
 That me is wo that I was borne:
 May nought make my sorowis flyde,
 Not all the rem'edies of Ovide,
 Ne Orpheus, god of Melodie,
 Ne Dædalus, with his playes flye,
 Ne hele me may no phyficien,
 Nought Hippocrates ne Galen;
 Me' is wo that I live houris twelve;
 But whofo wol assaye him selve
 Whether his hert can have pite
 Of any sorowe let him se me,
 I wretche, that dethe hath made al naked
 Of al the blisse that er was maked,
 I wrothe, the werste of allè wightes,
 That hate my dayis and my nightes;
 My lyfe, my lustis, be me lothe,
 For allè fare and I be wrothe;
 The pure deth is so ful my foe
 That I wolde die it wil not foe,
 For whan I folowe' it it wil flye,
 I wold have him it n'il not me;
 And this is paine withoutin rede,
 Alway dyinge and be not dede,

That Sisyphus that lyeth in hel
 Nay may not of more sorowe tel;
 And who so wiste al, by my trouthe,
 Al my sorowe, but he hadde routh
 And pyte of my sorowes smerte
 That man yhath a fendely herte,
 For who so seeth me first on morowe
 May sayne that he hath met with Sorowe,
 For I am Sorowe, and Sorowe is I,
 Alas! and I wyl tel the why,
 My sorowe is tournid to playnyng,
 And al my laughtir to weping,
 My glad thoughtis to hevynesse,
 In travaile is myn ydlenesse,
 And eke my rest, my wele is wo,
 My gode is harme, and evirmo
 In wrathe is tournid my playnyng,
 And my delite in sorowing,
 Myn hele is turned into sickenesse,
 In drede is al my fyckernesse,
 To derke is turnid al my lyght,
 My wytte is foly, my day night,
 My love is hate, my slepe wakyng,
 My mirth and melis is fasting,
 My countinaunce is nicete,
 And al abawed where so I be,
 My pece is pleding, and in werre,
 Alas, howe might I fare in werre!

My boldenesse is turnid to shame,
 For false Fortune hath played a game
 At chesse with me, alas the while!
 The trayteresse false and ful of gyle,
 That al behoteth and nothing halte,
 She gothe upright and yet she halte,
 That baggith foule and lokith fayre,
 The dispitous and debonaire,
 That scornith many a cature;
 An ydole of false purtraiture
 Is she, for she wol sonè wryen;
 She is the monstri's hed ywryen,
 As filthe, ovir ystrowed with floures,
 Her mostè worship, and her floures,
 To lyen, for that is her nature,
 Withoutin faith, lawe, or mesure,
 She false is, and evir laughing
 With one eye, and that othir weping,
 That is brought up she set al downe;
 I likin her to the scorpiowne,
 That is a false and flatteryng best,
 For with his hed he makith fest,
 But al amynd his flatteryng
 With his taile he wil sorely styng,
 And envenim, and so wil she;
 She is the envious Charite,
 That is aye false and semith wele,
 So turnith she her falsè whele
 About, for it is nothing stable,
 Nowe by the fyre nowe at the table;
 Ful many' one hath she thus yblent;
 She is playe of enchauntement,
 That semith one and is not so:
 The falsè thefe what hath she do
 Trowest thou? by' our Lorde I wil the say.
 At chesse with me she gan to play;

With her false draughtis ful divers
 She stale on me, and toke my fers;
 And whan I sawe my fers away,
 Alas! I couth no lengir play,
 But sayid, Farewel swete! ywis,
 And farewell al that er there is;
 Therwith Fortune ysaid Cheke here,
 And mate in the myd poynt of the checkere
 With a paunè errant. Alas!
 Ful craftyir to play she was
 Than Athalus, that made the game
 First of the chesse, so was his name;
 But God wolde I had ones or twise
 Iconde and knowe the jeoperdise
 That coude the Greke Pythagores,
 I shulde have plaide the bet at ches,
 And kept my fers the bet therby;
 And though wherto? for trewily
 I holde that wishe not worthe a stre,
 It had be ner the bet for me,
 For Fortune can so many' a wyle
 Ther be but fewe can her begile,
 And eke she is the lasse to blame,
 My selfe I wolde have do the same,
 Before God, had I ben as she,
 She ought the more excusid be;
 For this I say yet more therto,
 Had I be God, and might have do
 My wyl, whan she my fers ycaught
 I wolde have drawn the same draught,
 For al so wise God gyve me reste
 I dare wel swere she toke the beste,
 Put throughe that draught I have ylorne
 My blyffe, alas that I was borne!
 For evirmore I trowe trewly,
 For al my wil, my luste wholly
 Is turne, but wote ye what to done?
 By' our Lorde it is to dyin sone,
 For nothings I ne leve it nought
 But lyve and dye right in this thought;
 There n'ys planet in firmamente,
 Ne' in ayre ne' in erthe none elements,
 That they ne yeve me' a yeste echone
 Of wepyng whan I am alone,
 For whan that I advise me wele,
 And bethinke me everydele
 How that there lieth in rekinige
 In my sorowis for nothings,
 And howe there livith no gladnesse
 May gladdin me of my distresse,
 And howe I have losse suffisaunce,
 And therto I have no plesaunce,
 Than may I say I have right nought;
 And whan al this falleth in my thought,
 Alas! than am I ovircome,
 For that is done this not to come:
 I have more sorowe than Tantale.

And whan I herde him tel this tale
 Thus pitously as I you tell,
 Unnethis myght I lengir dwell,
 It did myn herte so mochill wo.
 A, gode Sir! (quod I) say nat so,
 Have some pite on your nature,
 That fourmid you to a cature;

Remembrith you of Socrates,
For he ne countith not thre strees
Of nought that Fortune coude ydo.

No, (quod he) I ne can not so.

Why, gode Sir, yes parde, (quod I)

Ne say not so, for truily

Though ye had lost the feris twelve,

And for sorowe murdrid your selve,

Ye shulde be dampnid in this case,

By as gode right as Medea was,

That slough her childrin for Jafon,

And Phyllis for Demophoon,

That hing her self, so welaway!

For he had brekin his terme day

To come to her. Anothir rage

Had Dido, the Quene of Carthage,

That slough her self for Æneas

Was false, for whiche a fole she was;

And Echo dyed for Narcissus

Ne wolde nat love her; and right thus

Hath many' an othir fole done,

And for Dalila died Sampfone,

That sloughe him selfe with a pilere;

But there is no man alive here

Wolde for ther feris make this wo.

Why so? (quod he) it is not so,

Thou wotest ful lytil what thou menest,

For I have losse more than thou wenest.

And howe may that ybe? (quod I)

Gode Sir; tellith me al wholly

In what wise, howe, why, and wherfore,

That ye have thus your blisse ylore.

Blithely, (quod he;) come, sit the down;

I tel the on condicioun

Thou shalte wholly with all thy wit

Do thyne entente to herkin it.

Yes, Sir. Than swere thy trouthe therto,

Gladly to holdin the hereto.

I shal right blithe, so God me save,

Wholly with all the witte I have

Here you as wel as er I can.

A Godde's halfe, (quod he) and began.

Sir, (quod he) fithins firste I couthe

Have any manir witte fro youthe,

Or kindly understandinge

To comprehende in any thinge

What love was in mine ownè wit,

Dredileffe I have evir yet

Be tributary and yeve rente

To Love wholly, with gode entente,

And through plesaunce become his thral

With gode wil, body, herte, and al;

Al this I put in his servage

As to my lorde, and dyd homage;

And full devoutly' I praide hym tho

He shulde beset myne herte so

That it plesaunce unto him were

And worship to my lady dere.

And this was long and many' a yere

(Er that min hert was set o where)

That I dyd thus, and ne wist why,

I trowe it came me kindly;

Paraunter I was thereto most able

As a white wal or a table,

For it' is redy to catche and take

Al that men wollin therin make,

Whethir men will portrey or painte

Be the werkis nevir so quainte.

And thilke tyme I farid right so,

I was able to' have lernid tho,

And to have conde as wel or better

Parauntir eithir arte or lettir,

But for love came first in my thought

Therefore I ne forgate it nought;

I chees love to be my first crafte,

And therefore it is with me laste;

For why? I toke' it of so yonge age

That malice ne had my corage,

Not that time turnid to nothing

Thorough to mokil knowleging,

For that tyme Youth my maistresse

Governid me in ydilnesse,

For it was in my firste youth,

And though ful litil gode I couthe,

For al my werkis were flittyng

That time, and al my thought varying,

Al thinges were to me yliche gode,

That knewe I tho, but thus it stode:

It happed that I came on a day

In to a place there that I sey

Trewly the fairist companie

Of ladies that er man with eye

Had sene togethers in o place;

Shal I clepe it happe eithir grace

That brought me there? nought but Fortune,

That is to lyin ful comune,

The false traitresse perverse,

God wolde that I coude clepe her werse,

For now she worchith me ful wo,

And I wol tel the sone why so.

Amonges these ladies thus echone,

The sothe to sayin, I sawe one

That ne was lyke none of the route,

For I dare swere, withoutin doute,

That as the sommer's sonne bright

Is fairer, clerer, and hath more lyght,

Than any other planet in heven,

The monè or the sterris seven,

For al the worlde right so had she,

Surmountin' hem al of beaute,

Of manir, and of comlynesse

Of stature, and wel set gladnesse,

Of godelyhede, and so wel besey,

Shortly, what shal I more ysey?

By God, and by his holowes twelve,

It was my swete right al her selve;

She had so stedfast countenaunce,

So noble porte and maintenaunce,

And Love, that wel yherde my bone,

Yhad espyid me thus sone

That she fill sonè in my thought;

As helpe me God so was I cought

So sodainly, that I ne toke

No maner counsaile but at her loken

And at min herte; for why? her eyen

So gladly I trowe myn herte seyne,

That purely tho min ownè thought

Said it were but serve her for nought

Than with anothir to be wele;
 And it was sothe, for every dele
 I wil anone right tel the why:
 I sawe her daunce so comily,
 Carol and sing so swetily,
 And laugh and play so womanly,
 And lokin so debonairly,
 So godely speke and so frendely,
 That certes I trowe that evirmore
 N'as sene so blisful a trefore;
 For every here on her hed,
 The sothe to say, it was not red,
 Ne neithir yelow ne browne it n'as,
 Me thought moste like to golde it was;
 And whiche eyin my lady had,
 Debonaire, gode, and glad, and sad,
 Simple, of gode mokil, not to wide;
 Therto her loke n'as not aside,
 Ne ovirthwart, but beset so wele
 It drewe and toke up everydele
 Al whiche that on her gan beholde;
 Her eyin semed anone she wolde
 Have mercy, Folly wendin so,
 But it was ner the rathir do;
 It n'as no counterfetid thinge,
 It was her owne pure lokin,
 Whiche that the goddesse Dame Nature
 Had made 'hem opin by mesure
 And close, for were she ner so glad
 Her lokin was not solishe sprad
 Ne wildily though that she plaide,
 But er me thought her eyin saide
 By God my wrathe is al forieve;
 Therwith her liste so well to live
 That Dulnesse was of her adrad;
 She n'as to sobre ne to glad;
 In allè thingis more mesure
 Ne had never I trowe cature;
 But many' one with her loke she herte,
 And that fate her full lyte at herte,
 For she knewe nothinge of ther thought;
 But wher she knewe or knewe it nought
 Algate she ne' rought of 'hem a stre;
 To get her love no nere n'as he
 That woned at home than he in Inde;
 The formist was alway behinde;
 But gode folke ovir al othir
 She loved as man may his brothir,
 Of whiche love she was wondir large
 In skilful placis that bere charge;
 But whiche a visage had she therto!
 Alas! my herte is wondir wo
 That I ne can discrivin it,
 Me lackith bothe Englishe and wit
 For to undo it at the ful,
 And eke my spirites ben so dull
 So gret a thinge for to devise;
 I have no wyt that can suffyse
 To comprehendin her beaute;
 But thus moche I dare faine, that she
 Was white, rody, freshe, lifely hewed,
 And every day her beaute newed;
 And nyghe her face was aldirbeste,
 For certis Nature had soche leste

To make that faire, that trewly she
 Was her chefe patron of beaute,
 And chefe ensample' of al her werke
 And monstre, for be' it ner so derke
 Me thinketh I se her evirmo;
 And yet moreovir, though al tho
 That ever lived were now a lyve
 Ne wolde thei have founde to discrive
 In al her face a wickid signe,
 For it was sad, simple, and benigne.

And soche a godely swete speche
 Yhad that swete, my lyv'is leche
 So frendely, and so well ygrounded,
 Upon reson so wel ifounded,
 And so trefable to al gode,
 That I dare swere wel by the rode
 Of eloquence was never fonde
 So swete a fowning and faconde,
 Ne trewir tonged, ne scornid lasse,
 Ne bet coude hele, that by the masse
 I durste swere, though the Pope it longe,
 That ther was ner yet through her tonge
 Man ne woman gretly harmid,
 As for her was al harme yhid,
 Ne lasse flatirng in her worde,
 That purely her simple recorde
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde
 Or trouthe of any man's honde.

Ne chide she coude never a dele,
 That knowith al the worlde ful wele.
 But soche a fairenesse of a necke
 Yhad that swete, that bone nor brecke
 N'as there none sein that misselatte,
 It was white, smothe, streight, and pure flatte,
 Withoutin hole or canel bone,
 And by seming she ne had none.

Her throte, as I have nowe memoire,
 Semed as a rounde tour of yvoire,
 Of gode gretnesse, and not to grete;
 And Faire White ywas she hete,
 That was my ladies name right,
 And she was therto faire and bright;
 She ne had not her name wronge:
 Right faire sholdirs and body longe
 She had, and armis evir lith,
 Fattishe, fleshy, nat grete ther with;
 Right white handis, and nailis rede;
 Rounde brestis; and of a gode brede
 Her hippis were; a streight flatte backe,
 I knewe on her none othir lacke,
 That al her limmis n'ere pure sewing,
 In as ferre as I had knowing:
 Therto she coude so wel yplaye
 What that her lyfte, that I dare saye
 That she was lyke to torchè bright,
 That every man may take of light
 Ynough, and it hath ner the lesse
 Of manir and of comlynesse.

Right so farid my lady dere,
 For every wight of her manere
 Might cathe ynough if that he wolde,
 Yf he had eyen her to beholde,
 For I dare swere wel if that she
 Had amonge tenne thousande ybe

She woldin have be at the beste
 A chese myroure of al the feste,
 Though they had stondin in a rowe
 To mennis eyen that coude have knowe;
 For where so men had plaide or waked
 Me thought the felowshippe as naked
 Withoutin her that I sawe ones
 As a corowne withoutin stones;
 Trewily she was to min eye
 The solein phœnix of Arabye,
 For there livith nevir but one,
 Ne suche as she ne knowe I none:
 To speke of godenesse, trewily she
 Had as mochil debonairete
 As er had Hester in the Bible,
 And more, if more were possible;
 And, sothe to sayin, therewithal
 She hadde a witte so general,
 So whole enclinid to al gode,
 That al her witte was sette by the rode
 Without malyce, upon gladnesse;
 And therto I sawe ner yet a lesse
 Harmful than she was in doing;
 I say not that she n' hadde knowyng
 What harme ywas, or ellis she
 Had coude no gode, so thinkith me;
 And trewily for to speke of trouthe,
 But she had had it had be routhe,
 Therof she had so moche her dele,
 And I dare saine and swere it wele,
 That Trouthe him selfe over al and al
 Had chose his manor principal
 In her, that was his resting place;
 Therto she had the moste grace
 To have stedfaste perseveraunce,
 And esy' attempre govirnaunce,
 That evir I knewe or wiste yet,
 So pure sufferaunt was her wit;
 And reson gladly she understode,
 It solowid wel she coude gode;
 She usid gladly to do wele:
 These were her manirs every dele.

Therewith she lovid so wel right
 She wronge do woldin to no wight;
 No wight ne might do her no shame,
 She lovid so wel her owne name.

Her lust to holde no wight in honde,
 Ne be thou sikir she wolde not fonde
 To holdin no wight in balaunce
 By halfe worde ne by couninaunce,
 But if men wolde upon her lye,
 Ne sende men into Walakye,
 To Pruise and to Tartarie,
 To Alisaundrie ne Turkye,
 And bidde him fast anon that he
 Go hodelesse into the drie se,
 And come home by the Carrenare;

And, Sir, be ye now full ryght ware
 That I may of you here men saine
 Wurshippe or that ye come againe.

She ne used no soche knackis smale:
 But therfore that I tel my tale,
 Right on this same, as I have saide,
 Was wholly al my love ylaide,

For certis she was that swete wife,
 My suffisaunce, my luste, my life,
 Min hope, min hele, and al my blesse,
 My worlde's welfare and my goddesse,
 And I wholly hers, and every dele.

By our Lorde! (quod I) I trowe you wele,
 Hardly your love was wel beset,
 I n'ot howe it might have do bet.
 Bettir! ne not so wel (quod he.)
 I trowe it, Sir, (quod I) parde.

Nay leve it wel. Sir, so do I;
 I leve you wel that trewily
 You thought that she ywas the best,
 And to beholde the alderfairest,
 Who so had loked her with your eyen.

With myn! nay, al whiche that her seyen
 Sayid and swore that it was so,
 And though they ne had I wolde tho
 Have lovid best my lady fre
 Though I had had al the beaute
 That er had Alcibiades,
 And al the strength of Hercules,
 And thereto had the worthinesse
 Of Alisaundre, and al the richesse
 That evir was in Babyloine,
 In Carthage or in Macedoine,
 Or in Rome or in Nineve,
 And therto al so hardy be
 As was Hector, so have I joye,
 That Achilles yfough at Troye,
 And therefore was he slayne also
 In a temple, for bothe two
 Were slaine, he and Antilegius,
 And so faithe Darius Fregius,
 For the love of Polixena,
 Or ben as wise as Minerva,
 I wolde evir withoutin drede
 Have lovid her, for I must nede.

Nede! nay, trewily I gabbè now;
 Nought nede, and I wol tellin howe,
 For of golde wil min herte it wolde,
 And eke to love her I was holde,
 As for the fairist and the beste;
 She was as gode, so have I repte,
 As was Penelope of Grece,
 Or as the noble wife Lucrece,
 That was the beste, he tellith thus
 The Roman Titus Livius,
 She was as gode, and nothing like,
 Though ther stories be autentike,
 Algate she was as trewe as she.

But wherfore that I tellin the,
 Whan that I first my lady sey
 I was right yonge, the sothe to sey,
 And ful grete nede I had to lerne,
 Whan that myn hertè woldin yerne;
 To love it was a gret emprise,
 But as my wite wolde beste suffise;
 Aftir my yonge and childely wit
 Withoutin drede I beset it
 To lovin her in my beste wife,
 To do her wurship and the servise
 Whiche that I coude tho, by my trouthe,
 Withoutin faining eithir flouthe,

For wondir faine I wolde her se;
So mokill it amendid me,
That whan I sawe her a morowe
I was warished of al my sorowe
Of al day aftir tel' it were eve;
Me thoughtin nothings might me greve
Were my sorowes nevir so smerte,
And yet she syt so in min herte
That by my trouthe I n'oldè nought
For al this worlde out of my thought
Yleve my lady; no trewly.

Now by my trouthe, Sir, (quod I)
Me thinkith you have soche a chaunce
As shrifte without in repentaunce.

Repentaunce nay, nay; fye! (quod he)
Shuldin I nowe repentin me
To love? nay, certes, than were I wel
Worse than ywas Achitophel
Or Antenor, so have I joye,
The traitour that betrayid Troye,
Or than the false Ganelion,
He that purchasid the traizon
Of Roulande and of Oliver:—
Nay, while that I am alive here
I n'yl foriet her nevirmo.

Nowe, gode Sir, quod I to him tho,
Ye have wel tolde me here before,
It is no nede to reherse it more,
Howe that ye sawe her first, and where,
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To her whiche was your firste speche,
Therof I woldè you beseche,
And howe that she knewe first your thought,
Whethir ye lovid her or nought,
And telleth me eke what ye have lore;
I herde you tellin here before,
Ye saide thou n'otist what thou menest,
For I have losse more than thou wenest?
And what losse is that? (quod I tho;)
N'il she not love you? is it so?
Or havin ye ought done amis,
That she hath lest you? is it this?
For Godd'is love telleth me al.

Before God (quod she) and I shal.
I say right as I have ysaide,
On her was al my love ylaide,
And yet she n'iste it ner a dele
Not longè tyme, levith it wele,
For be right fykir I durst nought
For al this worlde tel her my thought,
Ne' I wolde have wrathid her trewly;
For wost thou why? she was lady
Of the body that had the herte,
And whofo' hath that may not asterte.

But for to kepe me fro' ydlenesse
Trewly I dyd my businesse
To make songis as I best coude,
And oftin time I songe 'hem loude,
And made songis this a grete dele,
Although I coud nat make so wele
Songis, ne knewe the arte so al,
As coude Lamek'is sone Tubal,
That founde out firste the arte of songe,
For as his brothir's hamire ronge

Upon his anvelt up and downe
Therof he toke the firste sowne.

But Grekes faine of Pythagoras
That he the first findir ywas
Of the' arte, Aurora tellith so;
But therof no force of 'hem two;
Algatis songis thus I made
Of my felyng, min herte to glade,
And lo! this was the althir first,
I n'ot whethir it were the worst:

Lorde! it makith min herte light
Whan that I thinke on that swete wight
That is so semely on to se,
And wishe to God it might so be
That she wolde holde me for her knight,
My lady, that' is so faire and bright.

Nowe have I tolde the, soth to say,
My firste songe. Upon a day
I bethought me what mochil wo
And sorowe that I suffrid tho
For her, and yet she wiste it nought;
Ne tel her durst I not my thought:
Alas! thought I, I can no rede,
And but I tel her, I am but dede,
And if I tel her, to say sothe

I am adradde she wol be wrothe:
Alas' what shal I than ydo?
In this debate I was so wo
Me thought myne herte brast atwaine,
So at the last, sothe for to faine,
I bethought me that Dame Nature
Ne formid nevir in creture
So mochil beauty trewly
And bountie withoutin mercy.

In hope of that my tale I tolde,
With sorowe, as that I ner sholde
For nedis, and maugre myne hedded,
I must have tolde her or be ded.
I n'ot wel howe that I began,
Ful yvil reherse it I can,
And eke, as helpe me God withal,
I trowe it was in the dismal,
That was the ten woundes of Egypte.
For many a worde I ovirskipte
In telling my tale, for pure fere
Lest that my wordis myselfet were;
With sorowful hert and woundes dede,
Softely, and quaking for pure dreden
And shame, and flinting in my tale
For ferde, and min hewe allè paid;
Ful ofte I wexte bothe pale and red,
Bowing to her I hinge the hed;
I durst not onis loke her on,
For wit, manir, and al, was gone;
I saide, Mercy, swete! and no more:
It n'as no game; it fate me fore.

So at the laste, the sothe to faine,
Whan that myne herte was come againe,
To tellin shortly al my speche,
With whole herte I gan her beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete,
And swore and hertely gan her beto
Evir to be stedfaste and trewe,
And love her alway freshly newe,

And nevir othir lady have,
 And al her worship for to save
 As I beste coude, I fwere her this,
 For yours is al that er ther is,
 For evirmore, myne herte swete!
 And ner to false you but I mete
 In'yl, as wise God helpe me so.

And whan I had my tale ydo
 God wote she' acomptid not a stre
 Of al my tale, so thoughtin me:
 To tel shortly, right as it is,
 Trewly her answer it was this;
 I can not now wel contrefete
 Her wordis, but this was the grete
 Of her answer: she sayid Nay
 All utterly. Alas that day
 The sorowe I suffrid and the wo!
 That trewly Cassandra, that so
 Bewaylid the distruccion
 Of Troye and of Ilion
 Had ner soche sorowe as I tho;
 I durstin no more say therto
 For pure fere, but ystale away,
 And thus I lyved ful many a day
 That trewly I had no nede
 Ferthir than at my bedd'is hede
 Nevir a day to sechin sorowe,
 I founde it redy every morowe;
 For why? I loved her in no gere.

So it befell an othir yere
 I thought onis I wouldin fonde
 To doe her knowe and undirstonde
 My wo; and she well undirstode
 That I ne wilnid thyng but gode
 And worship, and to kepe her name
 Ovir all thynges, and drede her shame,
 And was so busie her to serve,
 And pitie were I shouldin sterve,
 Sithe that I wilned none harme iwis.

So when my ladie knewe all this,
 My ladie yave me all whollie
 The noble yest of her mercie,
 Savyng her worship by al waies;
 Dredelesse I mene none othir waies,
 And therewith she yave me a ryng,
 I trowe it was the firste thyng:
 But if myne herte was iwaxe
 Glad that it is no nede to axe.

As helpe me God I was as blive
 Yraisd as fro deth to live,
 Of all happis the aldirbest,
 The gladdist and the moste at rest
 For truilie that swete wight,
 When I had wrong and she the right,
 She wouldin alwaie so godelie
 Foryeve me so debonairlie;
 In alle my youth, in alle chaunce,
 She toke me in her govirnaunce;
 Therewith she was alwaie so true,
 Our joye wasevir iliche newe;
 Our hertis werne so even a paire,
 That nevir n'as that one contraire
 Unto that othir for no wo,
 For sothe iliche thei suffrid tho.

O blisse, and eke o sorowe bothe!
 Illiche thei were bothe glad and wrothe.

All was us one withoutin were;
 And thus we lived full many a yere
 So well I can not tellin how.

Sir, (quod I) and where is she now?
 Now! quod he, and ystinte anone,
 Therewith he woxe as dedde as stone,
 And faied, Alas that I was bore!
 That was the losse that here before
 I tolde the that I had ylorne.

Bethinke the how I faied beforne
 Thou woste ful lityl what thou menest,
 For I have losse more then thou wenest.

God wot, alas! right that was she.
 Alas, Sir! how? what maie that be?
 She is dedde! Naie! Yes, by my trouthe.

Is that your losse? by God it is routhe.
 And with that word right anone
 Thei gan to strake forthe; all was done
 For that tyme the hart huntyng.

With that me thoughtin that this kyng
 Began homewardis for to ride
 Unto a place was there beside,
 Whiche that was from us but a lite,
 A long castill with wallis white,
 By Saint John, on a richè hill,
 As me mette; but thus it befill:

Right thus me mette, as I you tell,
 That in the castell there was a bell,
 As it had smittin houris twelve,
 And therewith I awoke my selve,
 And found me lying in my bedde,
 And the boke whiche that I had redde
 Of Alcyone and Ceix the kyng,
 And of the goddis of Slepynge,
 I found it in myne hond ful evin;
 Thought I this is so queint a swevin
 That I would by processe of tyme
 Fonde to put this swevin in rime
 As I can best, and that anon:
 This was my swevin, now it is doen.

*This seems an envoy to the Duke of Lancaster after his
 loss of Blanch.*

My master, &c. When of Christ our kyng
 Was askid, What is trothe or sothfastnesse,
 He not a worde answerde to that askyng,
 As who saith, no manne is all true I gesse;
 And therefore though I hight for to expresse
 The sorowe and wo that is in mariage
 I dare not writen of it no wickidnesse,
 Lest I my self fall est in soche dotage.

I woll not faie how that it is the chaine
 Of Sathanas on whiche he knawith ever,
 But I dare faine were he out of his paine
 As by his will he would be boundin never;
 But thilke dotid sole that est hath lever
 Ichainid be than out of prisone crepe,
 God let hym nevir fro his woe discever,
 Ne no man hym bewailin though he wepe.

But yet lesse thou do worse takith a wife;
Bet is to wedde than brennin in worse wife;
 But thou shalt have sorowe on thy fleshe thy life,
 And ben thy wiv'is thralle, as saine these wife;
 And if that holy writte maie not suffise,
 Experience shall the teche, so maie happe:
 Take the waie levir to be taken in Frise
 Then est to fall of weddyng in the trappe.

This lityl writte, proverbis or figure,
I send you, takith kepe of it I rede;
Unwise is he that can no wele endure;
If thou be sikir put the not in drede.
The Wife of Bathe I praie you that ye rede
Of this matter whiche that we have on honde;
God grauntin you your life frely to lede
In fredome, for foule is it to be bonde.

THE ASSEMBLY OF FOUR

THE ASSEMBLE OF FOULES.

All Fowles are gathered before Nature on St. Valentine's Day to chuse their mates. A formal eagle being beloved of three tercels requireth a year's respite to make her choice, upon this triall, Qui bien aime tard oublie, he that loveth well is slow to forget.

THE life so short, the craft so long to lerne,
The assaye so hard, so sharp the conquering,
The dredefull joy, alwaie that flit so yerne,
All this mene I by Love, that my felyng
Astonieth with his wondirfull werkyng
So fore iwis, that when I on him thinke
Naught wete I well whether I flete or sink.

For all be that I knowe not Love in dede,
Ne wot how that he quitith folke ther hire,
Yet happith me full ofte in bokis rede
Of his miraculis and his cruill ire,
There rede I well he woll be lorde and fire :
I dare not saie his strokis be so fore,
But God save soche a lorde I can no more.

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,
On bokis rede I oft, as I you tolde,
But wherfore that I speke all this, naught yore
Agon it happid me for to beholde
Upon a boke i writte with lettirs old,
And thereupon a certain thing to lerne,
The longè daie full fast I radde and yerne;

For out of the old feldis, as men saieth,
Comith all this newe corne fro yere to yere,
And out of oldè bokis, in gode saieth,
Comith all this newe science that men lere :
But now to purpose : as of this mattere
To redin forthe, it gan me so delite
That all the daie me thought it but a lite.

This boke of which I makin mencion
Entitlid was dight thus, as I shall tell,
Tullius of the Drame of Scipion;
Chapiters seven it had of heven and hell.
And yerth, and foulis that therein do dwell,
Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,
Of this sentence I woll you saine the grete.

First tellith it when Scipion was come
In Affrike how he metith Massinisse,
That hym for joie in armis hath inome ;
Then tellith he her speche and all the blisse
That was betwixt 'hem till the daie gan misse,
And how his auncester Affrikan so dere
Gan in his slepe that night till hym appere :

Then tellith it that from a starrie place
How Affrikan hath hym Carthage yshewed,
And warnid hym beforne of all his grace,
And saied hym, What man, lerid eithir leude,
That lovith common profite well itheude,
He should into a blisfull place ywende,
There as joye is that last withoutin ende :

Then askid he if folke that here ben dede
Have life and dwellyng in an othir place ?
And Affrikan saied Ye, withoutin drede,
And how our present worly liv'is space
N'is but a manir deth, what waie we trace,
And rightfull folke shull gon aftir thei die
To heven, and shewid hym the Galaxie :

Then shewed he him the little yerth that here is
To regarde of the hevin's quantite,
And after shewid he hym the nine speris,
And aftir that the melodie herd he
That comith of thylke speris thryis thre,
That welles of musike ben and melodie
In this worlde here and cause of harmonie :

Then saied he him, Sens that yerth was so lite,
And full of tourment and of hardè grace,
That he ne shuld hym in this worlde delite ;
Then told he him in certain yeris space
That every sterre should come into his place
There it was first, and all should out of mind
That in this world is doen of all mankynd :

Then praied hym Scipion to tell hym all
The waie to come into that hevin blisse;
And he saied, First knowe thyself immortal,
And loke aie busely that thou werche and wisse
To common profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swiftly unto that place dere
That full of blisse is and of soules clere.

And brekirs of the lawe, the sothe to faine,
And likerous folke astir that thei ben dede,
Shall whirle about the worlde alwaie in pain
Till many' a worlde be passid, out of drede,
And then foryeve all ther wickid dede;
Then shullin thei come to that blisfull place,
To whiche to comin God sendin the grace.

The daie gan failin; and the darkè night,
That revith bestis from their businesse,
Berafte me my boke for lacke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfilled of thought and busie hevinesse,
For bothe I had thyng whiche that I ne wolde,
And eke I ne had that thyng that I wolde.

But, finally, my spirite at the laste,
For werie of my labour all that daie,
Toke rest, that madin me to slepin faste,
And in my slepe I met as that I laie
How Affrikan, right in the self araie
That Scipion hym sawe before that tide,
Was come, and stode right at my bedd'is side.

The werie huntir slepyng in his bedde
The wodde ayen his minde goith anone,
The judge ydremith how his plees be spedde,
The cartir dremith how his cartis gone,
The rich of gold, the knight fight with his sone,
The sicke ymette he drinkith of the tonne,
The lovir mette he hath his ladie wonne.

Can I not faine if that the cause ywere
For I had radde of Affrican beforne
That madin me to mete that he stode there,
But thus said he; Thou hast the so wel borne
In lokyng of myne olde boke all to torne,
Of which Macrobie ne raught not a lite,
That somedele of thy labour would I quite.

Thou Citherea, blisfull ladie swete!
That with thy fire brond dauntist when the lest,
That madist me this swevin for to mete,
Be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best,
As wisely as I feigh the north northwest
When I began my swevin for to write,
So yeve me might to rime it and endite.

This foresaid Affrikan me hent anone,
And forthe with hym unto a gate ybrought
Right of a parke ywallid with grene ston,
And o'er the gate with lettirs large ywrought
There werin versis writtin, as me thought,
On eithir halfe, of full grete difference,
On which I shall you saie the plain sentence.

Through me men gon into that blisful place
Of hertis hele and dedly woundis cure,
Through me men gone into the well of grace,
There grene and lustie Maie shall er endure;
This is the waie to all gode avinture:
Be glad, thou reader, and thy sorowe' of cast,
All open am I; passe in, and spede the fast.

Through me men gon, then spake that othir side,
Unto the mortall strokis of the spere,
Of whiche Disdain and Daungir is the gide,
There nevir tre shall fruiet ne levis bere;
This streame you ledith to the sorowfull were
There as the fishe in prison is all drie;
Th' eschewyng is onely the remedie.

These versis of gold and asure writte were,
Of whiche I gan astonied to beholde,
For with that one encrefid all my fere,
And with that othir gan my herte to bolde;
That one me het, that othir did me colde:
No wit had I for errour for to chese
To entre' or flie, or me to save or lese.

Right as betwixin adamantis two
Of evin weight a pece of yron set
Ne hath no might to movin to ne fro,
For what that one maie hale that othir let;
So fared I, that I n'ist where me was bet
To entre' or leve, til Affrican my gide
Me hent, and shove in at the gatis wide,

And saied, It standith writtin in thy face
Thyne errour, though thou tell it not to me,
But dred the not to come into this place,
For this writyng is nothyng mente by the,
Ne by none but he Lov'is servaunt be,
For thou of love hast lost thy tast I gesse,
As sicke man hath of swete and bittirnesse.

But natheles, although that thou be dull,
That which thou canst not doe yet maiest thou se,
For many a man that maie not stande a pull
Yet liketh it hym at wrestlyng for to be,
And demith whethir he doe bet or he;
And if thou haddist connyng for t' endite
I shall the shewin mattir of to write.

With that my hand in his he toke anon,
Of whiche I comfort caught, and went in fast;
But Lorde! so I was glad and well begon!
For ovir all where I myne eyin cast
Were treis clad with leves that aie shal last,
Eche in his kinde, with colour freshe and grene,
As emeraude, that joie it was to sene.

The bildir oke, and eke the hardie ashe,
The pillir elme, the coffir unto caraine,
The boxe pipetre, the holme to whippis lashe,
The sailing firre, the cypres deth to plaine,
The shotir ewe, the aspe for shaftis plaine,
The' olive of pece, and eke the dronkin vine,
The victor palme, the laurir to divine.

A gardein sawe I full of blofomed bowis
Upon a rivir in a grenè mede
There as sweteness evirmore inough is,
With flouris white and blewe, yellowe and rede,
And colde and clere wellestremis nothyng dede,
That swommin full of smalè fishis light,
With finnis rede and scalis silvir bright.

On every bough the birdis herd I syng
With voice of angell in their harmonie,
That busied hem ther birdis forthe to bryng,
The little pretie conies to ther plaie gan hie,
And furthir all about I gan espie
The dredfull roe, the buck, the hart, and hind,
Squirils, and bestis small of gentle kind.

Of instruments of stringis in accorde
 Herd I so plaie a ravishyng swetnesse
 That God, that makir is of all and lorde,
 Ne herd nevir a bettir, as I gesse,
 Therewith a winde, unneth it might be lesse,
 Made in the levis grene a noisè soft
 Accordant to the Foulis song on loft.

The aire of the place so attempre was
 That ner was ther grevaunce of hot ne cold,
 There was eke every wholsome spice and gras,
 Ne no man maie there waxin like ne old;
 Yet was there more joie a thousande fold
 Then I can tell, or evir could or might;
 There is evir clere daie and nevir night.

Undir a tre beside a well I feye
 Cupide our lorde his arrowes forge and file,
 And at his fete his bowe all redie laye,
 And well his doughtir temprid all the while
 The heddis in the well, and with her wile
 She couchid 'hem astir as thei should serve,
 Some for to flea, and some to wound and carve.

Tho was I ware of Plesance anon right,
 And of Arrai, Luste, Beaute', and Curtisie,
 And of the craft that can yhave the might
 To doen by force a wight to doen folie,
 Disfigurid was she, I will not lie;
 And by himself, undir an oak I gesse,
 Sawe I delite, that stode with Gentilnesse:

Then sawe I Beautie with a nice atire,
 And Youth, all full of game and jolite,
 Fole Hardinesse, Flattirie, and Desire,
 Messagerie, and Mede, and othir thre,
 Ther namis shall not here be tolde for me,
 And upon pillars grete of jaspir long
 I sawe a temple' of brasse ifoundid strong:

And about the temple dauncid alwaie
 Women inow, of which some there ywere
 Faire of 'hemself, and some of 'hem were gaie;
 In kirtils all disheveled went thei there,
 That was ther office er fro yere to yere;
 And on the temple sawe I white and faire
 Of dovis fittyng many' a thousande paire.

Before the temple dore full sobirlye
 Dame Pece yfat, a curtaine in her honde;
 And her besidis wondir discretlye
 Dame Pacience yfittyng there I fonde,
 With face pale, upon an hille of sonde,
 And althir nexte, within and eke without,
 Behest and Arte, and of ther folke a rout.

Within the temple' of fighis hote as fire
 I herd a swough that gan about to ren,
 Whiche fighis were engendrid with desire
 That madin every herte for to bren
 Of newè flambe; and well espied I then
 That all the cause of sorowes that thei drie
 Come of the bittir goddis Jelousie.

The god Priapus sawe I as I went
 Within the temple' in soveraine place ystonde
 In soche arraie as when the asse hym shent
 With crie by night, and with sceptre in honde;
 Full busilie men ban assaie and fonde
 Upon his hedde to set of sondrie hewe
 Garlandis full of freshè flouris newe:

And in a privie corner in disport
 Found I Venus and her portir Richesse,
 That was full noble' and hautin of her port;
 Darke was that place, but astirwarde lightnesse
 I sawe a lite, unnethes it might be lesse,
 And on a bed of golde she laie to reste
 Till that the hote sonne began to weste.

Her gildid heris with a goldin threde
 Iboundin were, untressid as she laie,
 And nakid from the brest unto the hede
 Men might her se, and, sothly for to saie,
 The remenaunt covired well to my paie
 Right with a lityl kerchese of Valence;
 There n'as no thickir clothe of no defence.

The place gave a thousande favours sote,
 And Bacchus, god of Wine, fate her beside,
 And Ceres next, that doeth of hunger bote,
 And, as I saied, amiddis laie Cypride,
 To whom on kneis the yong folkis cride
 To be ther helpe: but thus I let her lie,
 And farthir in the temple' I gan espie,

That in dispite of Diana the chaste
 Full many a bowe ibroke hing on the wall
 Of maidins, soche as gone ther tymis waste
 In her service, and paintid ovir all
 Of many' a storie', of whiche I touchin shall
 A fewe, as of Calisto' and Atalante,
 And many' a maide of which the name I want:

Semeramis, Candace', and Hercules,
 Biblis, Dido, Thisbe, and Pyramus,
 Tristram, Ifoude, Paris, and Achilles,
 Helaine, Cleopatra, and Troilus,
 Scylla, and eke the mother of Romulus;
 All these were paintid on that othir side,
 And all ther love, and in what plite thei dide.

When I was comen ayen into the place
 That I of spake, that was sote and grene,
 Forthe walked I tho my selvin to solace,
 Tho was I ware where there yfate a quene,
 That as of light the sommir sonnè shene
 Passith the sterre, right so ovir mesure
 She fairir was then any other cature.

And in a launde, upon a hill of floures,
 Was set this quene, this noble goddesse Nature;
 Of braunchis were her hallis and her boures
 Iwrought after her croft and her mesure;
 Neither n'as Foule that cometh of engendrure
 That there ne were yprest in her presence
 To take her dome and yeve her audience;

For this was on Sainet Valentin's daie,
 When every Foule comith to chese her make
 Of every kinde that men ythinkin maie,
 And that so huge a noisè gan thei to make
 The yerth, the se, and tre, and every lake,
 So full was, that unnethis there was space
 For me to stande, so full was all the place.

And right as Alaine in The Plaint of Kinde
 Devisech Nature of soche araie and face,
 In soche araie men mightin her there finde.
 This noble empreffe, full of allè grace,
 Bad evèry Foule takin her owne place
 As thei were wont alwaie fro yere to yere
 On Sainet Valentines daie to standin there:

That is to saie, the Foulis of ravine
Were highist set, and then the Foulis smale,
That etin as them Nature would encline,
As worme or thing, of which I tell no tale,
And watirfoule fate lowist in the dale,
And Foules that liveth by sede sat on the grene,
And that so fele that wondir was to sene.

There mightin men the roiall egle finde,
That with his sharpe loke persith the son,
And othir eglis of a lowir kinde,
Of whiche that clerkis well devisin con;
There was the tirant with his fethirs don
And grene, I mene the goshaue, that doth pine
To birdes for his outrageous ravine;

The gentle faucon, that with his fete distreineth
The kyng's hand, the hardie sperhaue eke,
The qual's foe, the merlion, that peineth
Hymself full oft, the larkè for to seke,
There was the dove, with her eyin so meke,
The jelous swan, ayenst his deth that singeth,
The oule eke, that of deth the bode ybringeth;

The crane, the geant, with his tromp's sonne,
The thief the chough, and eke the chattring pie,
The scornynge jaie, the ele's foe the heroune,
The false lapwing, alle full of trechirie,
The starling, that the counsaile can bewrie,
The tame ruddocke, and the cowarde kite,
The cocke, that horiloge is of thropes lite;

The sparrow, Venus son, the nightingale,
That clepith forthe the freshe levis newe,
The swalowe, murdrer of the beis smale,
That maken honie of flouris freshe of hewe,
The weddid turtell with his herte true,
The peacocke with his angell fethirs bright,
The sfaunt, scornir of the cocke by night;

The waker gose, the cuckowe, er unkinde,
The poppingeie, full of delicacie,
The drake, destroyir of his owne kinde,
The storke, the wrekir of advouterie,
The hote cormeraunt, full of glotonie,
The ravin wise, the crowe, with voice of care,
The throstill olde, and frostie feldesfare.

What should I saie? of Foules of every kind
That in this world have fethirs and stature
Men mightin in that place assemblid finde
Before that noble goddesse of nature,
And eche of them ydid his busie cure
Benignelie to chese or for to take
By her accorde his formell or his make.

But to the point. Nature held on her hond
A formell egle, of shape the gentillest
That evir she emong her workis fonde,
The moste benigne and eke the godeliest;
In her was every vertue at his rest
So farforthe, that Nature her self had blisse
To loke on her, and oft her becke to kisse.

Nature, the vicare of the' almightie Lorde,
That hote and colde, hevie, light, moiste, and drie,
Hath knit by evin nombir of accorde,
In esie voice began to speke and saie,
Foulis, take hede of my sentence I praie,
And for your ese, in fordring of your nede,
As fast as I maie speke I will me speke.

Ye know well how on S. Valentine's daie,
By my statute and through my govirnaunce,
Ye chese your makes, and aftir flie awaie
With 'hem as I doe pricke you with plesaunce,
But nathelesse, as by rightfull ordinaunce,
Maie I not let, for all this worlde to win,
But he that moste worthiest is shall begin.

The tercell egle, as ye knowe full wele,
The Foule roiall, above you' all in degre,
The wise and worthie, secret, true as stele,
The whiche I have formid, as ye maie se,
In every parte as it best likith me,
It nedith not his shape you to devise,
He shall first chese and spekin in his gise.

And after hym by ordir shall ye chese
Aftir your kinde, everiche as you likith,
And as your hap is shall ye win or lese,
But which of you that love most entrikith
God sende hym her that forest for hym sikith;
And therewithall the tercell gan she call,
And saied, My sonne, the choise is to the fall.

But nathelesse in this condicion
Muste be the choice of everiche that is here,
That she agre to his eleccion,
Who so he be, that should yben her fere;
This is our usage aye fro yere to yere,
And who so maie at this time have his grace
In blisfull tyme he came into this place.

With hed enclined and with full humble chere
This roiall tercell spake, and taried nought,
Unto my soveraine ladie, and not my fere,
I chose and chese with will, and hert, and thought,
The formell on your hand so well iwrought,
Whose I am all, and evir will her serve,
Doe what her luste to doe me live or sterve;

Besechyng her of mercie and of grace,
As she that is my ladie soverain,
Or let me die here present in this place,
For certis long maie I not live in pain,
For in my herte is corvin every vain,
Havyng regarde onily to my trouthe:
My dere herte! havith on my wo some routh.

And if that I be founde to her untrue,
Disobeisaut, or wilfull negligent,
Avauntour, or in processe love anewe,
I praie to you this be my judgemen, t
That with these Foulis I be all to rent
That ilke daie that she me evir finde
To her untrue or in my gilte unkinde.

And sith none lovith her so well as I,
Although she nevir of love me behet,
Then ought she to be mine through her mercie,
For othir bonde can I none on her knet,
For for wele nor wo nevir shall I let
To servin her, how far so that she wende:
Saie what you list, my tale is at an ende.

Full right as the sote and freshe redde rose newe
Against the sommir sunne ycoloured is,
Right so for shame all waxin gan the hewe
Of this formell when that she herd all this;
Neithir she answerde well ne saied amis,
So sore abashed was she, till that Nature
Saied, Doughtir, drede you not, I you assure.

And othir tercell egle spake anon
Of lowir kind, and saied that should not be ;
I love her bet then ye doe by Sainct John,
Or at the lest I love as well as ye,
And lengir have served her in my degre,
And if she should have loved for long lovyng
To me alone had be the guerdonyng.

I dare eke saie, if she me findin false,
Unkinde, jangler, rebell, in any wise,
Or jelous, doe me hangin by the halfe ;
And but I berin me in her servise
As well aye as my wit can me suffise
Fro pinct to pinct, her honour for to save,
Take she my life and all the gode I have.

The thirde tercell egle answerid tho,
Now, Sirs, ye se the lityl lesir here,
For every Foule crieth out to be ago
Forth with his make or with his lady dere,
And eke Nature her self ne will not here,
For tarying her, not half that I would seie,
And but I speke I must for sorowe deie.

Of longe service avaunt I me nothing,
But as possible' is me to die to day
For wo as he that hath be languishing
This twenty wintre', and wel it happin may
A man may serve bettir and more to pay
In halfe a yere, although it were no more,
Than some man doth that hath servid ful yore.

I say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no servise that may my lady plesse,
But I dare say I am her trewist man,
As to my dome, and fainist wolde her plesse :
At shortè wordis, til that dethe me cese
I wil be hers whethir I wake or winke,
And trewe in al that hertè may bethinke.

Of al my lyfe syth that day I was borne
So gentle ple in love or othir thinge
Ne herdin nevir no man me beforen,
Who so that had right lesir and conninge
For to reherse ther chere and ther spekyng,
And from the morowe gan this spechè laste
Till downward went the sonnè wondir faste.

The noise of Foulis for to be deliverde
So loudè range, Have don and let us wende,
That wel wende I the wode had all to shivered :
Come of, they cried ; alas ! ye wil us shende ;
Whan shal your cursid pleding have an ende ?
How shulde a judge on eithir partie leve
For ye or nay withoutin any preve ?

The gose, the cuckowe, and the ducke also,
So cryid Keke, keke, Cuckow, Queke, queke, hye,
Thorough myne eris the noyse wente tho ;
The gose sayd than, Al this n'ys worthe a flye,
But I can shape herof a remedye,
And wil ysay my verdite faire and swithe
For watir Foule, who so be wrothe or blithe.

And I for worme Foule, saied the sole cuckow,
For I wil of min owne autorite,
For common spece, take on me the charge now
For to deliver us is grete charite,
Ye may abydin a while yet perde.
(Quod the turtel) If that it be your wil
A wight may speke it were as gode be stil.

I am a fede Foule, one the unworthiest,
That wot I wel, and the lest of connyng,
But bettir is that a wight'is tonge rest
Than entremetin him of soche doynge
Of whiche he neithir redin can nor singe,
And who so' it doth ful foule him self acloyeth,
For *Office uncommittid ofte anoyeth.*

Nature, whiche that alway yhad an ere
To murmure of the leudeneffe behinde,
With faconde voice saied, Hold your tongis there,
And I shal sone I hope a counsaile finde
You to deliver and fro this noyse unbynde :
I charge of every flocke ye shall one cal
To say the verdite of you Foulis all.

Assentid were to this conclusyon
The birdis al, and Foulis of ravine
Have chosin first by plaine election,
The tercelet of the faucon to define,
Al ther sentence, and as him lust to termine,
And to Nature him gan they to presente,
And she acceptith him with glad entente.

The tercelet sayd than in this manere :
Ful hard it were to preve it by reson
Who lovith best this gentil formel here,
For everiche hath soche replicacion
That by skillis may non be brought adoun ;
I cannat se that argumentes availe,
Than semith it there must be a battaile.

Al redy, quod these egles tercelles tho,
Nay, Sirs, (quod he) if that I durst it say
Ye do me wronge, my tale is not ydo ;
For, Sirs, ne takith nat a grese I pray,
It may not be as ye wolde in this way ;
Ours is the voice that have the charge in hande,
And to the judg'is dome ye must ystande ;

And therefore pece : I say as to my wit
Me woldin thinke how that the worthiest
Of knyghthode, and lengist had usid it,
Most of estate, of blode the gentillest,
Were fittingest for her, if that her lest,
And of these thre she wote her selfe I trowe
Whiche that he be, for it is light to knowe.

The watir Foulis have ther hedis laide
Togidir, and of shorte avisement
Whan everiche had his verdite ysaide,
They saidin sothely al by one assent
How that the gose, with the facondè gent,
That so desirith to pronounce our nede,
Shal tel our tale, and prayed to God her spede.

And for these watir Foulis tho began
The gose to speke, and in her cakelynge
She saied, Pece now, take kepe every man,
And herken whiche reson I shal forth bring ;
My witte is sharpe ; I love no tarying ;
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother,
But she wil love him let him love another.

Lo here a parfite reson of a gose !
Tho (quod the sperhauke) nevir mote she the ;
Lo soche a thing it' is to have a tonge lose !
Nowe parde sole yet were it bet for the
Have holde thy pece than shewde thy nicete ;
It lyeth nat in his wit nor in his wil,
But sothe is saide, *A sole can not be still.*

The laughtir arofe of gentil Foulis al,
 And right anone the fede Foules chofin had
 The turtel trewe, and gan her to 'hem call,
 And prayid her to fay the sothè sad
 Of this matir, and askid what she rad?
 And she answered that plainly her entent
 She woldè shewe, and sothly what she ment.

Nay, God forbede a lovir shuldè chaunge,
 The turtel said, and wexte for shame al rede;
 Though that his lady evirmore be straunge,
 Yet let him serve her ay tyl he be dede;
 Forsothe I ne praise not the gos'is rede,
 For tho she dyed I wold none othir make;
 I wil be hers tyl that the dethe me take.

Wel ybourdid (quod the ducke) by my hat;
 That men shouldin love alway causèlesse
 Who can a reson finde or wit in that?
 Dauncith he mery that is mirthlesse?
 Who shuldin recke of that is rechèlesse?
 Ye queke yet (quod the ducke) ful wel and faire,
There be mo fierres in the skye than a paire.

Nowe fye, churle! (quod the gentil tercèlet)
 Out of the donghil came that word aright;
 Thou canst not se which thinge is wel beset;
 Thou farest by love as owlis do by light,
 The day 'hem blindeth, ful wel they se by night;
 Thy kinde is of so lowe a wretchidnesse
 That what love is thou canst not se nor gesse.

Tho gan the cuckow put him forthe in prece
 For Foule that etith worme, and sayid blyve,
 So I (quod he) may have my make in pece
 I ne retche nought howe longè that ye strive;
 Let eche of 'hem be soleine al ther lyve:
 This is my rede sens they may nat acorde;
 This shorte lesson nedith not recorde.

Ye have the glutton filde inow his paunche,
 Then are we wel, sayid the emerlon,
 Thou murdrir of the heifugge, on the braunche,
 That brought the forth, thou most rufull glutton,
 Live thou solein, wormis corrupcion!
 For no force is of lacke of thy nature;
 Go, leude be thou while that the world may dure!

Nowe pece (quod Nature) I commandin here,
 For I have herde al your opinion,
 And in effecte yet be we ner the nere;
 But, finally, this is my conclusion,
 That she her selfe shal have her election
 Of whom her list, who so be wroth or blithe,
 Him that she cheseth he shal her have as fwithè:

For sithe it may not here discussid be
 Who loveth her best, as said the tercèlet,
 Than wol I done this favour to' her, that she
 Shal have right him on whom her hert is set,
 And he her that his hert hath on her knet;
 This judge I Nature, for I may not lye,
 To none estate I have none othir eye.

But as for counsayle for to chose a make,
 Yf I were Reson, certis than woulde I
 Counsailin you the royal tercel take,
 As sayd the tercèlet ful skilfully,
 As for the gentilist and most worthy,

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Which I have wrought so wel to my plesaunce
 That to you it ought ben a suffisaunce.

With dredfull voice the formell her answerde;
 My rightfull lady, goddesse of Nature,
 Soth is that I am er undir your yerde,
 As is als' evèriche othir cature,
 And must be yours while that my life may dure,
 And therefore grauntith me my firstè bone,
 And myne entent you wol I say right sone.

I graunt it you (quod she.) And right anone
 This formel egle spake in this degre;
 Almighty quene! unto this yere be done
 I aske respite for to avysin me,
 And aftir that to have my choyce all fre:
 This al and some that I wold speke and sey;
 Ye get no more although ye do me dey:

I wol not servin Venus ne Cupide
 Forsothe as yet by no manir of way.
 Nowe sens it may none othir wayes betide
 (Quod Dame Nature), here is no more to say;
 Than wolde I that these Foulis were away
 Eche with his make for tarying lengir here,
 And said 'hem thus, as ye shal aftir here:

To you speke I, ye tercelet (quod Nature),
 Bethe of gode herte, and servith allè thre,
 A yere is not so longe for to endure,
 And eche of you paine him in his degre
 For to do wel, for God wote quit is she
 Fro you this yere, what aftir so befall;
 This entremes is dressid for you all.

And whan this werk ybrought was to an ende
 To evèry Foule Nature yave his make
 By even acorde, and on ther way they wende,
 And Lordethe blisse and joye which that they make!
 For ech gan othir in his wingis take,
 And with ther neckis eche gan othir winde,
 Thankynge aye the noble goddesse of Kinde.

But first were chofin Foulis for to finge,
 As yere by yere was alway ther usaunce,
 To finge a roundel at ther departing,
 To do to Nature honour and plesaunce;
 The note I trowe ymakid was in Fraunce;
 The wordis were soche as ye may here find
 The nextè vers, as I nowe have in minde,

Qui bien aime tard oublie.

Now welcom somir! with thy sonnis soft,
 That haste this wintir wethirs ovirshake;
 Saint Valentine! thou arte full hye on losse,
 Which drivist away the longe nightis blake,
 Thus singin smalè Foulis for thy sake;
 Well havin they cause for to gladin ofte
 Sens eche of 'hem recovered hath his make,
 Ful blisful maie they sing when they awake.

And with the shouting when ther songe was do
 That the Foulis made at ther flight away
 I woke, and othir bokis toke me to
 To rede upon, and yet I rede alway;
 I hope ywis to redin so some day
 That I shal metin some thinge for to fare
 The bet, and thus to rede I n'il not spare,

l i

OF THE

CUCKOWE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

*Chaucer dreameth that he heareth the Cuckowe and the Nightingale contend for excellency
in singing.*

THE god of Love, ah, *benedicite* !
Howe mighty and howe gret a lorde is he !
For he can makin of lowe hertis hie,
And of hye lowe and lykè for to die,
And hardè hertis he can makin fre :

He can makin within a litil flounde
Of sickè folke whole, and freshe, and founde,
And of the whole he can ymakè seke ;
He can ybindin and unbindin eke
That he wol have yboundin or unbounde.

To tel his might my wit may not suffise,
For he can makin of wise folke ful nice,
For he may do al that he wol device,
And lithy folke to distroyin vice,
And proude hertis he can make agrise.

Shortly, al that evir he wol he may ;
Against him there dare no wight say naye,
For he can glad and greve whom him lykith,
And who that he wol he loweth or sikith,
And most his might he shedith er in May ;

For evèry true gentle hertè fre,
That with him is or thinkith for to be,
Against May now shal have some fteringe,
Or to joye or ellis to some mourning,
In no feson so moche, as thinkith me :

For whan that they may here the birdis singe,
And se the flouris and the levis springe,
That bringith into ther remembèraunce
A manir ese ymedlid with grevaunce,
And lusty thoughtis ful of grete longing ;

And of that longing comith hevinesse,
And therof growith oft grete sikènesse,
And for the lacke of that that they desire ;
And thus in May ben hertis fet on fire,
So that they brennin forth in gret distresse.

I speke this of feling trewily :
What ! tho that I be olde and unlusty
Yet I have felte of the sickenesse through May
Bothe hote and cold, and axis every day,
How fore iwis there wote no wight but I.

I am so shakin with the fevors white
Of al this May, ne slepe I but a lite ;
And also it is not lyke unto me
That any hertè shouldin slepy be
In whom that Love his firy darte wol smite.

But as I lay this othir night waking
I thought howe lovirs had a tokining,
And amonge 'hem it was a commune tale
That it were gode to here the Nightingale
Moche rathir than the leudè Cuckowe singe.

And than I thought anon as it was day
I woldè faine go fomwhere to assay
If that I might a Nightingale yhere,
For yet had I none herde of al that yere,
And it was tho the thirde night of May.

And right anon as I the day aspidè
No lengir would I in my bedde abide,
But unto a wodde that was me fast by
I went forthe my self alone boldily,
And helde the way downe by a brokè side.

Tyl I came to a launde of white and grene,
So faire an one had I nevir in bene;
The grounde was grene, ypoudrid with daifye,
The flouris and the grevis alike hie,
Al grene and white, was nothing ellis fene.

There fate I downe among the faire flouris,
And sawe the birdes trippe out of ther bowris
There as they restid 'hem had al the night;
They were so joyful of the day's lyght
They began of Maye for to done honouris:

They coudin wel that service al by rote,
And there was many a full lovely note;
Some songin loudè as they had yplained,
And some in othir manir voice yfained,
And some songin al out with the ful throte.

They proynid 'hem and madin 'hem right gay,
And daunsidin and leptin on the spray,
And evirmore were two and two in fere,
Right so as they had chofin 'hem to yere
In Feverere on Saint Valentine's day.

And the rivir whiche that I sat upon
It madin soche a noisè as it ron,
Accordaunt with the birdis armony,
Me thought that it was the best melody
That mightin ben yherde of any mon.

And for delyte, I ne wotte nevir howe,
I fel in soche a flombre and a swowe,
Nat al aslepe ne fully awaking,
And in that swowe me thought I herdè singe
The fory birde, I mene the leude Cuckowe,

And that was upon a tre right fast by;
But who was than evil apaide but I?
Now God (quod I) that dyid on the crois
Yeve sorowe on the and on thy leude vois!
Ful litil joye have I now of thy crie.

And as I with the Cuckow thus gan chide,
I herdin in the nextè bush beside
A Nyghtingale so lustily ysinge,
That with her clere voice she madin ringe,
Echoing thorough al the grene wode wide.

Ah! gode swete Nightingale! (quod I) then,
A litil hast thou ben to longè hen,
For here hath ben the leude fory Cuckow,
And songin songis rathir than hast thou;
I pray to God that evil fire her bren!

But now I wol you tel a wondre thing;
As longe as I ylay in that swouning,
Me thought I wist what that the birdis ment,
And what they sayd, and what was ther entent,
And of ther speche I had full gode knowing.

There herdin I the Nightingale ysay,
Now, gode Cuckow! goith some where awaye,
And let us that can singin dwellin here,
For every wight eschevith the to here,
Thy songis ben so elenge, in gode fay.

What! (quod she) what may the aylin as nowe?
It thinkith me I singe as wel as thou,
For my songè is both true and eke plaine,
And though I can not crakil so in vaine
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot ner how.

And every wight may undirstandin me;
But, Nightingale, so may they not done the,
For thou hast many a nice queintè crie;
I have the herdè faine Ocy, ocy:
Howe might I knowin what that should ybe?

Ah, sole! (quod she) wost thou not what it is?
Whan that I say Ocy, ocy, ywys
Than menin I that I would wondre faine
That al they werin shamfully ysaine
That menin ought against love amis;

And also' I would that al tho had the dede
That thinkin not in love ther life to lede,
For who so wol not the god of Love serve
I dare wel say he is worthy to sterve,
And for that stil Ocy, ocy, I grede.

Eye! (quod the Cuckow) this is a queint-lawe,
That every wight shal love or be to draw;
But I forsakin al soche company,
For myne entent ne is not for to die,
Ne ner while I live on Love's yoke to draw;

For lovirs ben the folke that ben on lyve
That most disese yhave and most unthrive,
And most endurin sorow, wo, and care,
And that the lest yfelin of welfare;
What nedith it ayenist trouth to strive?

What! (quod she) thou art alle out of thy minde;
How might thou in thy churlinesse yfynde
To speke of Lov's servauntes in this wise?
For in this world is none so gode service
To every wight that gentle is of kinde;

For therof truly comith al godenesse,
Therof al honour and al gentilnesse,
Thereof worship, ese, and al hert'is lust,
And parfite joye and ful assurid trust,
And jolytic, and plesauce, and freshenesse,

And lowlyhed, largesse, and curtisye,
And semelyhed, and trew company,
And drede of shamed for to done amys,
For he that truly Lov'is servaunt is
Were lothir to be shamid than to die.

And that thys is the sothe whiche that I sey
In that beleve I wil bothe live and dey;
And, Cuckow, so I rede thou do ywys.
Than (quod he) let me nevir havin blisse
Yf evir I to that counsaile obey.

Nyghtingale, thou yspekist wondre faire,
But for al that is the soth contrayre,
For Love ne is in yongè folke but rage,
And is in oldè folke a grete dotage;
Who most it usith he most shal enpaire;

For therof commeth disese and hevinesse,
So sorow', and care, and many' a grete likenesse,
Despite, debate, and angre, and envy,
Depraving, shame, untrust, and jelousie,
Pride, mischefe, povertie, and wodenesse.

Loving is aye an office of dispaire,
And one thing is therin that is not faire,
For who that getteth of Love a litil blisse,
But if he be alwaie therewith, iwis
He maie full sone of age yhave his haire:

And, Nightingale, therefore held the nie,
For leve me well, for all thy queintè crie,
If thou be ferre or longè fro thy make
Thou shalt be as othir that ben forsake,
And then thou shalt yhotin as do I.

Fie! (quod she) on thy namè and on the,
The god of Love ne let the nevir the,
For thou art worse a thousandfolde than wode,
For many' one is full worthie and full gode
That had be naught ne haddin Love ibee;

For evirmore Love his servauntes amendeth,
And from all evill tachs 'hem defendeth,
And makith 'hem to brenne right in a fire
In trouthe and in worshipfull desire,
And when him likith joy inough 'hem sendeth.

Thou, Nightingale, he sayid, be still,
For Love have no reson but it is will,
For oft tymis untrue folke he esith
And true folke so bittirly displeisith
That for defaute of courage he let 'hem spill.

Then toke I of the Nightingale kepe
How that she cast a figh out of her depe,
And saied, Alas that evir I was bore!
I can for tene not saie one wordè more;
And right with that worde she braft out to wepe.

Alas! (quod she) my hertè woll to breke,
To herin thus this leudè birdè speke
Of Love, and of his worshipfull service;
Now god of Love, thou helpe me in some wise
That I maie on this Cuckowe ben awreke.

Me thoughtin then that he sterte up anon,
And glad was I tho that he was agon,
And evirmore the Cuckowe as he flaie
Ysayid, Farewell, farewell, popingaie,
As though he had yscornid me alone.

And then ycame the Nightingale to me,
And sayid, Frende, forsoth I thanke the
That thou hast likid me for to rescowe,
And one avowe to Love ymake I now,
That all this Maie I woll thy singir be.

I thankid her, and was right well apaied.
Ye, (quod she) and ne be thou not dismaied
Tho thou have herd the Cuckow erst than me,
For if I live it shall amendid be
The nextè Maie, if I be not affraied.

And one thing I woll redin the also,
Ne leve thou not the Cuckow ne' his loves so,
For all that he hath saied is strong lesyng.
Naie, (quod I) therto shall nothyng me bryng
For love, and it hath do me mochil wo.

Ye, hath it? Use (quod she) this medicine,
Every daie this Maie or that thou dine
Go lokin upon the freshe daïse,
And though thou be for wo in point to die
That shall full gretly lessen the of thy pine.

And loke alwaie that thou be gode and true,
And I woll sing one of the songis newe
For love of the, as loude as I maie crie;
And then she began this songè full hie,
I shrewe all 'hem that ben of love untrue.

And when she had ysong it to the ende,
Now farewell, (quod she) for I motè wende,
And god of Love, that can right well and may,
As mochil joyè sendè the this daie
As any yet lovir he ever sende.

Thus taketh the Nightingale her leve of me,
I praie to God alwaie with her to be,
And joye of love he sende her evirmore,
And shilde us fro the Cuckowe and his lore!
For there is not so false a birde as he.

Forthe she yflewe the gentill Nightingale
To all the birdis that were in that dale,
And gate 'hem all into a place in fere,
And befoughtin 'hem that they wouldin here
Her difefe; and thus she began her tale:

The Cuckowe, well it is not for to hide.
How the Cuckowe and I fast havin chide
Evir fithin that it ywas daie light;
I praie you all that ye doin me right
Of that foule, and false, and unkindè bride:

Then speke o birde for all by one assent;
This mattir askith gode avifement,
For we ben allè birdis here in fere,
And sothe it is the Cuckowe is not here,
And therefore we woll have a parliment;

And thereat shall the egle be our lorde,
And othir peris that ben of recorde,
And the Cuckowe shall be aftir ysent,
And there shall be yevin the judgèment,
Or els we shall finally make accorde.

And this shall be ydone withoutin naie
The morowe aftir Sainet Valentine's daie,
Undir a maple that is faire and grene,
Before the chambir windowe of the quene
At Wodestocke upon the grenè laie.

She thankid 'hem; and then her levè toke,
And flew into an hauthorne by that broke,
And there she fate and song upon that tre,
For terme of life love hath withholde me,
So loude, that I with that song awoke.

O leudè boke! with thy foule rudèness,
Sithe thou hast neithir beaute ne' eloquence
Who hath the caused or yeve the hardinesse
For to appere in my ladie's presence?
I' am ful fikir thou knowist her benevo'lence,
Full agreable to all her abiyng,
For of all gode she is the best livyng,

Alas! that thou ne haddist worthinesse
To shewin to her some plesant sentence,
Sith that she hath thorough her gentillesse
Acceptid the servaunt to her digne reve'rence.
O! me repentith that I ne' had science
And lesir als to make the more florishyng,
For of all gode she is the best livyng.

Beseche her mekely with all lowlinesse,
Though that I be ferre from her in absence,
To thinke on my trowth to' her and stedfastnesse,
And to' abridge of my sorowes the violence
Which caused is, wherof knowith your sapience,
She like emong to notifie me' her likyng,
For of all gode she is the best livyng.

L'ENNOY.

Aurore of gladnesse, daie of lustinesse,
Lucerne anight with hevenlie influence
Illumined, rote of beautie and godenesse,
Suspiris, whiche I effunde in silence,
Of grace I beseche aledge let your writyng,
Now of all gode sith ye best livyng.

I i iij

HEREAFTER FOLOWETH

HOW PYTE IS DEDE,

AND BURIED IN GENTYLE HERTE.

Pyte, that I have fought so yore ago
 With herte fore, and full of besy paine,
 That in this worlde was nevir wight so wo
 Withoutin dethe, and yf I shal nat faine
 My purpose was to Pitie to complaine
 Upon the crueltie and tyrannye
 Of Love, that for my trouth doth me to die.

And whan that I by length of certaine yeres
 Had evir in one fought a time to speke,
 To Pite ran I all bespreint with teres
 To prayin her on Cruelte me' a-wreke;
 But or I might with any worde out breke,
 Or tel her any of my painis smerte,
 I found her ded and buried in an herte.

A downe I fel whan that I saw the herse
 Ded as a stone while that the swonne me laste,
 But up I rose with coloure ful diverse,
 And pitoufly on her myne eyen I cast,
 And nerir the corse I gan presin fast,
 And for the soule I shope me for to pray;
 I was but lorne; there was no more to say.

Thus am I flaine sith that Pite is ded;
 Alas that day that evir it shulde fal!
 What manir man dare nowe hold up his hed,
 To whom shal now any foro'wfull hert call,
 Nowe Cruelte hath cast to fle us al,
 In ydle hope folke redèlesse of paine,
 Sith she is ded, to whom shal we complaine?

But yet encrefith me this wondir newe,
 That no wight wote that she is ded but I,
 So many men as in her tyme her knewe,
 And yet she dyid all so sodainly,
 For I have fought her er full besily,
 Sithins that I had firste witte or mind,
 But she was ded er that I coude her find.

Aboute her herse there stodin lustily,
 Withoutin any mo as thoughtin me,
 Bountie, perfetely well armed and richely,
 And freshe Beaute, and Lust, and Jolite,
 Assurid Manir, Youthe, and Honeste,
 Wisdome, Estate, with Drede and Govirnaunce,
 Confedrid both by bonde and aliaunce.

A complainte had I writin in my honde
 To have yput to Pyte as a byl,
 But I there al this company yfonde
 That rathir wouldin all my causè spill
 Then do me help, I held my plaintè still,
 For to those folke withoutin any faile
 Without Pite there maie no bill availe.

Then leave all vertues save onely Pitie,
 Keping the corse, as ye have herd me faine,
 Confedrid by bonde unto Crueltie,
 And be assentid when I shall be flaine,
 And I have put my compleinte up againe,
 For to my foes my bill I dare not shewe
 The' effect, which sayith thus in wordis fewe:

Humblist of herte, hyist of reverence,
 Flowir benigne, coroune of vertues alle!
 Shewith unto your roiall excellence
 Your servaunt, if I durstin me so call,
 His mortall harme in which he is ifall,
 And nought all onely for his wofull fare
 But for your renome, as he shall declare.

It standeth thus; that your contary' Crueltie
 Allyid is ayenst your regalie,
 Undir colour of womanly beautie,
 For men shouldin not knowe her tyrannie,
 With Bountie, Gentilleffe, and Curtesie,
 And hath deprivid you thus of your place,
 That is hie Beaute' apertenant to your grace:

For kindly by your heritage and right
Ye be annexid evir to Bountie,
And verily ye ought to doe your might
To helpin Trouthe in his adversitie;
Ye be also the coroune of Beautie,
And certis if that ye want in these twaine
The worlde is lore; there is no more to faine.

Eke what availeth manir and gentileffe
Withoutin you, o most benigne cature!
Shall Crueltie ybe your governess?
Alas! what herte maie it long endure?
Wherefore but ye rathir ytakin cure
To brekin that perillous aliaunce
Ye fleen 'hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

And furthir ovir, if ye suffir this
All your renome is fordoo in a throwe,
There shall no man ywete what pitie is;
Alas that your renome is fall so lowe!
Ye be' also fro your heritage ithrowe
By Crueltie, that occupieth your place,
And we dispairid that fekin your grace.

Have mercie on me, thou herenus quene,
That you have fought so tendirly and fore,
O let some streame of light on me be sene,
That love and drede you er longir the more!
For, sothily to faine, I bere so fore;

And though I be not connyng for to plaine
For God's love have mercie on my paine.

My paine is this, that what so I desire
That have I not, ne nothyng like thereto,
And evir setteth desire mine herte on fire;
Eke on that othir side, where that I go
What manir thing that may encrese my wo
That have I redy unfought every where;
Me lackith but my deth and then my bere.

What nedith to shewe percel of my paine,
Sith every wo that herte maie bethinke
I suffir, and yet dare not to you plaine?
For well I wote though that I wake or winke
Ye recke not whethir that I flete or sinke;
And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall susteine
Unto my deth, and that shall well be sene:

This is to faine, that I will be yours ever,
Though ye me flea by Crueltie your so,
Algate my spirite shall nevir discevir
Fro your service for any paine or wo,
Sith ye be dedde, alas that it is so!
Thus for your deth I maie wepin and plain
With herte fore and full of besie pain.

I i iij

*These Verses next folowing were compiled by Geoff. Chaucer, and in the writen copies folowe
at the ende of The Complainte of Pite.*

THE longè nyghtis, when every creture
Shuld have ther rest in somewhat as by kind,
Or ellis ne may ther life not long endure,
It fallith moste into my woful minde
How I so farre have brought my self behind,
'That safe the deth ther may nothing me liffe,
So dispairid I am from allè blisse.

'This same thought me lastith til the morow,
And from the morowe forth til it be eve;
There nedith me no care for to borow.
For both I have gode laisir and gode leve;
'There is no wight that will my wo byreve,
'To wepe enough and wailin all my fyll;
'The forè sparke of peine now doth me spil.

'This Love, that hath me set in soche a place
'That my desire he wil nevir fulfyl,
For neithir Pite, Mercy, neithir Grace.
Can I not finde, and yet my wofull herte
For to be dede I can it not arace,
The more I love the more she doth me smerte,
'Thorowe whiche I se withoute remedie
That from the deth I may no wise asterte.

Now sothly what she hight I wol reherse;
Her name is Bountie, set in womanhed,
Sadnes in youth, and beantie pridèlesse,
And plesaunce undir govirnaunce and drede,
And her surname is eke faire Ruthèlesse,
The wise knit unto gode avinture,
That for I love her she sleth me gillelesse;
Her love I best, and shall while I may dure;

Bett than my selfe a hundrid thousand dele,
'Than al this world's richis or creture;
Now hath not Love me bestowid wel,

To lovin there I nevir shal have parte?
Alas, right thus is turnid me the whele!
'Thus am I flaine with Lov's furious darte?
I can but love her best my swetè so,
Love hath me taught no morè of his arte
But servin alwaye and stint for no wo.

Within my trewè carefull herte ther is
So mochil we and eke so litil blisse
That wo is me that evir I was bore!
For al that thinge which I desire I misse,
And al that evir I wolde not iwis
That finde I redy to me evirmore;
And of all this I n'ot to whom me plaine,
For she that might me out of this ybring
Ne rechith nought whethir I wepe or sing,
So litil routh hath she upon my paine!

Alas! whan slepinge tyme is then I wake,
Whan I shuld daunce for fere lo than I quake;
This hevy life I lede, lo! for your sake,
Though ye therof in no wise hedè take,
Myn hert's lady and whole my live's quene
For truly durst I say as that I fele
Me semith that your swetè herte of stele
Is whettid now against me to kene.

My derè herte and best beloved so!
Why lykith you to do me al this wo?
What have I don that grevith you, or faide?
But for I serve and love you and no mo,
And whilest I live I wil evir do so,
And therefore, swete! ne bethe not il apaide;
For so gode and so faire as that ye be
It wer a right gret wondir but ye had
Of al servauntis both of gode and badde,
And best worthy of al them I am he.

But nevir the lesse, my righte lady swete !
Though that I be unkonninge and unmete
To serve as I coud best aye your highnes,
Yet is ther none fainir, that would I hete,
Than I to do you ese or ellis bete,
What so I wist that were to your highnes ;
And had I might as gode as I have wil,
Than should ye fele wher it were so or none,
For in this world livinge than is ther none
That fainir wolde your hert'is wil fulfil.

For both I love and eke drede you so sore,
And algates mote and have don you ful yore,
That bettir loved is none ne nevir shal,
And yet I would beseche you of no more
But lovith wel, and be not wroth therfore,
And let me serve you forth, lo ! this is al ;
For I am nought so hardy ne so wode
For to desire that ye should lovin me,
For wel I wotte, alas ! that may not be,
I am so litil worthy' and ye so gode,
For ye be one the worthyist on live,
And I the most unlikely for to thrive.

Yet for al this wetith ye ful righte wel
That ye ne should me from your servyce drive,
That I ne wil aye with my witis five

Serve you truly what wo so that I fele,
For I am set so hy upon your whele
That though ye nevir wil upon me rew
I must you love, and bene evir as trewe
As any man ycan or maye on live.

But the more that I love you, godely fre !
The lassè finde I that ye lovin me ;
Alas ! whan shal that hardè wit amende ?
Wher is now al your womanly pite,
Your gentilnes and your debonairte ?
Wil ye nothings therof upon me spend,
And so whole, swete ! as I am youris all,
And so grete wil as I have to you serve ?
Now certis and ye let me thus ysterve
Yet have ye wonnin therupon but small,

For at my knowing I do nothing why :
And thus I wil beseche you hertily,
That if evir ye finde whilis ye live
A truir servaunte to you than am I,
Levith than, and sleith me hardily,
And I my deth to you wil al forgive ;
And yf ye finde no trewir verily,
Wollin ye suffir than that I thus spil,
And for no manir gilt but my gode will ?
As gode were than untrue as true to be.

CODE COUNSAILE OF CHAUCER.

FLIE fro the preef and dwell with fothfastnesse;
 Suffise unto thy gode though it be small,
 For horde hath hate, and climbyng tikilnesse,
 Prece hath envie, and wele is blent oer all;
 Saviour no more than the behoven shall;
 Rede well thy self, that othir folke canst rede,
 And trouthe the shall delivir it' is no drede.
 Paine the not eche crokid to redresse
 In trust of her that tourneth as a balle;
 Grete rest standith in litil businesse;
 Beware also to spurne again a nalle;

Strive not as doith a crocke with a walle;
 Demith thy self that demist othir's dede,
 And trouthe the shall deliver it' is no drede.
 That the is sent receive in buxomenesse;
 The wrafllyng of this worlde askith a fall;
 Here is no home, here is but wildirnesse;
 Forthe pilgrim, forthe o best out of thy stall;
 Loke up on high, and thanke thy God of all;
 Weivith thy luste and let thy ghost the lede,
 And trouthe the shall delivir it' is no drede.

CHAUCER'S A, B, C.

CALLED LA PRIERE DE NOSTRE DAME.

Chaucer's A, B, C, called La Priere de nostre Dame, made, as some say, at the request of Blanch Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her private use, being a woman in her religion very devout.

A.

ALMIGHTIE and allmerciable Quene!
To whom all this world fleith for soccour,
To have relese of sinne, of sorow, of tene,
Glorious Virgine! of all flouris flour,
To the I fle, confoundid in errour;
Helpe and releve, almightie debonaire!
Have mercy of mine perillous langour,
Venquist me hath my cruill adversaire.

B.

Bountie so fixe hath in my hert his tent,
That well I wote thou wilt my succour be;
Thou canst not warnin that with gode entent
Axith thyne helpe, thine hert is aye so fre,
Thou art largesse of plaine felicite,
Havin and refute of quiete and rest;
Lo how that thevis sevin chasin me;
Helpe, Ladie bright! or that mine ship to brest.

C.

Comfort is none but in you, Lady dere!
For lo! mine sinne and mine confusioun,
Which ought not in thin presence for to apere,
Han taken on me a grevous actioun,
Of veray right and disperatioun,
And as by right they mightin well sustene
That I were worthy mine damnatioun,
Ne were it of thy mercy, blissfull Quene!

D.

Dout is there none, o Quene of mise'ricord!
That thou n'art cause of grace and mercy here,

God vouchidefate through the with us to' accord;
For certis, Christ's blissfull modir dere!
Were now the bow ybent in fwiche manere
As it was first of justice and of ire,
The rightfull God would of no mercy here;
But through the han we grace as we desire.

E.

Ever' hath mine hope of refute in the be,
For here beforne full oft in many' a wise
Unto mercy hast thou recevid me,
But mercy, Lady! at the gret assise,
When we shall come before the High Justise,
So litil freut shall then in me ben found
That but thou or that day correctin me
Of very right mine werke will me confound.

F.

Flying I fle for succour to thine tent,
Me for to hide fro tempest full of drede,
Beseking you that ye you not absent,
Though I be wicke: o help yet at this nede!
All have I ben a best in wit and dede,
Yet, Lady! thou me close with thine owne grace;
Thine enemye and mine (Lady, take hede)
Unto mine deth in point is me to chafe.

G.

Gracious maid and modir! which that never
Were bittir nor in erth nor in the se,
But full of swetenesse and of mercy ever,
Helpe, that mine Fadir be not wroth with me

Speke thou, for I ne dare him not yse :
So have I done in erth, alas the while !
That certis but if thou mine succour be
To sinke eterne he will mine ghost exile.

H.

He vouchidefate, tell him, as was his will,
Become a man as for our alliaunce,
And with his blode he wrote that blisful bill
Upon the crosse as generall acquitaunce
To every penitent in full cryaunce;
And therefore, Lady bright ! thou for us prey,
Then shalt thou stentin allè his grevaunce,
And maken our foe to faylin of his prey.

I.

I wotè well thou wilt ben our succour;
Thou art so full of bountie in certaine,
For when a soule fallith in errour
Thine pitie goeth and halith him againe,
Then makist thou his pece with his Soverain,
And bringist him out of the crokid strete :
Whoso the lovith shall not love in vaine,
That shall he find as he the life shall lete.

K.

Kalendiris enluminid ben they
That in this world ben lightid with thine name,
And who so goith with the the right wey
Him dar not dredin in soule to ben lame.
Now Quene of comfort ! sith thou art the same
To whom I sechin for my medicine,
Let not mine so no more mine wound entame,
Mine hele into thine hond all I refine.

L.

Lady ! thine sorrow can I not portrey
Undir the crosse, ne his grevous pennaunce ;
But for your bothis peine I you do prey
Let not our aldir so make his bostaunce
That he hath in his leftis, with mischaunce !
Convict that that ye both han bought so dere :
As I said erst, thou ground of all substaunce !
Continue' on us thin pitous eyin clere.

M.

Moyse, that saw the bosh of flambis rede
Brenning, of which then nevir a sticke brend,
Was signe of thine unwemmid maidinhede ;
Thou art the bosh on which there can descend
The Holy Ghost, the which that Moyse wend
Had ben on fire ; and this was in figure ;
Now Lady ! fro the fire us defend
Which that in hell eternally shall dure.

N.

Noble Princeffe ! that nevir haddist pere,
Certis if any comfort in us be
That commith of the, Christis modir dere !
We han none othir melodie ne gle
Us to rejoyce in our adversite,
Ne advocat that will and dare so prey
For us, and that for as lite hire as ye,
That helpin for an Ave'mary or twey.

O.

O very light of eyin tho ben blind !
O very lust of labour and distresse !
O tresorere of bountie to mankind !
The whom God chese to moder for humbleffe,
From his ancille he made the maistresse

Of heven and erth, our bill up for to bede,
This world awatith ay on thine godenes,
For thou ne failed'est nevir wight at nede.

P.

Purpose I have sometime for to enquire
Wherefore and why the Holy Ghost the fought ;
When Gabriel's voice come to thine ere
He not to werre us swich a wondir wrought,
But for to save us that he sithin bought ;
Then nedith us no wepon us to save,
But onely there we did not as us ought
Do penitence, and mercy aske and have.

Q.

Quene of comfort ! right when I me bethinke
That I agiltid have both him and the,
And that mine soule is worthy for to sinke,
Alas ! I caitife, whedir shall I fle ?
Who shall unto thine sonne mine menè be ?
Who but thine selfe, that art of pitie well ?
Thou hast more routh on our adversite
Than in this world might any tongue tell.

R.

Redresse me, modir ! and eke me chastise,
For certainly my Fadir's chastising
Ne dare I not abidin in no wise,
So hideous is his full reckining.
Modir ! of whom our joy began to spring,
Be ye mine judge and eke my soul's lech,
For ay in you is pitie abounding
To each that will of pity you besech.

S.

Soth is that he ne grauntith no pite
Withoutin the, for God of his godenesse
Forgivith none but it like unto the :
He hath the made vicair and maistresse
Of all this world, and eke govirnereffe
Of hevin, and represtith his justise
Aftir thine will, and therefore in witnesse
He hath the crownid in so royall wise.

T.

Temple devout ! ther God chese his wonning,
Fro which these misbelevèd deprivid ben,
To you mine soule penitent I bring ;
Receve me, for I can no ferthir fleen.
With thornis venemous, o hevin Quene !
For which the erth accursid was full yore,
I am so woundid, as ye may well sene,
That I am lost almost, it smert so fore.

V.

Virgine ! that art so noble of apparaile,
That ledist us into the highè toure
Of Paradise, thou me wise and counsaile
How I may have thy grace and thy succour,
All have I ben in filth and in errour :
Lady ! on that countrey thou me adjourne
That clepid is thine bench of freshe flour,
There as that mercy evir shall sojourne.

X.

Xpen thine sonne, that in this world alight
Upon a crosse to suffir his passioun,
And suffred eke that Longeus his hert pight,
And made his hert's blode renne adoun,
And all this was for my salvatioun ;
And I to him am fals and eke unkind,

And yet he will not mine dampnation;
This thanke I you, succour of all mankind!

Y.

Ysaac was figure of his deth certaine,
That so ferreforth his fadir would obey
That him ne rought nothing for to be slaine;
Right so thy sonnè list a lambe to dey:
Now Lady full of mercy! I you prey,
Sith he his mercy furid me so large,
Be ye not scant, for all we sing or say,
That ye ben fro vengeaunce alway our targe.

Z.

Zacharie you clepith the opin well
That wisht his sinfull soule out of his guilt,
Therefore this lessoun out I will to tell,
That n'ere thine tendir hert we werin spilt.
Now Lady bright! sith that thou canst and wilt,
Ben to the sede of Adam merciab;le;
Bring us unto that paleis that is built
To penitents, that ben to mercie able.

O F Q U E N E

ANNELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE.

Arcite, a Theban knight, forsaketh Queen Annelida, who loved him entirely, and taketh a new lady, whereupon Annelida maketh this great complaint.

O thou fiers god of Armis, Mars the Rede,
That in thy frostie countrey callid Thrace
Within thy grisly templis full of drede
Honourid art as patrone of that place,
With the Bellona, Pallas full of grace,
Be present, and my song continue' and gie;
At my beginnyng thus to the I crie.

For it full depè is sonkin in mynde
With pitous herte in Englishe to endite
This olde storie, in Latine whiche I finde,
Of Quene Annelida and false Arcite,
That elde, whiche all thingis can frete and bite,
And it hath fretin many' a noble storie,
Hath nigh devourid out of our memorie.

Be favourable' eke thou Polymnia,
On Parnassus that with thy sustirs glade
By Helicon, and not ferre from Cirrha,
Singist with voice memoriall in the shade,
Undir the laurir, which that maie not fade,
And doe that I my ship to havin winne:
First followe' I Stace, and astir him Corinne.

*Jamque domos patrias, Scythica post aspera gentis
Prælia, laurigero subeuntem Thesea curru
Latifisci plausus, missusque ad sidera vulgi, &c.*

When Theseus with warris long and grete
The aspre folke of Scythe hath ovircome,
The laurir crounid, in his chaire golde bete
Home to his countre housis is icome,
For whiche the peple blisfull all and some
So cridin that to the sterres it went,
And hym to honourin did all ther entent.

Before this duke in signe of victorie
The trompis come, and in his banir large
The' image of Mars; and in token' of glorie
Men mightin se of trefure many' a charge,
Many' a bright helme, and many' a spere and targe,
Many' a freshe knight, and many' a blisfull rout
On horse and fote, in all the field about.

Hyppolyta his wife, the hardie Quene
Of Scythia, that he conquerid had,
With Emelie her youngè sustir shene,
Faire in a chare of golde he with him lad,
That al the ground about her chare she sprad
With brightnesse of the beautie in her face,
Fulfillid all of largesse and of grace.

With his triumph and laurir corouned thus
In all the floure of Fortun'is yevyng
Lete I this noble prince, this Theseus,
Toward Athenis in his waie ridyng,
And fonde I woll in shortly for to bryng
The flie waie of that I began to write
Of Quene Annelida and false Arcite.

Mars, that through his furious course of ire,
The oldè wrathe of Juno to fulfill,
Hath set the peplis hertis bothe on fire
Of Thebes and Grece everich othir to kill
With blodie speris, restid nevir still,
But throng now here now there emong 'hem both,
That everiche othir slue, so were thei wroth:

For when Amphiorax and Tydeus,
Hippomedon and Parthenope' also
Were dedde, and slain was the proude Capaneus,

And when the wretchid Thebans brethrin two
Were slain, and Kyng Adrastus home ago,
So desolate stode Thebis and so bare
That no wight could remedie of his care.

And when that the old Creon gan espie
How that the blode roiall was brought adoun
He helde the cite by his tyrannie,
And did the gentils of that regioun
To ben his frendis and dwell in the toun;
So what for love of him, and what for awe
The noble folke were to the toun idrawe.

Emong all these Annelida the Quene
Of Ermonie was in that toun dwelling,
That fairir ferre was than the sonnè shene;
Throughout the worlde so gan her name to spryng,
That her to se had every wight likyng,
For as of trouthe ne is there none her liche
Of all the women in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twentie yeris olde,
Of middle stature, and of soche fairenesse
That Nature had a joye her to beholde;
And for to spekin of her stedfastnesse,
She passid hath Penelope' and Lucrese;
And, shortlie, if she shall ben comprehended,
In her there mightin nothyng ben amended.

This Theban knight Arcite eke, sothe to faine,
Was yong, and therwithal a lustie knight,
But he was double' in love and nothing plaine,
And subtil in that crafte ovre' any wight,
And with his connyng wan this ladie bright,
For so ferforthe he gan her trouthe assure
That she hym trustith o'er any cature.

What should I faine? she lovith Arcite so
That when that he was absent any throwe
Anone her thought her herte braft a two,
For in her sight to her he bare hym lowe,
So that she wende have all his herte iknowe;
But he was false, it n'as but fainid chere,
As nedith not soche craftis men to lere.

But nerthelesse full mikill businesse
Had he er that he might his ladie winne,
And swore that he would dyin for distresse
Or from his witte he sayid he would twinne;
Alas the while! for it was routhe and sinne
That she upon his sorowis would rue;
But *Nothing thinkith the false as doth the true.*

Her fredome found Arcite in soche manere
That al was his that she hath, moche or lite,
Ne to no manir cature made she chere
Furthir then as it likid to Arcite;
Ther was no lack with which he might her wite;
She was so ferforthe yevin him to pleie
That al that likid hym did her to ese.

There n'as to her no manir lettir sent,
That touchid love, from any manir wight,
That she ne shewid hym or it was brent,
So plain she was, and dyd her fullè might
That she n'ill hidin nothyng from her knight,
Lest he of any untrouthe her upbreide;
Withoutin bode his herte she obeide.

And eke he made hym jelous ovir her,
That what that any man had to her saied
Anon he would yprayin her to fwere

What was that worde, or make him ill apaied;
Then wenid she out of her witte have braied;
But all was nought but sleight and flattirie;
Withoutin love he fainid jelousie.

And all this toke she so debonairly
That al his wil her thought it skilful thyng,
And er the lengir loved hym tendirly,
And did hym honour as he were a kyng;
Her herte was to hym weddid with a ryng,
For so ferforthe on trouthe is her entent
That where he goith her hert with him went.

Whan she shal ete on him is so her thought
That wel unnethis of mete toke she kepe,
And whan that she was to her rest ybrought
On him she thought alway tyl that she slepe,
Whan he was absent prively dothe she wepe;
Thus liveth faire Annelida the Quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd her al this tene.

This false Arcyte, of his newfanglenesse,
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,
Ytoke lesse deintè for her stedfastnesse,
And sawe anothir lady proude and newe,
And right anon he clad him in her hewe,
Wote I not whethir in white, red, or grene,
And falsid faire Annelida the Quene.

But nerthelesse, grete wondir was it none
Though he were false, for it is the kinde of man
Sith Lamech was, that is so longe agone,
To be in love as false as er he can;
He was the firstè fathir that began
To lovin two, and was in bigamie,
And he founde tentis first but yf men lye.

This false Arcite somewhat must he nede faine
Whan he was false to coveren his traitourie,
Right as an horse that can both bite and plaine,
For he bare her in honde of trechirie,
And swore he coude her doublenesse espye,
And al was falsenesse that she to him ment;
Thus swore this thefe, and forth his way he went.

Alas! what herte might endurin it
For routhe or wo her sorowe for to tel,
Or what man hath the conning or the wit,
Or what man might within the chambre dwel,
If I to him reherfin shall the hel
That suffrith faire Annelida the Quene,
For false Arcite, that did her al this tene?

She wepith, wailith, fwounith, pitoufly;
To grounde as ded she fallith as a stone;
She crampisnith her limmis crokidy;
She spekith as her witte were al agone;
Othir colour than ashin hath she none,
Ne none othir worde spekith she moch or lite
But *Mercy, cruil herte min, Arcite!*

And thus endurth til that she was so mate
That she ne' hath sote on which she may sustene;
But forth languishing er in this estate,
Of whiche Arcite hath neithir rothe ne tene;
His herte was ellifwhere sette new and grene,
That on her wo ne deinet him not to think;
Him reckith ner whethir she flete or sinke.

This newè lady holdith him so narowe
Up by the bridil at the stav'is ende,
That every worde he dred it is as an arowe;
Her daungir made him bothè bowe and bende,

And as her luste madin him turne or wende,
 For she ne grauntid him in her living
 No grace why that he hath thereof to singe,
 But drove him forth; unneth list her to knowe
 That he was servaunt to her ladyship,
 But lest that he were proude she held him lowe;
 Thus servith he withoutin mete or sip;
 She sente him nowe to lande and nowe to ship,
 And for she yave him daungir al his fil
 Therefore she had him at her ownè wil.

Ensample' of this, ye thriftie women al,
 Take hede of Annelida' and false Arcite,
 That for her list him her dere hertè call,
 And was so meke, therefore he loved her lite;
 The kinde of mann'is herte is to delite
 On thing that straunge is, al so God me save,
 For what they may not get that wold they have.

Now turne we to Annelida ayen,
 That pinith day by day in languishing;
 But whan she sawe that her ne gate no geyn,
 Upon a day ful foro'wfully weping
 She cast her for to make a complaining,
 And with her ownè hande she gan it write,
 And sente it to her Theban knight Arcyte.

The Complaint of Annelida to false Arcite.

So thirlid with the point of remembraunce
 The swerde of sorowe, whette with false plesaunce,
 Myne hertè bare of blisse and black of hewe,
 That turnid is to quaking all my daunce,
 My sewertye in wapid countinaunce,
 Sens it availith nothing to ben trewe,
 For who so trewe is certes it shall her rewe
 That servith Love, and dothe her observaunce
 Alway to one, and chaungith for no newe.

I wote my selfe as well as any wight,
 For I loved one with al min hert and might,
 More than my self an hundred thousande sith,
 And callid him my hert'is lyfe, my knight,
 And was al his as ferre as it was right,
 And whan that he was glad than was I blythe,
 And his disese ywas my dethe as swithe,
 And he ayen his trouthe hath to me plight
 For evirmore his lady me to kithe.

Now is he false, alas! and causèles,
 And of my wo he is so routhèles
 That with a worde him list not onis daine
 To bring ayen my sorowful herte in pees,
 For he is caught up in an othir lees;
 Right as hym lyst he laughith at my paine,
 And I ne can min hertè not restraine
 For to love him yet alway nertheles,
 And of all this I n'ot to whom to plaine.

And shulde I plain, alas the hardè stounde!
 Unto my foe that yave myn herte a wounde,
 And yet desirith that myne harme be more?
 Now certis ferthir woll I never founde
 None othir helpe my foris for to founde,
 My Destiny hath shapid so ful yore,
 I woll none othir medecyne ne lore,
 I woll ben aye there I was onis bounde,
 That I have said be said for evirmore.

Alas! where is become your gentillnesse,
 Your wordes full of plesaunce and humblenesse,
 Your observaunce in so lowe a manere,
 Your awaitinge, and eke your besinesse,
 On me, that ye the callid your maistresse,
 Your sovèraine lady in this worlde here?
 Alas! is there now neithir worde ne chere
 Ye vouchsafin upon myn hevinesse?
 Alas! your love I bye it al to dere!

Now certis, swete Arcitè! though that ye
 Thus causèlesse the rufull cause ybe
 Of all my pyne and dedly' adversite,
 Your manly treasoun ought it to respite
 To fle your sothefast frende, and namely me,
 Whiche that have never yet in no degre
 Offendid you in ought, as wisly he
 That all thinges wote of wo my soulè quite.

But for I was so plain to the Arcite
 In all my wordes and workis moche and lite,
 And was so besy aye you to delite,
 Myne honour only save, meke, kinde, and fre,
 Therefore, Arcite, ye put in me this wite:
 Alas! alas! ye rechin not a mite
 Though that the percing swerde of sorow byte
 My woful hert thorough your cruilte.

My swetè foe! why do ye so for shame?
 And thinkin ye that furthered be your name
 To lovin a newe and ben untrewè aye,
 And putin you in flaundir nowe and blame,
 And do to me adversyte and grame
 That love you most, God thou wotist alwaye?
 Yet turne ayen, and yet be plaine some daye,
 And then shall this that now is mis ben game,
 And al forgevin whilis I lyve maye.

Lo, hertè myne! al this is for to faine,
 As whethir shal I praye or ellis plaine?
 Which is the way to done you to be trewe?
 For eithir mote I have you in my chaine
 Or with the deth ye mote depart us twayne,
 There beth none othir mene ne wayis newe,
 For God so wysely on my soulè rewe
 As verily ye slaine me with the paine,
 That mowe ye se unfainid on mine hewe.

For thus ferforth have I my deth ysought,
 My selfe I murdir with my privie thought;
 For sorowe' and routhe of your unkindenesse
 I wepe, I waile, I fast; al helpith naught;
 I voide alle joy that is to speak of aught,
 I voide alle company, I flye gladnesse;
 Who may avaunt her bet of hevinesse
 Than I? and to this plite have me ye brought
 Withoutin gilte; me nedith no witnesse.

And shoulde I pray and weivin womanhede?
 Nay, rathir deth than do so foule a dede;
 And aske mercy and giltylesse? what nede?
 And if that I complaine what life I lede
 You reckith not, that know I out of drede;
 And if I unto you mine othis bede
 For mine excuse, a scorne shal be my mede;
 Your chere yflourith but it woll not fede;
 Ful longe agon I might have takin hede:

For though I had you to morowe againe
 I might as well hold Aprilis from raine
 As holdin you to makin you stedfast:

Almyghty God! of trouthe the foveraine,
Wher is the trouthe of man? who hath it flaine?
She that 'hem lovith shall 'hem finde as fast
As in a tempest is a rottin mast.

Is that a tame best that is evir faine
To renne away when he is left agast?

Nowe mercy, swete Arcite! if I mislay;
Whethir have I aught said out of the way
I n'ot; my witte is wastid al away:
I fare as doth the songe of chantepleure,
For nowe I plaine and nowe agen I pley;
I am so masid that I dey, I dey;

Arcite, Arcite, hath born away the key
Of al my wele and my gode avinture:

For in this world there he is no creture
Walking, alas! in more discomfiture
Than I, ne that more sorowe doth endure,
For yf I slepe a furlonge way or twey
Than thinkith me anon that your figure
Suppliant before me stante ciad in asure,
Redy este to profre a newe assure
For to ben trewe, and mercy me to prey.

The longè night this wondir fyght I drie,
That on the day for soche affray I dye;

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And of al this right naught iwys ye retche;
Ne nevirmore myne eyin two ben drye;
And to your routhe and to your trouthe I crye,
But wel away! to ferre ben they to fetchen;
Thus holdith me my Destiny a wretche;
But me to rede out of this drede or gye
Ne may my wit (so weke is it) not stretche.

Than ende I thus, sithe I may do no more,
I yeve it up for nowe and evirmore,
For I shall nevir este putten in balance
My sikirness, ne lerne of love the lore,
But as the swan, I have herde say ful yore,
Ayenst his deth wol sing in his penance,
So singe I here the destinie and chaunce
Howe that Arcite Annelida so sore
Hath thrillid with the poynt of remembraunce.

Whan that Annelida, this woful Quene,
Hath of her hande ywritin in this wrie,
With face all dede, betwixin pale and grene,
She sel a swoone, and sithe she gan to rise,
And unto Mars avowith sacrifise
Within the temple, with a sorowfull chere,
That shapin was as ye may plainly here.

K k

THE COMPLAINT

OF THE BLACKE KNIGHT.

The heavy Complaint of a knight for that he can not win his lady's grace.

N Maie, when Flora the freshe lustie quene
The soile hath cladde in grene, and red, and whight,
And Phœbus gan to shede his stremis shene
Amidde the Bulle with al the bemis bright,
And Lucifer to chace awaie the night,
Ayen the morowe our orizont hath take
To bid all lovirs out of slepe awake,

And hertis hevie for to recomforte
From drerihed of hevie night's sorowe,
Nature bad 'hem rise, and 'hem disporte
Ayen' the godelie and the glad greie morowe,
And hope also, with Sainct Ihon to borowe,
Bad in despite of daungir and dispaire
For to takin the wholsome lustie aire;

And with a sigh I gan for to abreide
Out of my flombre', and sodainly up sterte,
As he (alas) that nigh for sorowe deide,
My sikenesse fate aye so nie my herte,
But for to findin soccours of my smerte,
Or at the lest some relese of my paine,
That me so fore yhalte in every veine.

I rose anone, and thought I wouldè gone
Into the wodde to here the birdis syng
When that the mistie vapour was agone,
And cleare and faire ywas the morownyng,
The dewe also like silvir in shynyng
Upon the levis, as any baume swete,
Till firie Titan with his persaunt hete

Had dryid up the lustie licour newe
Upon the herbis in the grenè mede,
And that the floures of many divers hewe
Upon ther stalkis gonin for to sprede,
And for to spleie out ther levis in brede
Againe the sonne, golde burnid in his spere,
That down to 'hem ycast his bemis clere.

And by a rivir forthe I gan costie
Of watir clere as birell or cristall,
Till at the last I founde a little weie
Toward a parke, enclosid with a wall,
In compace rounde, and by a gate small:
Who so that would he frelie mightin gone!
Into this parke, ywallid with grene stone:

And in I went to here the birdis song,
Which on the braunchis both in plain and vale
So loude yfang that all the wode yrong
Like as it shoud shivir in pecis smale,
And as methoughtin that the nightingale
With so great might her voice began out wrest
Right as her harte for love would all to brest.

The soile was plain and smoth, and wondir soft,
All oversprad with tapettes that Nature
Had made her self, covirid eke aloft
With bowis grene, the flouris for to cure,
That in their beautie thei maie long endure
From all assaulte of Phœbus fervent fere,
Whiche in his sphere so hotte yshone and clere.

The aire attempre, and the smothè winde
Of Zephyrus emong the blofomes white
So wholsome was and nourishing by kinde,
That smale buddis and round blofomis lite
In maner gan of her brethe to delite,
To yeve us hope that there fruct shall ytake
Ayenist autumpne redy for to shake.

I sawe the Daphne closid undir rinde,
With the grene laurir and the wholsome pine,
The Mirre also, that wepith ever' of kinde,
The cedris hie, as upright as a line,
The filbert eke, that lowe doith encline
Her bowis grene unto the yerth adoun
Unto her knight callid Demophoon.

There sawe I growing eke the freshe hauthorne
In white motley, that so fote doeth ysmell,
Ashe, firre, and oke, with many a yong acorn,
And many a tre mo then I can tell,

And me before I saw a little well,
That had his course, as I could wele beholde,
Undir an hill, with quicke strems and colde,

The gravill gold, the watir pure as glasse,
The bankis rounde the well invironing,
And soft as velvet was the yongè grasse
That thereupon lustilie came springyng,
The sute of trees aboutin compassyng
Ther shadowe cast, closyng the wel arounde,
And all the herbis growyng on the grounde.

The water was so wholsome and so vertuous
Through might of herbis growyng it beside,
Not like to the welle where as Narcissus
Islain was through the vengeance of Cupide,
Where so wondir covertly he did hide
The grain of deth upon eche fatal brinke
That deth mote folowe who that ever drinke;

Ne like unto the pitte of the Pegace
Undir Parnassus, where poëtis slept,
Nor like to the welle of pure chastité
Which that Diana with her nymphis kept,
When she nakid into the watir lepte,
That slowe Actæon with her handis fell,
Only for he came so nigh the well:

But this welle which that I now here reherse
So wholsome was that it wouldin aswage
Wightes bollin hertis, and the venim perce
Of Pensifched, withall the cruill rage,
And ovir more refreshin the visage
Of them that were in any werinesse
Of grete labour, or fallin in distresse.

And I that had through daungir and disdain
So drie a thirst, thought that I would assaie
To tastin a draught of this welle or twain,
My bittir langour if it might alaie,
And on the banke anone me doune I laie,
And with mine hed unto the welle I raught,
And of the watir dranke I a gode draught,

Whereof me thought I was refreshid wele
Of the brennyng that fate so nigh my herte,
That verily anone I gan to fele
An hugè parte relefid of my smerte,
And therewithall anone up I asterte,
And thought that I would walkin and se more
Forth in the parke and in the holtis hore.

And thorough a launde as I yede apace,
And gan aboutin fast for to beholde,
I founde anone a delectable place
That was beset with treis young and olde,
Whose namis here for me shal not be tolde,
Amidde of whiche there stode an herbir grene
That benchid was with coloures new and clene.

This herbir was all full of flouris gende,
Into the whiche as I beholde began,
Betwixt an hulfere and a wodè bende,
As I was ware, I sawe where laie a man
In blacke, and of white colour pale and wan,
And wondir dedly also of his hewe,
Of hurtis grene and freshe woundis newe,

And ovirmore distrainid with sicknesse
Beside all this he was full grevoullie,
For upon hym he had an hote accesse
That daie by daie hym shoke ful pitoullie,
So that for constraint of his maladie
And hertely wo, thus lying all alone,
It was a deth for one to here hym grone.

Whereof astoined, my fote I gan withdrawe,
Full gretly wondiring what it might be
That he so laye and haddin no felawe,
Ne that I coude no wight with him yse,
Wherof I had grete routhe and eke pite,
And gan anone, so softely as I coude,
Amonge the bushis prively me to shroude,

If that I myght in any wise espie
What was the cause of this his dedly wo,
Or why that he so petously gan crie
On his fortune, and on his ure also;
With all my myght I layid an ere to
Every worde, to marke wel what he saide
Out of his swough anon as he abraide.

But first, if I shulde makin mencion
Of his persone, and plainly him discrive,
He was in sothe, without excepcion,
To speke of manhode one of the best on live,
There may no man ayen the trouth ystrive,
For of his time and of his age also
He provid was there men shuld have ado.

One of the best therto of brede and length,
So wel ymade by gode proporcion,
If he had be in his delivir strength,
But thought and sicknesse were occasyon
That he thus lay in lamentacyon
Grouffe on the grounde, in place so desolate,
Sole by him self, awhapid and amate.

And for me semith that it is sitting
His wordis al to put in remembraunce,
To me that herdin all his complaining,
And al the grounde of this his woful chaunce,
If there withall I maye you do plesaunce,
I wol to you so as I can anone,
Lyke as he saide, reherce everichone.

But who shal helpin me now to complaine,
Or who shal now my stilè gie or lede?
O Niobe! let now thy teris rayne
Into my penne, and helpe me eke in nede
Thou woful Myre! that felist mine herte blede
Of pitous sorowe, and myne hande eke quake,
What that I writin for this mann's sake;

For unto wo accordith complaining,
And doleful chere unto hevinesse,
To sorowe also sighing and weping,
And pitous mourning unto drerinesse;
And whofo that shal writin of distresse
In party nedith to knowe felingly
The cause and rote of al soche malady.

But I, alas! that am of witte but dul,
And that have no knowing of soche matere,
For to discrive and writin at the ful
The woful Complainte which that ye shal here,
But even like as doth a skryvinere,
That can no more tell what that he shal write
But as his maistr beside dothe endite;

Ryght so fare I, that of no sentement
Can sayin right naught in conclusioun,
But as I herde whan that I was present
This man complinin with a pitous soun,
For even like without addicioun
Or disencrese eythir of more or lesse
For to reherse anone I wol me dresse.

And if that any now be in this place
That felith in love breninge or fervence,
Or hindirid were to his ladle's grace
With falsè tongis, that with pestilence
Sle trewè men, that nevir did offence
In worde nor dede, ne yet in ther entent,
If any soche there be here nowe present,

Let him of routhe lay him to audience
With doleful chere and sobre countinaunce,
To herin this man by ful hye sentence
Hys mortal wo and his dire perturbaunce
Complaining, and now lying in a traunce
With lokis upcast and with rusul chere,
Th' effecte of which was as ye now shal here.

The thought oppressed with inward sighis sore,
The painful lyfe, the body languishing,
The woful gost, the hertè rent and tore,
The pitous chere, all pale in complaining
The dedly face, like as his in shining,
The salte teris that from min eyin fall,
Parcel declare grounde of my painis al.

Whose herte is grounde to blede in hevynesse
The thought receite of wo and of complainte,
The brest is cheft of dole and drerinesse,
The body eke so feble and so fainte,
With hote and colde mine axis is so mainte,
That nowe I chivir for defaute of hete,
And hote as glede nowe sodainly I fwete;

Nowe hote as fire, nowe cold as ashis ded,
Now hote for colde, now cold for hete again,
Now cold as yse, and now as colis red
For hete I brenne; and thus betwixin twaine
I possid am and al forcaste in paine,
So that my hete ful plainly as I fele
Of grevous colde is cause every dele.

This the colde of inward hie disdaine,
Cold of dispite, and colde of cruil hate,
This is the colde that doth his besy payne
Ayenist trouthe to fight and to debate,
This is the colde that doth the fyre abate
Of trewe mening, alas the harde while!
This is the coldè that wol me begile.

For er the bettir that in trouth I mente
With al my myght her fathfully to serve,
With hert and al to be right diligent,
The lesse thanke, alas! I can deserve;
Thus for my trouthe Daungir doth me sterve,
For one that shuld my deth of mercy let
Hath made Despise anew his swerde to whet

Against me, and his arowis to fyle,
To take vengeaunce of wilful cruilte,
And tongis false thorough ther slightly wyle
Han gone a werre, that wil not stintid be,
And false Envie, with Wrathe and Envyte,
Have conspirid against al right and lawe
Of ther malyce that Trouth shal be ylawe.

And Malèbouche gan first the talè tel,
To sclaudir Trouth of indignacion,
And False Reportè so laud yrange the bel
That Misbylese and False Suspection
Have Trouthe ybrought to his dampnacion,
So that, alas! wrongfully he dyith,
And Falsenesse nowe his place occupyith,

And entirid is into Trouth's londe,
And hath thereof the ful possession.
O rightful God! that first the trouthe fonde,
Howe maie thou suffre soche oppressyon,
That Falsched shulde have jurisdiction
In Troth's right to sle him giltles!
In his fraunchise he may not live in pees.

Falsly accused, and of his sone forjued,
Withoutin answere, while he was absent,
He damnid was, and maie not be excused,
For Cruilte ysate in judgèment
Of Hastinesse without advisèment,
And badde Disdaine do execute anone
His judgèment in presence of his sone.

Attorney there maye none admittid ben
To excuse Trouthè, ne a worde to speke;
To faith or othe the judge ne liste not sene;
There ne is no gaine but he will be wreke.
O Lorde of Trouthe! to the I cal and clepe,
Howe may thou sein thus in thy presence
Withoutin mercy murdrid Innocence!

Nowe God, that art of trouthe souveraine,
And seist how I lie for trouthe bounde,
So fore yknitte in lov's fyrie chaine, (wounde,
Even at the deth, through gyrtè with many' a
That lykily are nevir for to founde,
And for my trouthe am damnid to the deth,
And not abyde, but drawe along the breth,

Considre and se in thine eternal right
Howe that min herte professid whilom was
For to be trewè with al my ful myght
Onily to one, the whiche nowe, alas!
Of volunte without any trespas
Myne accusours hath takin unto grace,
And cherishith hem my deth to purchase.

What menith this? what is this wondir ure
Of purveiaunce, yf so I shal it cal,
Of god of Love, that false hem so assure,
And trewe, alas! downe of the whele ben fal!
And yet in sothe this is the worst of al,
That falsched wrongfully of troth hath name,
And trouth ayenward of falsched the blame.

This blindè chaunce, this stormy avinture,
In love hath mostely his experience,
For who that doth with trouthe most his cure
Shal for his mede yfindin moste offence
That servith Love with al his diligence,
For who can fainin undir lowly hede
Ne failith not to findin grace and spede:

For I lovid one ful longe sythe agone
With all mine herte, and body, and ful might,
And to be ded my herte can not gone
From his behestè, but hold that he hath hyght;
Though I be banishid out of her syght,
And by her mouth damnid that I shal dey,
To my behestè yet I will er obey:

For evir fithins that the worlde began,
Who so lyst lokin and in story rede,
He shal aye findin that the trewe man
Was put abacke there where as the falshe
Yfurthered was; for Love takith none hede
To fle the trew, and hath of 'hem no charge,
Where as the false gothe frely at ther large.

I take recorde of true Palamedes,
The gilleles man, the noble worthy knight,
That evir lovid and had no reles,
Notwithstanding his manhode and his might,
Yet Love unto him dyd ful gret unright,
For aye the bet he dyd in chivalrye
The more he still was hindrid by envye;

And aye the bett he did in every place,
Thorough his knighthode and his busy paine;
The ferdir was he from his ladye's grace,
For to her mercy might he ner attaine,
And to his deth he coude it not refraine
For no daungere, but aye obey and serve
As he beste coude, plainly tyl that he sterve.

What was the fyne also of Hercules
For al his conquest and his worthinesse,
That was of manly strength alone pereles?
For lyke as bokis of him liste expresse
He set pillers thorough his hye prowesse
Away at Gades, for to sygnifie
That no man might him passe in chivalrye;

The whichè pilliris ferre beyonde Inde
Beset of golde for a remembraunce,
And for al that yet was he set behinde
With 'hem that love lyst feblely to avaunce;
For him, alas! set last upon a daunce
Against whom there helpe may no strife.
And so for al his trouthe he losse his life.

Phœbus also, for al his plesaunt lyght,
Whan that he wonid here in yerthe belowe,
Unto the verry herte with Venus sight
Ywoundid was thorough Cupidis bowe,
And yet his lady lyst him not to knowe:
Though for the love of her his herte dy'd blede
She let him go, and toke of him no hede.

What shal I sayin of yonge Pyramus,
Of trewe Tristram, for al his hye renowne,
Of Achilles or of Antonius,
Of Arcytè, or of him Pelomowne?
What was the ende of ther passiowne
But astir sorowe deth and than ther grave?
Lo, here the guerdon that these lovirs have!

But false Jason with his doublenesse,
That was untrue at Colchos to Medee,
And Theseus, rote of unkindenesse,
And with these two also the false Enee,
Lo! thus the false evir in one degre
Haddin in love ther lust and al ther wil,
And save falshode there was none othir skil.

Of Thebis city eke the false Arcite,
And falsir Demophon eke for his slouth,
They had ther lust and al that myght delite
For al ther falshode and ther gret untrouth;
Thus evir Love, alas! and that is routhe,
His false liegis forthirith what he may,
And fleeth the trewe ungodely day by day:

For trewe Adonis was slayne with the bore
Amidde the forest in the grenè shade,
For Venus love he feltin al the fore,
But Vulcanus with her no mercy made,
The soule chorle had many nightis glade,
Where Mars Armipotent, her knight and man,
To fyndin mercy comforte none he can.

Also the yonge freshe Hippomenes,
So lustly fre he was of his corage
That for to serve with al his hert he ches
Atalanta, so faire of her visage,
But Love, alas! quite him so ill his wage,
With cruil daungir plainly at the laste.
That with the dethè guerdonlesse he paste.

Lo here, alas! the fine of Love's service!
Lo howe that Love can his servauntis quite!
Low how he can his faithful men dispise,
To fle the trewe men and false to respite!
Lo howe he dothe the swerde of sorowe byte
In hert'is soche as mooste his luste obey,
To save the false and do the trewe to deye!

For faith, nor othe nor worde, ne assuraunce,
Trewe mening, nor awaite, nor busynesse,
Neithir stil porte ne faithful attendance,
Manhode, ne might in armis, worthinesse,
Nor pursute of worship nor hie prowesse,
Nor in straunge landis riding ne travaile,
Ful lytil or nought in love dothe availe.

Peril of dethè neithir in se ne lande,
Hungir ne thurst, sorowe ne sykènesse,
Ne gret emprisis for to take on hande,
Sheding of blode, ne manful hardinesse,
Ne ofte wounding at sautis by distresse,
Nor in parting of life, nor deth also,
Al is for nought; Love taketh no hedè therto.

But lesingoures with ther base flattirie,
Through ther falshe, and with ther doublenesse,
With talis newe, and many fainid lie,
By false semblaunt and counterfeit humbleffe,
Undir colour depainte with stedfastnesse,
With fraude covered under a pitous face,
Acceptid be nowe rathist unto grace,
And can themselvin nowe best magnifie
With fainid porte and ther presumpcion;
They hauncin ther cause with false surquidrie,
Undir menyng of double entencion,
To thinkin one in ther opinion,
And saye' anothe to set them self aloste,
And hindir trouthe, as it is sene ful ofte.

The whichè thinge I bye nowe al to dere,
Thankid be Venus and the god Cupide,
As it is sene by mine oppressid chere,
And by his arowes that stycken in my side,
That save my deth I nothings elles abide
Fro day to day, alas the hardè while!
Whenevir his darte that hym lyst to file,

My woful hertè for to rive atwo,
For faute of mercy and lack of pite
Of her that causith al my paine and wo,
And lyst not onis of grace for to se
Unto my trothe thorough her cruelte;
And most of al for this I me complaine,
That she hath joy to laughin at my paine,

And wilfully she hath my deth ysworne
Al giltyesse, and wote no cause why,
Save for the trouthe that I had asorne
To her alone to servin faithfully.

O god of Love! all unto the I crye,
And to thy blynde and double deite
Of this my gret wronge I complainè me,

And to thy stormy wilful variance,
Iment with chaunge and gret unstableness,
Now up now doune, so renning is thy chaunce,
That the to trust may be no sikirnesse,
I wite it nothings but thy doublenesse;
And who that is an archir and is blende
Markith nothings, but shotith ay by wende;

And for that he hath no discrecion
Without advise he let his arowe go;
For lacke of sight and also of reson,
In his shoting it happith oftin so
To hurte his frendist rathir than his fo:
So doith this blind god with his sharpe flone,
The trew he sleeth and lettith the false gone.

And of his wounding this is worst of al,
Whan he hurt doith to so cruil wretche,
And makith the sycke for to crie and cal
Unto his very foe to be his leche;
And harde it is, sothe, for a man to feche,
Upon the point of deth in jeoperdye,
Unto his foe to findin remedie.

Right thus farith it nowe evin by me,
That to my foe that gave my herte a wounde
Mote askin grace, and mercy, and pite,
And namily there where none may be founde,
For nowe my fore my lechè wil confounde,
And god of Kinde so ill hath set mine ure
My lyy'is foe to have my wounde in cure.

Alas the while nowe that I was borne,
Or that I evir sawe the brightè sonne!
For nowe I se plaine that ful longe asorne
Or I was borne my destiny was sponne
By the Sisterne, to fle me yf they conne,
For they my deth had shopin or my sherte,
Onely for trouthe I may it not asterte.

The mighty goddesse also of Nature,
That undir God hath the whole govirnaunce
Of worldely thinges committid to her cure,
Disposid have through her wise purveiaunce
To give my lady so moche suffisaunce
Of al vertues, and therwithal purvyde
To murdre Trouthe hath take Daungir to gide:

For bounte, beaute, shape, and semelihede,
For prudence, wit, and passingly fairenesse,
For benigne porte, glad chere, with lowlyhede,
Of womanhede right plenteous largenesse,
Dame Nature dyd in her fully empresse
Whan she her wrought, and althir last Disdaine
To hindir Trouthe she made her chambirlaine;

Whan Mistrust eke and False Suspeccion,
With Misbeleve, she madin for to be
Chefe of counsaile, to this conclusion,
For to exilin Trouthe and eke Pite,
Out of her courte to makin Mercy fle,
So that Dispite now holdith forthe her reine
Through hasty bileve of tales that men feine.

And thus I' am, only for my trouthe, alas!
Murdrid and slayn with wordis sharp and kene,
Although giltyesse God wote of al trespas,
And lye and blede upon this coldè grene.
Nowe mercy, swete! mercy, my liv'is quene!
And to your grace of mercye yet I preye
In your service that your true man may deye.

But if so be that I shal die algate,
And that I shal none other mercy have,
Yet of my deth let this yben the date,
That by your wil I was brought to my grave,
Or hastily, if that you lyste me save,
My sharpe woundis, that akin so and blede,
Of mercy charme and also' of womanhede:

For othir charme plainly ne is there none
But onely mercy to helpe in this case,
For though my woundis blede evir in one
My lyfe, my deth, ystandith in your grace;
And though my gilte ybe nothings, alas!
I aske mercy in all my best entente,
Redy to dyin if that ye assente:

For there againist shal I never strive
In worde ne werkè, plainly I ne may,
For levir I have then to be alyve
To dye sothly, and it be to her paye,
Ye, though it shuldè be this samè day,
Or whan that evir her lyste to devise;
Suffisith me to die in your servise. [wight

Thou, God! that knowest the thought of every
Right as it is, in every thing maist se,
Yet er I dyd with al my ful myght
Lowly I pray to grauntin unto me
That ye, lady godely, faire, freshe, and fre!
Which onely fle me for defaute of routhe,
Or that I dyin ye may knowe my trouthe:

For that in sothe inow suffisith me
And she it knowe in every circumstance,
And astir I am wel apaide that she,
If that her lyst of deth to do vengeance,
Unto me that am undir her lygeaunce;
It fit me not her dome to disobeye,
But at her luste fulle wilfully to deye.

Withoutin grutchinge or rebellion
In wil or wordis wholly I assentè,
Or any manir contradiction,
Fully to be at her commaundement;
And if I dyin, in my testament
My herte I sende and my spirite also,
What so evir she lyste with 'hem to do.

And aldir last unto her womanhede
And to her mercy me I recommaunde,
That lye nowe here betwixin hope and drede,
Abidinge plainly what she list commaunde,
For uttirly this ne is no demaunde;
Welcome to me whilis me lastith breth,
Ryght at her choise, where it be lyfe or deth.

And in this matir more what might I faine,
Sithe in her hand and in her wil is al,
Bothe lyfe and deth, my joye and al my peine?
And, finally, my heste holdin I shall
Tyl my spirite by destinye fatal,
Whan that her lystith fro my body wende,
Have here my trouthe; and thus I make an ende.

And with that worde he gan to fighe as fore,
Like as his hert yryvin would atwaine,
And helde his pece, and spake no wordè more;
But for to se his wo and mortal paine
The teris gonin fro mine eyin raine
Ful piteously, for very inwarde rothe
That I him sawè so long wishyng for troth.

And al this while my selfe I keptè close
Amonge the bowis, and my selfe gonne hide,
Tyl at the last the woful man arose,
And to a lodge ywent there close beside,
Where al the May his custome was t'abyde,
Sole to complainin of his painis kene
From yere to yere undir the bowis grene.

And for bycause that it drewe to the night,
And that the sonne his arke diurnal
Ypassid was, so that his persaunt lyght,
His brightè bemis and his stremis al,
Were in the wavis of the watir fal
Undir the bordure of our ocean,
His chare of golde his course so swiftly ran;

And while the twilight and the rowis rede
Of Phœbus light were deaurat alite
A penne I toke, and gan me fast to spede
The woful plaintis of this man to write
All worde by worde right as he did endite;
Like as I herde and coude him tho reporte
I have here set, your hertis to disporte.

If ought be misse laye all the wite on me,
For I am worthy for to bere the blame;
If any thinge amyffe reportid be
To make this ditte for to semè lame,
Through myne unconning for to fain the same
Like as this man his Complaint dyd expresse,
I aske you mercy and forgivènesse.

And as I wrote me thought I sawe aserre,
Aferre in the west, lustily appere
Esperus, the so bright and godely sterre,
So glade, so faire, so persaute, eke of chere,
I menè Venus, with her bemis clere,
That hevy hertis only to releve
Is wonte of custome for to shewe at eve;

And I as fast fel adowne on my kne,
And evin thus to her gan I to prey;
O lady Venus, so feire on to se!
Let not this sothfast man for his trouthe deye,
For that joy which thou haddist whan thou leye
With Mars thy knight when Vulcanus yfonde,
And with a chaine unvisibile you bonde

Togidur bothè tway, in the same whyle
That al the courte above celestial
At your shamè began to laughe and smyle:
Ah! fairist lady! willy fonde at al,
Comforte to careful goddis immortal
Be helping nowe, and do thy diligence
To let the stremis of thine influence

Discendin downe in furthering of the trouthe,
Namely of 'hem that lye in sorowe bounde;
Shew now thy might, and on ther wo have routh
Er that false Daungir fle 'hem and confounde;
And special let thy might in this be founde
For to help and socour what that thou may
The trewe man that in the herbir lay,

And al that trewe are forthir for his sake,
O gladè sterre! o lady Venus myne!
And cause his lady him to grace to take;
Her hert of stele to mercy so encline,
Er that thy bemis go up to declyne,
And er that thou nowe go fro us adowne,
For that love which thou haddist to Adowne.

And whan that she wos gone unto her rest
I rose anone, and home to bed ywente,
For wery' I was, me thought it for the best,
Desiring thus in al my best entente
That al trewe men that be with daungir shente
With mercy may, in relese of ther paine,
Recurid be er Maye come este againe.

And for that I ne may no lengir wake
Farewel, ye lovirs al that be trewe,
Praying to God, and thus my leve I take,
That er the sonne to morowe be ryfen newe,
And er he have ayen his rosin hewe,
That eche of you may havin soche a grace
His owne lady in armis to embrace;

I mene thus only, in al honeste,
Withoutin more, ye may togidur speke
What so ye lystin at gode liberte,
That eche may to othir ther herte ybreke,
On Jelousie only to be awreke,
That hath so long of malice and envy
Ywerid Trouthe with his tiranny.

L'ENVOY.

Princesse! plesith it your benignite
This lityl dyte for to have in minde
Of your womanhede, also for to se
That your trew man may of you mercy find
And pite eke, that longe hath be behinde;
Let him againe be provokid to grace,
For by my trouthe it is against alle kinde
That false Daungere should occupye his place.

Go, lityl quaire, unto my liv'is quene,
And to my very hert'is soveraine,
And be right glad for that she shal the sene;
Soche is thy grace: but I, alas! in paine
And left behinde, and n'ot to whom to plaine,
For mercy, Ruthe, and Grace, and eke Pyte,
Exilid be, that I may not attaine
Recure to finde of mine adversite.

T H E

COMPLAINT OF MARS AND VENUS.

GLADITH ye lovirs in the morowe graie;
Lo Venus rissen among yon rowis rede!
And flouris freshe honour ye this daie,
For when the sonne uprist then would thei sprede;
But ye lovirs that lie in any drede
Flyith, lest wickid tonguis you aspie:
Lo, yonde the sonne, the candle of Jelousie!

With teris blewe and with a woundid hert
Taketh your leve, and with Sainct Ihon to borowe
Apefith somwhat of your painis smert,
Time comith eft that cessin shall your sorow;
The glad night is worthe ap hevie morowe.
Sainct Valentine, a foule thus herde I sing
Upon thy daie or sonne gan up spring:

Yet sang this foule; I rede you all awake,
And ye that have not chosen in humble wise,
Without repentyng, chesith now your make,
Yet at the lest renoveleth your service,
And ye that have full chosen, as I devise,
Confermith it perpetually to dure,
And pacientlie takith your avinture.

And for the worship of this higheste feste
Yet woll I in my briddis wise ysing
The sentence of the Complaint at the leste
That wofull Mars made at the departyng
Fro freshe Venus in a morownyng,
When Phœbus with his fire torchis rede
Ranfaked hath every lovir in his drede.

Whilome the thre hevenis lorde above,
As well by hevenliche revolution
As by deserte, hath wonne Venus his love,
And she hath take him in subjeccion,
And as a maistresse taught him his lesson,
Commaundyng hym nevyr in her service
He were so bolde no lovir to dispise:

For she forbade hym jelousie at all,
And crueltie, and bofte, and tirannie;
She made him at her luste so humble and thrall,
That when she denied to cast on him her eye
He toke in pacience to live or die;
And thus she bridlith him in her manere
With nothing but with scorning of her chere.

Who reignith nowe in blisse but faire Venus,
That hath this worthi knight in govirnaunce?
Who singith nowe but Mars, that servith thus
The fayre Venus, the causir of plesaunce?
He bint him to perpetuel obeissaunce,
And she binte her to lovin him for ever,
But so be that his trespase it discever.

Thus be they knitte, and reignin as in heven,
By lokyng most, as it fel on a tide,
That by ther bothe assent was set a steven
That Mars shall entre as fast as he may glyde
Into her nexte palays to abyde,
Walking his course til she had hym ytake,
And he prayed her to haste her for his sake.

Than saide he thus; Myne hert is lady swete!
Ye knowin wel my myschese in that place,
For sikirly tyl that I with you mete
My lyfe stante there in avinture and grace,
But whan I se the beaute of your face
There is no drede of deth may do me smerte,
For al your luste is ese unto mine herte.

She hath so grete compassion of her knight,
That dwellith in solitude til she come,
For it stode so that ylkè time no wight
Counsaillid him, ne said to him welcome,
That nigh her wit for sorowe was oercome,
Wherefore she spedd her as fast in her way
Almoste in one daye as he did in tway.

The gret joye that ywas betwixe hem two
Whan they be mette there may no tonge tel,
There is no more but unto bedde they go,
And thus in joye and blisse I lette hem dwel;
This worthy Mars, that is of knighthode wel,
The floure of fairnesse happith in his armes,
And Venus kysith Mars the god of Armes.

Sojournid hath this Mars, of which I rede,
In chambre amydd the palais privily
A certaine time, til that him fel a drede
Through Phœbus, that was comin hastily
Within the palais yatis sturdily
With torch in honde, of which the firemis bright
On Venus chambre knockidin ful light.

The chambre there as laye this freshe quene
Depaintid was with white bolis grete,
And by the light she knew that shon so shene
That Phœbus came to bren 'hem with his hete;
This silly Venus, ny dreint in teres wete,
Enbrafith Mars, and said, Alas I die!
The torch is come that all this worlde wol wrie.

Up sterre tho Mars, him listid not to slepe
Whan he his lady herdin so complaine,
But for his nature was not for to wepe,
In stede of teris from his eyin twaine
The fire sparelis sprongin out for paine,
And hente his hauberke that lay him beside;
Fly wold he nought, ne might him selfin hide.

He throwith on his helme of huge weight,
And girt him with his swerde, and in his honde
His mighty spere, as he was wont to feight,
He shakith so that it almost to wonde;
Ful hevy was he to walken ovir londe;
He may not holde with Venus company,
But badde her flye, lest Phœbus her espy.

O woful Mars, alas! what maist thou sain?
That in the palace of thy disturbaunce
Arte leste behind in paril to be slaine,
And yet thereto is double thy penaunce,
For she that hath thine hert in govirnaunce
Is passid halfe the strems of thine eyen;
That you n'ere swift wel maist thou wepe and crien.

Nowe flyeth Venus into Ciclinius tour
With voidē corse, for fere of Phœbus light;
Alas! and there ne hath she no socour,
For she ne fonde ne sey no manir wight,
And eke as there she had but litil might,
Wherefore her selvin for to hide and save
Within the gate she fledde into a cave.

Darke was this cave, and smoking as the hel,
Nat but two paas within the yate it stode;
A naturel day in darke I let her dwel.
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and wode,
For sorowe he wolde have seen his hert blode;
Sith that he might done her no companie
He ne rought not a mite for to die.

So feble he wext for hete and for his wo
That nigh he swelt; he might unneth endure;
He passith but a sterre in dayis two;
But nertheles for al his hevy armure
He foloweth her that is his liv'is cure,
For whose departing he toke gretir yre
Than he did for his brenning in the fire.

Aftir he walkith softly a paas,
Complaining that it pite was to here;
He saide, O lady bright, Venus! alas
That er so wide a compas is my sphere!
Alas, whan shal I mete you, herte dere!
This twelve dayis of April I endure
Through jelous Phœbus this misavinture.

Now God helpe sely Venus all alone!
But as God wolde it happid for to be
That while that weping Venus made her mone
Ciclinius riding in his chyvaunche
Fro Venus, Valanus might this palais se,
And Venus he salvith and makith chere,
And her recevith as his frende ful dere.

Mars dwellith forth in his adversitie,
Complaining evir in her departing,
And what his complaint was remembrith me,
And therefore in this lustie morowning,
As I best can, I wol it saine and sing,
And aftir that I wol my leve ytake,
And God yeve every wight joy of his make!

THE COMPLAINT OF MARS.

THE' ordir of Complaynt requireth skilfully
That if a wight shall plainin pitously
Ther mote be cause wherfore that men yplaine,
Or men may deme he playnith folily
And causèles : alas ! that am not I,
Wherfore the grounde and cause of all my paine,
So as my troublid witte may it attaine,
I wol reherse, not for to have redresse,
But to declare my grounde of hevynesse.

The first time, alas ! that I was ywrought,
And for certain effectis hidir brought
By him that lordith eche intelligence,
I yave my trewe service and my thought
For evirmo, how dere I have it bought !
To her that is of so gret excellence
That what wight that shewith first her offence,
Whan she is wrothe and taketh of him no cure,
He may not longe in joye of love endure.

This is no fainid matir that I tel;
My lady is the very fours and wel
Of beaute, luste, fredome, and gentillesse,
Of riche array howe dere so men it sel,
Of al disporte in whiche men frendly dwel,
Of love and play, and of benigne humbleesse,
Of fowne of instrumentes of al swetnesse,
And thereto so wel fortunèd and thewid
That through the world her godenes is shewid :

What wondir is than though that I besette
My service on soche one that may me knette
To wele or wo, sithe it lithe in her might ?
Therefore myne herte for er I to her hette,
Ne trewly for my deth shall I not lette,
To ben her trewist servant and her knight;
I flattir nat, that may wete every wight,
For this day in her service shall I dye;
But grace be I se her nevir with eye.

To whom shal I plainin of my distresse ?
Who may me help, who may my hert redresse ?
Shal I complaine unto my lady fre ?
Nay, certis, for she hath soche hevynesse
For fere and eke for wo, that as I gesse

In litil time it would her bane ybe,
But were she safe it were no force of me :
Alas that evir lovirs mote endure
For love so many per'ilous avinture !

For though so be that lovirs be as trewe
As any metal that is forgid newe,
In many' a case 'hem tidith oft sorowe ;
Somtime ther ladies wol nat on 'hem rewe,
Somtimis if that Jelousy it knewe
They mightin lightly lay ther hed to borowe ;
Somtime envious folke with tongis horowe
Depravin 'hem : alas ! whom may they plese ?
But he be false no lovir hath his ese.

But what availith soch a long fermoun
Of avinturis of love up and down ?
I wol retourne and spekin of my paine :
The point is this, of my distructioun
My right lady and my salvacioun
Is in affray, and n'ot to whom to plaine :
O hertè swete ! o lady soverayne !
For your disese I ought wel swoun and swelt,
Though I none othir harme ne drede yfelt.

To what fine made the god that sytte so hie
Beneth him othir love or companye,
And strainith folke to love maugre ther hed ?
And then ther joye for aught I can espie
Ne lastith not the twinkeling of an eye,
And some have nevir joye til they be ded ;
What menith this, what is this mistihed ?
Wherto constrainith he his folke so fast
Thing to desirin but it should ylast ?

And though he made a lovir love a thing,
And makith it seme stedfast and during,
Yet putteth he in it soche misavinture
That rest ne is ther none in his yeving ;
And that is wondir that so juste a king
Ydothe soche hardnesse unto his cature ;
Thus whethir love breke or ellis dure
Algatis he that hath with love to done
Hath oftir wo than chaungid is the mone,

It semeth he hath to lovirs enmyte,
And lyke a fishe, as men may al day se,
Baitith his anglehoke with some plesaunce,
Till many' a fishe is wode to that he be
Cesid therwith, and then at erst hath he
Al his desyre, and therwithal mischaunce,
And though the line ybreke he hath penaunce,
For with that hoke he woundid is so fore
That he his wagis hath for evirmore.

The broche of Thebis was of soche a kinde,
So ful of rubyes and of stones of Inde
That every wight that sette on it an eye
He wende anone to worthy out of his mynde;
So fore the beaute would his hert ybynde
Til it he had him thought he must ydie;
And when that it was his than should he drie
Soche wo for drede aye while that he it had
That welnigh for the fere he should be mad;

And whan it was fro his possession
Than had he double wo and passion
That he so faire a jewil hath forgo;
But yet this broche, as in conclusion,
Was not the cause of his confusion,
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so
That every wight that had it should have wo,
And therefore in the worchir was the vice,
And in the coveitour, that was so nice.

So farith it by lovirs and by me,
For though my lady have so grete beaute
That I was mad to I had gette her grace
She was not cause of mine adversite,
But he that wroughtin her, as mote I the,

That put so gret a beaute in her face
That made me coveitin and so purchase
Myne owne deth; him wite I that I die,
And mine unwit that er I clambe so hie.

But to you hardy knightis of renowne,
Sithe that ye be of my devisyowne,
Al be' I not worthy to so gret a name,
Yet faine these clerkis I am your patrone,
Therefore ye ought have some compassion
Of my disese, and take it nat agame,
The proudest of you may be made ful tame,
Wherefore I pray you of your gentillesse
That ye complainin for mine hevinesse.

And ye, my ladyes, that ben trew and stable,
By way of kinde ye oughtin to ben able
To have pitie of folke that ben in paine;
Nowe have ye cause to clothin you in fable;
Sith that your empères the honorable
Is desolate wel oughtin ye to plaine;
Nowe shoude your holy teris fal and raine:
Alas! your honour and your emperice
Nigh ded for drede ne can her not chevice.

Complainith eke ye lovirs al in fere
For her that with unfainid humble chere
Was evir redy to do you focour,
Complainith her that er hath be you dere,
Complainith beaute, fredome, and manere,
Complainith her that endith your labour,
Complainith thilke ensample' of al honour,
That nevir yet dyd ought but gentilnesse;
Kythith therefore in her some kindenesse.

THE COMPLAINT OF VENUS.

THERE n'ys so high comfort to my plesaunce,
Whan that I am in my hevinesse,
As for to have leysir of remembraunce
Upon the manhode and the worthynesse,
Upon the trouthe and on the stedfastnes,
Of him whose I am al while I maye dure;
There ought to blamin me no creature,
For every wight praisith his gentillesse.

In him is bounte, wisedome, govirnaunce,
Well more than any mann'is witte can gesse,
For Grace hath wolde so ferforth him avaunce
That of knighthod he is parsite richesse,
Honour honourith him for his noblesse,
Therto so wel hath fourmid him Nature
That I am his for er I him ensure,
For every wight praisith his gentillesse.

And notwithstanding all his suffisaunce
His gentil herte is of so gret humbleesse
To me in worde, in werke, and in countenaunce,
And me to serve is al his besinesse,
That I am sette in very sykirnesse;
Thus ought I to blisse wel mine avintour,
Sith that him liste me servin and honour,
For every wight praisith his gentillesse.

Nowe certis, Love, it is right covenable
That men ful dere aby thy noble thinges,
As wake abedde and fastin at the table,
Weping to laugh, and singe in complainynges,
And downe to castin visage and lokinges,
Oftin to chaunge visage and countinaunce
Playe in slepinge, and dremyn at the daunce,
Al the revers of any gladde feling.

Jelousy he hangid by a cable,
She wolde al knowin through her espiyng,
There dothe no wight nothing so resonable
That al n'is harme in her ymagining;
Thus dere about is Love in his yeving,
Whiche ofte he yevith without ordinaunce,
As sorowe' ynough and litil of plesaunce,
Al the revers of any glade feling.

A litil tyme his yest is agreable,
But ful accomberous is the usinge,
For subtil Jelousy the discevable

Ful oftin tyme ycausith disflourbinge;
Thus ben we evir in drede and suffring:
In no certaine we languishen in penaunce,
And have wel ofte many an harde mischaunce,
Al the revers of any gladde feling.

But certis, Love, I saye not in soche wise
That for to scape out of your lace I ment,
For I so longe have ben in your service
That for to lete of wil I ner assent,
No force though jelousye me doe tourment;
Suffisith me to se him whan I may,
And therefore certis to mine ending day
To love him best shal me nevyr repent.

And certis, Love, whan I me wel advise
Of any' estate that man may represent
Than have ye made me thorough your franchise
Chesin the best that evir in erthe went;
Nowe love well, hert, and loke thou nevyr stent,
And lette the jelous putte it in assaye
That for no paine ne wol I not say naye;
To love him best shall I nevyr repent.

O herte! to the it ought ynoughe suffice
That Love so highe a grace hath to you sent
To chose the worthyist in allè wise,
And most agreable to mine entent;
Sekith no ferthir neithir way ne went,
Sith ye have suffisaunce unto my paye:
Thus wol I ende this Complaint or this lay;
To love him best shal I nevyr repent.

L'ENVOYE.

Princes, receveth this complaininge in gre,
Unto your excellent benignite
Directe astir my litil suffisaunce,
For elde, that in my spirite dullith me,
Hath of enditing al the subtilte
Weligh berafte out of my remembraunce;
And eke to me it is a grete penaunce,
Sith rime in Englishe hath soche scarcite,
To' folowe worde by worde the curiosite
Of Granfon, flour of hem that make in Fraunce,

THE LAMENTACION

OF MARIE MAGDALEINE.

This treatise is taken out of St. Origen, wherein Mary Magdalen lamenteth the cruell death of her Saviour Christ.

PLONGED in the wawe of mortall distresse;
Alas for wo! to whom shal I complein?
Or who shall devoide this grete heviness
Fro me', woful Marie, wofull Magalein!
My Lord is gon; alas! who wrought this tein?
This sodain chaunce persith my herte so depe
That nothing can I do but waile and wepe.

My Lorde is gone that here in grave was laied
Aftir his grete passion and deth cruell;
Alas! who hath hym thus again betraied?
Or what man here aboutin can me tell
Where he' is become the Prince of Israell,
Jesus of Naz'areth, my ghostly succour,
My parsite love, and hope of all honour!

What creture hath hym hennis caryid,
Or how might this so sodainly befall?
I would I had here with him taryid,
And so should I have had my purpose all:
I bought ointmentes ful precious and roial,
Where with I hoped his corps to have anointed,
But he thus gone my minde is disapointed.

While I therefore advertise and beholde
This pitous chaunce here in my presence
Full little marvaile though my hert be colde,
Confidiryng, lo! my Lord's absence:
Alas that I so full of negligence
Should be foundin! because I come so late
All men maie saie I am infortunate.

Cause of my sorowe you maie undirstonde,
Quia tulerunt Dominum meum,
An othir is that I ne maie him fonde,
I wote nere *ubi posuerunt eum* &

Thus I muste bewaile *dolorem meum*
With hertie wepyng I can no bet deserve
Till Deth approche my herte for to kerve.

My herte opprest with sodain avinture
By fervent anguyshe is bewrappid so
That long this life I ne maie not endure,
Soche is my pain, soch is my mortall wo;
Nevirthelesse to what parte shall I go

In hope to findin myne owne turtill true,
My liv'is joye, my soverain Lorde Jesu!
Sith all my joye, that I call his presence,
Is thus removed, now I am full of mone;
Alas the while I made no providence
For this mishap! wherefore I sigh and grone:
Succour to finde to what place might I gone!
Fain I would to some man my herte breke;
I n'ot to whom I maie complain or speke.

Alone I stande full sorie and full sad,
Which hopid to have seen my Lorde and Kyng;
Small cause have I to be merie or glad
Remembryng this bittirful departyng:
In this worlde ne is no creture livyng
That was to me so gode and gracious,
His love also then golde more precious.

Full sore I sigh without comfort again,
There is no cure to my salvacion,
His brenning love my hert so doth constrain,
Alas, here is a wofull permutacion!
Wherof I finde no joye nor consolacion,
Therefore my pain all onely to confesse
With deth I fere well ende my heviness.

This wo and anguish is intollerable;
If I bide here, life can I not sustain,
If I go hence my paines be uncurable;
Where him to finde I knowe no place certain,
And thus I ne wote of these thingis twain
Whiche I maie take and which I maie refuse:
My hert is wounded heron to thinke or muse,

A while I shall stande in this morowning
In hope if any vision would appere
That of my love might tell some gode tyding,
Whiche into joy might chaunge my wepyng cher;
I trust in his grace and his mercy dere;
But at the lest, though I therewith me kill,
I shall not spare to waile and wepe my fill.

And if that I die in soche avinture
I can no more but welcome as my chaunce;
My bones shal rest here in this sepulture;
My life, my deth, is at his ordinaunce;
It shal be tolde in lasting remembraunce:
Thus to departin is to me no shame,
And also thereof I 'am nothing to blame.

Hope against me so hath her course itake
That there is no more, but thus shall I die:
I se right well my Lorde hath me forsake,
But in my concept cause know I none why:
Although he be farre hence and nothing nye
Yet my wofull herte after hym doeth seke,
And causeth teres to ren down by my cheke.

Thinking, alas! I have lost his presence,
Which in this worlde was all my sustinaunce;
I crie and call with hertie diligence,
But there is no wight givith attendaunce,
Me to certifie of myne enquireaunce,
Wherefore I will to all this world bewraie
How that my Lorde is slain and born awaie.

Though that I mourne it ne is no grete wonder,
Sithe he is all my joye in speciall;
And nowe I thinke we be so farre asonder
That hym to se I fere nevyr I shall;
It helpith no more aftir hym to call,
Ne after hym to enquire in any coste:
Alas! how is he thus ygone and lost?

The Jewis I thinke full of miserie,
Yset in malice by ther busy cure
With force and might of gilefull trecherie
Hath entermined my Lord's sepulture,
And borne awaie that precious figure,
Levyng of it nothyng; if thei' have doen so
Marrid I am; alas, what shall I do!

With ther vengeaunce infaciabie
Now have thei hym gileless entretid so
That to reporte it is to lamentable,
Thei bete his bodie from toppe to the toe,
Nevyr man was yborne that felte soche woe;
Thei woundid hym, alas! with all grevaunce,
The blode down reilid in most habundaunce;

The blodie rowis stremed down ovir all,
Thei him assailid so maliciousslie
With ther scourgis and strokis bestiall;
Thei sparid not, but smote incessauntlie;
To satisfie ther malice thei were busie:
Thei spit in his face, thei smote here and there;
He groned full sore, and swete many a tere.

Thei crounid hym with thornis sharpe and kene,
The vainis rent, the blode ran down apace,
With blode ovircome were bothe his eyen,
And bolne with strokis was his blessid face;
Thei hym entretid as men without grace,
Thei knelid to hym, and made many a scorne;
Like helhoundis they have hym all to torne:

Upon a mightie crosse in length and brede
(These turmentours shewid ther cursidnesse)
Thei nailid hym without pitie or drede,
His precious blode braft out in largenesse,
Thei strained hym along as men mercilesse;
The verie jointes all to myne apparence
Rived asondir for ther grete violence.

All this I beholding with mine eyen twain
Stode there beside with rufull attendaunce,
And er me thought he beyng in that pain
Lokid on me with dedly countinaunce,
As he' had said in his speciall remembraunce
Farwell Magdalen, depart must I nedes hens,
My herte is *tanquam cera liquefens*.

Whiche rufull sight when that I gan beholde
Out of my witte I almoſte tho distraught,
I tare my here, my handis wrang and solde,
And of the sight my hert dranke soche a draught
That many a fall swounyng there I caught;
I brused my bodie fallyng on the grounde,
Whereof I fele many a grevous wounde.

Then these wretchis, full of all frowardnesse,
Gave hym to drinke eisell temprid with gall;
Alas! that poison full of bittirnesse
My lov'is chere causid them to appall,
And yet thereof might he not drinke at all,
But spake these wordis, as him thought it best,
Fathir of hevin! *consummatus est*.

Then knelid I doune in pain's outrage,
Clipping the crosse within myne armis twain,
His blode distillid doune on my visage,
My clothis eke the droppis did distain;
To have dyid for hym I would full fain,
But what shoulde it availe if I did so
Sith he' is *suspensus in patibulo*?

And thus my Lorde full dere was all disgised
With blode, and pain, and woundis many one,
His veinis braft, his jointis all to rived,
Partyng asondir the fleshe fro the bone;
But I sawe that he hing not there alone,
For *cum iniquis deputatus est*,
Not like a man but like a leprous best.

A blinde knight men ycallid Longias
With a spere aproched to my Sovèrain,
Lanysyng his side full pitousslie, alas!
That his precious herte he clave in twain,
The purple blode eke fro the hertis vain
Doune railid right fast in moste rufull wise,
With cristal water brought fro Paradise.

When I behelde this wofull passion,
I wote not how, by sodain avinture
My hert was perſed with very compassion,
That in me remained no life of nature,
Strokis of deth I felt without mesure,
My deth's wounde I caught with woe opprest,
And brought to point as my hert shuld ybrest.

The wounde, the hert, and blode, of my darling
Shal never slide fro my memorial,
The byttir paines also of tourmenting
Within my soule be gravin principal;
The spere, alas! that was so sharpe withall
So thrillid my herte, as to my feling,
That body and soule were at departing.

Sone as I might I releved up againe,
My brethe I coude not very wel restore,
Feling my self drownid in so grete paine,
Both body' and soule me thought wer al to tore,
Violent fallis grevid me right fore;
I wept, I bledde, and with my selfe I fared
As one that for his life nothing had cared.

I loking up unto that rufull rode
Sawe first the visage pale of that figure,
But so pitous a sight spottid with blode
Sawe never yet no living creature;
So it excedid the boundes of mesure,
That mann'is minde with al his wittis five
Is nothing able that paine to discrive.

Than gan I there min armis to unbrace,
Up lifting my handis ful mourningly
I sighid and fore sobbid in that place,
Both hevin and erthe might have herde me crie
Weping, and said Alas! incessauntly,
Ah, my swete herte, my gostly paramour!
Alas, I may nat thy body socour!

O bleffid Lorde! how fierse and how cruel
These cursid wightis now hath the yslaine,
Kerving, alas! thy body eviridel
Wounde within wounde, full byttir is thy pain;
Nowe wolde God that I might to the attaine
To naile my body fast unto thy tre,
So that of this paine thou mightist go fre!

I can nat reporte ne make reherfaile
Of my demening with the circumstaunce,
But wel I wote the spere with every naile
Thirlid my soule by inwarde ressemblaunce,
Which never shall out of my remembraunce;
During my life it woll cause me to waile
As ofte as I remembre that bataile.

Ah, ye Jewes! worse than doggis rabiate,
What moved you thus cruilly him to' aray?
He never displefed you, nor caused debate,
Your love and true hertes he conveytid aye;
He preched, he teched, he shewid the right way,
Wherefore ye lyke tyrantes wode and way-warde,
Nowe have him thus yslaine for his reward.

Ye ought to' have remembrid one thing special,
His favour, grace, and his magnificence;
He was your prince borne, and lorde ovir all,
Howe be it ye toke him in smal reverence;
He was ful meke in suffring your offence,
Nertheless ye devoured him with one assent,
As hungry wolves doth the lambe innocent.

Where was your pite, 'o peple mercileffe!
Arming your selfe with falsshed and trefon,
On my Lorde ye have shewid your wodenesse,
Like no men but bestis without reson;
Your malyce he suffrid for the seson:
Your paine wol come, ne thinke it nat to slacke;
Man without mercy of mercy shal lacke.

O traitours and maintainirs of madnesse!
Unto your foly' I ascribe al my paine,
Ye have me deprived of joye and gladnesse
So deling with my Lorde and soveraine;
Nothing ne shulde I nede thus to complaine
If he' had lived in pece and tranquillite
Whom ye have slaine through your iniquite.
Farewel, your noblenesse that somtime did raine!
Farewel your worship, your glory, and fame!
Hereaftir to lyve in hate and disdaine
Marvaile ye not; for your trespase and blame
Unto shame is tournid al your gode name:
Upon you now wol wondir every nation
As peple of a most vile reputation.

These wickid wretchis, these houndes of hel,
As I have tolde plaine here in this sentence,
Were not content my dere love thus to quel,
But yet they must embesile his presencé,
As I perceive; by covert violence
They have him conveyid to my displeasure,
For here is laste but nakid sepulture:

Wherefore of trowth and rightfull judgément,
That ther malice againe maye be acquitted,
Aftir my verdite and avisément,
Of false murdre they shullin be endited,
Of theft also, which shal not be respited,
And in al haste they shal be hanged and drawe;
I wol my selfe plede this cause in the lawe.

Alas! yf I with a trewe attendaunce
Had styl abiddin with my Lord'is corse,
And kept it stil with trewe perseveraunce,
Than had nat besal this woful devorse;
But as for my paine welcome, and no force:
This shal be my songe where so er I go,
Departing is the grounde of al my wo.

I se right wel now in my painis smerte
There is no wounde of so grevous dolour
As is the wounde of my careful herte;
Sithin I have losse thus my paramour
Al my swetnesse is tournid into four;
Mirthe to my herte nothing ne maie convey
But he that bereth therof bothe locke and key.

The joye excellent of bliffed Paradise
Maye me, alas! in no wise re-comforte,
Songe of angel nothing may me suffise,
As in min hertè nowe to make disporte;
Al I refuse but that I might resorte
Unto my love, the wel of godelihede,
For whose longing I trowe I shal be ded.

Of painful labour and tourment corpo'ral
I ne make therof none excepcion,
Painis of hel I wol passe ovir al
My love to finde in myne affeccion;
So grete to him is my delectacion,
A thousande timis martrid wolde I be
His bleffid body ones if I might se.

About this worlde, so large in all compace,
I shal not spare to renne my life during,
My fete also shal not rest in one place
Tyl of my love I may here some tiding,
For whose absence my handis nowe I wring;
To thinke on him cese shal never my minde:
O gentill Jesu! where shal I the finde?

Jerusalem I wol serche place fro place,
Sion, the Vale of Josaphath also,
And if I finde him not in al this space
By Mount Olivet to Beth'any woll I go;
These waies wol I wandir and many mo,
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana Jude;
No travaile shal me paine him for to se.

His blissid face if I might se and finde
Serche I wolde every coste and countrey,
The fardist parte of Egypt or hote Inde
Shulde be to me but a litil journey.
Howe is he thus gone or takin away!
If I knewe the ful trouthe and certentè
Yet from this care relefid might I be.

Into wildirnesse I thinke best to go,
Sithe I can no more tidinges of him here,
There may I my lyfe ledin to and fro,
There may I dwel and to no man apere;
To towne ne village woll I not come nere;
Alone in wodes, in rockes, and in caves depe,
I may at mine owne will both waile and wepe.

Myn eyin twaine withoutin variaunce
Shal nevir cese, I promise faithfully,
There for to wepin with gret aboundaunce
Byttir teris renning incessantly,
The whiche teris medlid ful petously
With the very blode er shall renne also,
Expressing in mine hert the grevous wo.

Worldely fode and sustenaunce I desire none,
Soche living as I finde soch wol I take,
Rotis that growin on the craggy stone
Shal me suffice, with watir of the lake;
Than thus may I say for my Lord's sake,
*Fuerunt mihi lacrymæ meæ
In deserto panes, die ac nocte.*

My body to clothe it makith no force,
A mourning mantil shal be sufficient,
The grevous woundis of his pitous corse
Shal be to me a ful royal garnement,
He departid thus I am best content;
His crosse with nailis and scourgis withat
Shal be my thought and paine especial.

Thus wol I live, as I have here ytolde,
If I may any longè time endure,
But I fere Deth is ovir me so bolde
That of my purpose I can not be sure;
My painis encrefin without mesure,
For of longe lyfe who can lay any reson?
Al thing is mortal, and hath but a seson.

I sigh ful sore, and it is ferre yfet;
Myne hert I fele now bledith inwardly,
The bloody teres I may in no wise let;
Sithe of my paine I finde no remedye
I thank God of al if that I now dye;
His will perfourmid I holde me content;
My soule let him have that hath it me lent,

For lengir to endure it 'is intollerable,
My woful herte is inflamid so huge,
That no sorow to myne is comparable,
Sithe of my minde I ne finde no refuge,
Yet I him require as a rightful juge
To devoide fro me the inwarde sorowe,
Lest that I live not to the nexte morowe.

Within mine hert is impressid ful sore
His royal forme, his shappe, his semelines,
His porte, his chere, his godenes evirmore,
His noble persone, with al gentilnes;
He is the welle of allè parfitnes,
The very Redemir of al mankinde,
Him love I best with herte, and soule, and minde.

In his absence my paines ful bittir be,
Right wel I may it fele nowe inwardely,
No wondir is though they hurte or fle me,
They causin me to crie so rufully;
Myne herte oppressed is so wondirfully
Onely for him, which so is bright of ble,
Alas, I trowe I shal him nevir se!

My joye is translate full farre in exile,
My myrthe is chaungid into paynis colde;
My lyfe I think endureth but a while;
Anguiste and paine is that that I beholde,
Wherfore my handis thus I wringe and folde;
Into this grave I loke, I cal, I pray,
Deth remainith and life is borne away.

Now must I walk and wandir here and there,
God wot to what partis I shal me dresse,
With quaking hert wepinge many a tere,
To seke out my love and all my swetnes;
I wolde he wyft what mortal hevines
About min herte renewith more and more,
Than wolde he nat kepe pite long in store.

Withoutin him I may not longe endure,
His love so fore workith within my brest,
And er I wepe before this sepulture
Sighing ful sore, as mine herte shulde ybrest;
During my lyfe I shal obtaine no rest,
But mourne and wepe where that evir I go,
Making complaint of al my mortal wo.

Fast I crie, but there is no audience,
My comming hidir was him for to plesse,
My soule opprest is here with his absence;
Alas, he list not set mine herte in ese!
Wherfore to paine my selfe with al disese
I shal not spare tyl he take me to grace,
Or ellis I shal sterve here in this place.

But onis if that I might with him speke
It were al my joy, with parfite plesaunce;
So that I might to him myne herte breke
I shulde anone devoide al my grevaunce,
For he' is the blisse of very recreaunce;
But now, alas! I can nothing do so,
For in stede of joy naught have I but wo.

His noble corse within min hert's rote
Depe is ygravid, whiche shal nevir flake;
Nowe is he gone, to what place I ne wote,
I mourne, I wepe, and al is for his sake:
Sithin he is paste here a vowe I make
With hertely promise, and therto me binde,
Nevir to cese til that I may him finde.

Unto his mothir I thinke for to go,
Of her haply some comforte may I take;
But one thinge yet me ferith and no mo,
Yf that I any mencion of him make
Of my wordis she wolde trimble and quake;
And who coude her blame, she having but one?
The sonne borne away the mothir wol mone.

Sorowes many hath she suffrid trewly
Sith that she first conceivid him and bare,
And sevin thinges there be most specially
That drownith her hert in sorowe and care,
Yet lo! in no wise maye they not compare
With this one now, the whiche if that she knew
She wolde her painis everichone renewe.

Gret was her sorowe by mennis saiying
Whan in the temple Simeon Justus
Shewid to her these wordis, prophesying,
Tuam animam pertransibit gladius;
Also whan Herode, that tyraunt furious,
Her childe pursuid in every place;
For his life went neithir mercy ne grace.

She mournid fore whan that she knewe him gone;
Full longe she sought or she him founde ayen;
Whan he went to deth his crosse him upon
It was to her sight a full rewful paine;
Whan he hong theron betwene thevis twaine,
And the spere unto his herte thrust was right,
She swounid, and to the grounde there ypyght:

Whan ded and bloody in her lappè lay
His blissed body, bothe handes and fete al tore,
She cryid out and said, Now, welaway!
Thus arayid was nevyr man before:
Whan hant was made his body to be bore
Unto sepulture here for to remaine
Unnethis for wo she coude her sustaine.

The sorowes sevin like swerdes every one
His mothir's herte woundid fro fyde to fyde,
But if she knewe her sonne thus ygone
Out of this worlde she shuld with deth yride,
For care she coude no lengir here abide,
Having no more joy nor consolacioun
Than I here standing in this stacioun:

Wherefore her to se I dare nat presume;
Fro her presence I wol my selfe refraine;
Yet had I levir to dye and consume
Than his mothir shulde have any more paine,
Nethèles her sonne I wolde se ful faine;
His presence was very joye and swetnes,
His absence is but sorowe and hevynesse.

There is no more, sith I may him nat mete
Whom I desire above al othir thing;
Nede I must take the souir with the swete,
For of 'his noble corse I here no tiding;
Ful oftyn I crie, and my handis wring.
Myne herte, alas! relentith al in paine,
Whiche wol ybrastin both sinewe and vaine.

Alas, howe' unhappy was this woful hour
Wherin is thus mispendid my service!
For min entent and eke my true labour
To none effecte may come in any wise;
Alas! I thinke if he do me dispise,
And list not take my simple observaunce,
There is no more, but deth is my finaunce.

I have him called, *sed non respondet mihi,*
Wherefore my mirth is tournid to mourning;
O, my dere Lord! *quid mali feci tibi,*
That me to comforte I finde no' erthly thing?
Alas! have compassion of my crying;
Yf fro me *faciem tuam abscondis*
There is no more but *consumere me vis.*

VOL. I.

Within myne hert is groundid thy figure,
That al this world's horrible tourment
May' it not aswage, it' is so without mesure,
It is so brenning, it is so fervent:
Remembir, Lorde, I have ben diligent
Evir the to plesse onely and no mo;
Myne herte is with the where so er I go.

Therefore, my dere darling! *trahè me post te,*
And lette me not standin thus desolate;
Quia non est qui consoletur me,
Myne herte for the is so disconsolate,
My paines also nothing me moderate;
Nowe if it list the to speke with me' alyve
Come in hast; my herte asondir will rive.

To the I profir, lo! my pore service,
The for to plesse astir mine owne entent;
I offre' here, as in devout sacrifice,
My boxe replete with precious oyntment,
Myne eyin twaine weping sufficient,
Myne herte with anguyshe fulfilled is, alas!
My soule eke redy for love out to pas.

Naught ellis have I the to plesse or pay,
For if min herte were golde or precious stone
It shulde be thine without any delay,
With hertely chere thou shulde have it anone,
Why suffrist thou me than to stande alone?
Thou hast I trowe my weping in disdaine,
Or els thou knowist nat what is my paine.

If thou withdrawe thy noble daliaunce
For ought that evir I displeid the,
Thou knowest right wel it is but ignoraunce,
And of no knowlege for a certainte;
If I have offendid, Lorde, forgive it me;
Gladde I am for to make ful repentaunce
Of all thing that hath ben to thy grevaunce.

Myne herte, alas! swellith within my brest,
So sore opprest with anguyshe and with payne,
That al to pecis forsothe it wol brest
But if I se thy blyssid corse againe;
For lyfe ne deth I can nat me refraine:
If that thou make delay thou maist be sure
Myne hert wol lepe into this sepulture.

Alas, my Lorde, why farest thou thus with me!
My tribulacion yet have in minde;
Where is thy mercy? where is thy pite?
Whiche evir I trustid in the to finde:
Sometime thou were to me both gode and kinde;
Lette it plesse the my prayir to accept,
Whiche with my teris I have here bewept.

On me thou oughtist to have very routh,
Sith for the onely is al this mourning,
For sith I to the plightid firste my trouthe,
I nevyr varyid with discording,
And that knowist thou best my owne darling!
Why constrainist thou me thus for to wayle?
My wo forsothe can the nothing availe.

I have endurid without variaunce,
Right as thou knowist, thy lovyr just and trew,
With hert and thought aye at thyn ordinaunce,
Lyke to the saphire, alwaye in one hewe;
I nevyr woulde chaungin the for no newe:
Why withdrawist thou the fro my presence,
Sithins al my thought is for thine absence?

L I

With hert intier, swete Lorde! I crie to the,
 Encline thine eres to my peticioun,
 And come *velociter exaudi me*;
 Remembre mine hert'is disposicioun,
 It may not endure in this condicioun,
 Therefore out of these paines libera me,
 And where thou arte *pone me juxta te*.

Let me beholde, o Jesu! thy blissed face,
 Thy faire thy glorious angelike visage;
 Bowe thine eris to my complaint, alas!
 For to convey me out of this wode rage:
 Alas, my Lorde! take fro me this damage;
 To my desire for mercy condiscende,
 For non but thou may my grevaunce amende.

Now yet, gode Lorde! I the besech and pray,
 As thou raifid my brothir Lazarous
 From deth to life, that upon the fourth day
 Came ayen in body and soule precious,
 As gret a thing maist thou shewe unto us
 Of thy self by powir of thy godhed
 As thou dyd of him lyinge in grave ded.

Myne hert is woundid with thy charite,
 It brennith, it flamith, incessauntly;
 Come, my dere Lorde! *ad adiuvandum me*;
 Nowe be not longe, my paine to multiplie,
 Lest in the mene time I departe and die:
 In thy grace I put hope and confidence
 To do as plesith thy magnificence.

Flodis of dethe and tribulacioun
 Into my soule I sele entrid ful depe,
 Alas, that here' is no consolacioun!
 Evir I waile, evir I mourne and wepe,
 And sorow hath woundid myn hert ful depe:
 O dere love! no marvaile though that I die,
Sagitta tua infixæ sunt mihi.

Wandringe in this place, as in wildirnesse,
 No comferte have I ne yet assuraunce,
 Desolate of joys, replete with faintnesse,
 No' answere receiving of mine enquirance,
 Myne herte also grevid with displeaunce,
 Wherefore I may saye, O Deus, Deus!
Non est dolor sicut dolor meus.

Myne hert expressith *quod dilexi multum*,
 I may nat endure although I wold saine;
 For now *solum superest sepulchrum*,
 I know it right wel by my hugè paine,
 And thus for love I may not life sustaine;
 But, o my God! I muse what aylith the,
Quid sic repente præcipitas me.

Alas! I fe' it wil none othirwise be,
 Nowe must I take my leve for evirmore,
 This sore paine hath almost discomfite me,
 My love's corse I can in no wise restore;
 Alas to this wo that er I was bore!
 Here at this tombe nowe must I die and starve,
 Deth is aboutin my hert for to carve.

My testament I wol begin to make;
 To God the Fathir my soule I commende,
 To Jesu my love, that died for my sake,
 My herte and al both I gyve and yfende,
 In whose dere love my lyfe ymakith ende,
 My body also to this monument
 I here bequeth, bothe boxe and oyntment,

Of al my willes, lo! nowe I make the last;
 Right in this place within this sepulture
 I woll be buried whan I'm ded and past,
 And on my grave I wol have this scripture,
Here within restith a gostly cature,
Christis true lovir, Mary Magdalaine,
Whes herte for love ybracke in peeis twaine.

Ye vertuous women, tendir of nature,
 Ful of pite and of compassion,
 Resorte I pray you to my sepulture
 To singe my dirge with grete devocion,
 Shewe your charite' in this condicion;
 Sing with pite and let your hertis wepe,
 Remembring I am ded, and layd to slepe:

Than whan that ye begin to parte me fro,
 And endid have your mourning observaunce,
 Remembre where so evir that ye go
 Alway to serche and make due enquirance
 Astir my love, mine hert'is sustinaunce,
 In every towne and in every village,
 If ye may here of his noble ymage;

And if it happe by any grace at laste
 That ye my trew love finde in any cost,
 Say that his Magdaleine is ded and paste,
 For his pure love hath yeldid up the gost;
 Say that of al thing I lovid him most,
 And that I ne might not this deth eschewe,
 My painis so fore dyd evir renewe.

And in token of love perpetual,
 Whan I am buried in this place present,
 Take out myne hert, the very rote and al,
 And close it within this boxe of oyntment,
 To my dere love make therof a present,
 Kneling downe with wordis lamentable
 Do your message, speke faire and trefable:

Say that to him my selfin I commende
 A thousand timis, and with herte so fre
 This povir token say to him I sende,
 Plesith his godenesse to take it in gre,
 It is his owne of right, it is his fe,
 Whiche he askid whan he said longe before
 Gyve me thy hert and I desire no more.

Adue, my Lorde! my love so faire of face!
 Adue, my turtle dove so freshe of hue!
 Adue, my mirthe! adue, al my solace!
 Adue, alas! my Saviour Lorde Jesu!
 Adue, the gentillist that er I knewe!
 Adue, my most excellent paramour!
 Fairir than rose, swetir than lylly flour!

Adue, my hope of plesure eternal!
 My lyfe, my welth, and my prosperite!
 Mine herte of golde, my perle oriental!
 Myne adamant of parfite charite!
 My chese refuge and my felycite!
 My comferte and my recreacioun!
 Farewel, my perpetual salvacioun!

Farewel, mine emperour celestial!
 And most beautiful prince of al mankinde!
 Adue, my Lord! of hert moste lyberal!
 Farewel, my swetist bothè soule and minde!
 So loving a spouse shal I nevir finde!
 Adue, my soveraine, very gentilman!
 Farewel, dere herte! as hertely as I can,

Thy wordes eloquente flowinge in swetnesse
 Shal no more, alas! my minde recomforte,
 Wherefore my life must ende in bittirnesse,
 For in this worlde shal I nevir resorte
 To the, whiche was mine hevinly disporte;
 I se, alas! it wol none othir be:

Nowe farewell, the grounde of al dignite!

Adue, the fairist that evir was bore!

Alas, I may nat se your blessid face!

Nowe welaway that I shal se no more

Thy blessid visage, so replete with grace;

Wherin is printid my parsite solace!

Adue, mine hert'is rote and al for ever!

Nowe farith wel, I must from the discever!

My soule for anguishe is nowe ful thrusty;

I faint, I faint, right fore for hevines;

My Lorde, my spouse! *cur me dereliquisti?*

Sith I for the suffre al this distresse

What causith the to seme thus mercilesse?

Sith it the pleseth of me to make an ende

In manus tuas my spirite I commende.

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THE FLOURE AND THE LEAFE.

WRITTEN BY GEOFFERY CHAUCER.

THE ARGUMENT.

A gentlewoman out of an arbour in a grove seeth a great company of knights and ladies in a dance upon the green grafs, the which being ended, they all kneel down and do honour to the daisie, some to the Flower, and some to the Leaf: afterward this gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this; they which honour the Flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as look after beauty and wordly pleasure, but they that honour the Leaf, which abideth with the root notwithstanding the frosts and winter storms, are they which follow virtue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

WHEN that Phœbus his chair of gold so hie
Had whirlid up the sterrie sky aloft,
And in the Bole was entrid certainly,
When shouris fote of rain descendid soft,
Causing the ground felè timis and oft
Up for to give many an wholesome air,
And evèry plain was yclothid faire

With newè grene, and makith smalè flours
To springin here and there in field and mede,
So very gode and wholesome be the shours,
That they renewin that was old and dede
In wiñtir time, and out of every fede
Springith the herbè, so that every wight
Of this seson wexith richt glade and licht;

And I so gladè of the seson swete,
Was happid thus; upon a certain night
As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete
Was unto me, but why that I ne might
Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight
[As I suppose] had more of hertis ese
Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor disese;

Wherefore I mervaille gretly of my self
That I so long withoutin slepè lay,
And up I rose thre houris astir twelwe,
About the springing of the gladsome day,
And on I put my gear and mine aray,
And to a plesaunt grove I gan to pas
Long or the bright sonnè uprisin was,

In which were okis grete, streight as a line,
Undir the which the grafs so freshe of hew
Was newly sprong, and an eight fote or nine
Evèry tre well fro his fellow grew,
With braunchis brode ladin with levis new,
That sprongin out agen the sonnè shene,
Some very rede, and some a glad light grene,

Which [as me thought] was a right plesaunt
And eke the birdis songis for to here [sight;
Would have rejoicid any erthly wight,
And I, that couth not yet in no manere
Herin the nightingale of all the yere,
Full busily herk'nid with hert and ere
If I her voice perceve could any where :

And at the last a path of litil brede
I found, that gretly had not usid be,
For it forgrowin was with grafs and wede,
That well unnethis a wight might it se;
Thought I, this path some whidir doth parde;
And so I followid till it me brought

To a right plesaunt herbir wel ywrought,
Which that benchid was, and with turfis new
Freshly turvid, whereof the grene grafs
So small, so thick, so short, so fresh of hew,
That most like to grene woll wot I it was;
The hegge also, that yedin in compas,
And closid in allè the grene herbere,
With sycamor was fet and eglaterè

Within, in fere so well and cunningly,
That every braunch and lese grew by mesure
Plain as a bord, of an height by and by;
I se nevir a thing [I you ensure]
So well ydone, for he that toke the cure
It for to make [I trowe] did all his peine
To make it pas all tho that men have seine.

And shapin was this herber rose and all
As is a pretty parlour, and also
The hegge as thick as is a castil wall,
That who that list without to stond or go,
Thogh he wold all day pryin to and fro
He should not se if there were any wight
Within or no, but one within well might

Perceve all tho that yain there without
Into the field, that was on every side
Cover'd with corn and grafs, that out of doubt
Tho one would sekin all the worldè wide
So rich a feldè could not be espyde
Upon no cost, as of the quantity,
For of allè gode thing there was plenty.

And I, that all these plesaunt sightis se,
Thought suddainly I felt so swete an air
Of the eglenterè, that certainly
There is no hert [I deme] in such dispair,
Ne yet with thoughtis froward and contraire
So overlaid, but it should sone have bote
If it had onis felt this favour sote.

And as I stode and cast aside mine eye
I was ware of the fairist medler tre
That evir yet in all my life I se,
As full of blossomis as it might be,
Therein a goldfinch leping pretily
From bough to bough, and as him list he ete
Here and there of buddis and flouris swete.

And to the herbir side was adjoyning
This fairist tre of which I have you told,
And at the last the bird began to sing
[Whan he had etin what he etin would]
So passing swetely that by many fold
It was more plesaunt than I couth devise;
And whan his song was endid in this wise

The nightingale with so mery a note
Answerid him, that alle the wode yrong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote
I stode astonied, and was with the song
Thorow ravishid, that till late and long
I ne wist in what place I was ne where,
Ayen methought she song e'en by mine ere:

Wherefore I waited about busily
On evéry side if I her might se,
And at the last I gan full well espy
Where she sate in a fresh grene laury tre,
On the furthir side evin right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglanterè full well;

Whereof I had so inly grete plesure,
As methought I surely ravishid was
Into Paradise, wherein my desire
Was for to be, and no ferthir to pas
As for that day, and on the sote grafs
I sat me down, for as for mine entent
The birdis song was more convenient

And more plesaunt to me by many fold
Than mete or drink, or any othir thing,
Thereto the herbir was so fresh and cold,
The wholsome savours eke so comforting,
That [as I demid] sith the beginning
Of the worldè was nevir seen er than
So plesaunt a ground of none erthly man.

And as I sat the birdis herkening thus,
Methought that I herd voicis suddainly,
The most swetist and most delicious
That evir any wight I trow trewly
Herdin in ther life, for the armony
And swete accord was in so gode musike
That the voicis to angels most were like.

At the last out of a grove evin by
[That was right godely and plesaunt to sight]
I se where there came singing lustily
A world of ladies, but to tell aright
Ther beauty grete lyith not in my might,
Ne ther array; nevirtheless I shall
Tell you a part, tho' I speke not of all:

The surcots white of velvet well fitting
They werin clad, and the semis eche one,
As it werin a mannir garnishing,
Was set with emeraudis one and one
By and by, but many a richè stone
Was set on the pursilis out of dout
Of collours, flevcs, and trainis, round about;

As of grete perlis round and orient,
And diamondis fine and rubys red,
And many othir stone of which I went
The namis now; and everich on her hede
A rich fret of gold, which withoutin drede
Was full of stately rich stonys fet,
And every lady had a chapelet

On ther hedis of braunchis fresh and grene,
So wele ywrought, and so marvelously,
That it was a right noble sight to sene,
Some of laurir, and some full plesauntly
Had chapelets of wodebind, and sadly
Some of agnus castus werin also,
Chaplets fresh; but there were many of tho

That dauncid and eke song full sobirly,
But all they yede in maner of compace;
But one there yede in mid the company
Sole by herself; but all follow'd the pace
That she kept, whose hevinly figured face
So plesaunt was, and her wele shape person,
That of beauty she past them everichone,

And more richly beseen by manyfold
 he was also in every manir thing;
 Upon her hede full plesaunt to behold
 A coron of gold rich for any king,
 A braunch of agnus castus eke bering
 In her hand, and to my sight trewily
 She lady was of all the company;

And she began a roundell lustily
 That *Sus le foyle de vert moy* men call
Sine & mon joly cœur est endormy,
 And than the company answerid all,
 With voisis swete entunid and so small,
 That methought it the swetest melody
 That evir I herd in my life sothly.

And thus they all came dauncing and singing
 Into the middis of the mede echone
 Before the herbir where I was sitting,
 And God wot I thought I was well bigone,
 For than I might avise them one by one
 Who fairist was, who best could dance or sing,
 Or who most womanly was in all thing.

They had not dauncid but a little throw
 When that I herd not fer of sodainly
 So grete a noise of thundering trumpis blow
 As though it should have departid the skie,
 And astir that within a while I sie
 From the same grove where the ladies came out
 Of men of armis coming such a rout

As all men on erth had ben assemblid,
 On that place well horrid for the nonis,
 Stering so fast that all the erth tremblid;
 But for to speke of richis and stonis,
 And men and horse, I trow the large wonis
 Of Pretir John, ne all his tresory,
 Might not unneth have bought the tenth party.

Of their array who so list to here more,
 I shall reherse so as I can a lite,
 Out of the grove that I speke of before
 I se come first, all in their clokis white,
 A company that wore for ther delite
 Chapelets fresh of okis serial

But newly sprong, and trumpets were they all;
 On every trump hanging a brode bannere
 Of fine tartarium, full richly bete,
 Every trumpet his lord's armis bere
 About ther neckis, with grete perlis sete,
 Collaris brode, for cost they wou'd not lete,
 As it would seem, for ther scochons echone
 Were set about with many a precious stone;

Ther horsis harneis was all white also;
 And astir them next in one company
 Can in kingis at armis and no mo,
 In clokis of white cloth with gold richly,
 Chaplets of grene on ther heds on hye,
 The crownis that they on ther scotchons bere
 Were set with perl, and ruby, and saphere,

And eke grete diamondis many one;
 But all ther horsis harneis and other gere
 Was in a sute according everichone,
 As ye have herd the foresaid trumpets were,
 And by seming they were nothing to lere,
 And ther guiding they did so manirly;
 And astir them came a gret company

Of heraldeis and pursevauntis eke,
 Arrayid in clothis of white velvet,
 And hardily they were nothing to seke
 How they on them shouldin the harneis set,
 And every man had on a chapèlet,
 Scotchonis and eke horse harneis in dede
 They had in sute of them that 'fore them yede.

Next after these appere in armour bright,
 All save ther hedis, semely knightis nine,
 And every clasp and nail, as to my sight,
 Of ther harneis were of red gold so fine,
 With cloth of gold, and furrid with ermine,
 Were the tappouris of their stedis strong,
 Both wide and large, that to the ground did hong;

And every boss of bridle and paitrel
 That they had on was worth, as I would wene,
 A thousand pound; and on ther hedis well
 Dressid were crounis of the laurir grene,
 The best ymade that evir I had sene;
 And every knight had astir him riding
 Thre henchmen, still upon him awaiting;

Of which every (first) on a short trunchon
 His lord's helmet bore so richly dight
 That the worst of them was worth the ransoun
 Of any king; the second a shield bright
 Bare at his back; the thred barin upright
 A mighty spere, full sharp yground and kene,
 And every child ware of levis grene

A fresh chap'let upon his hairis bright;
 And clokis white of fine velvet they were,
 Ther stedis trappid and arayid right,
 Without difference as ther lordis were;
 And astir them on many a fresh coursere
 There came of armid knightis such a rout
 That they besprad the large field about;
 And all they werin, astir ther degrees,
 Chappèlets new, or made of laurir grene,
 Or some of oke, or some of othir trees,
 Some in ther hondis barin boughis shene,
 Some of laurir, and some of okis bene,
 Some of hawthorne, and some of the wodebind,
 And many mo which I have not in mind.

And so they came ther horse freshly stirring
 With bloudy sownis of ther trompis loud;
 There se I many an uncouth disguising
 In the array of thilk knightis proud;
 And at the last as evenly as they cou'd
 They toke ther place in middis of the mede,
 And every knight turnid his horsis hede
 To his felow, and lightly laid a spere
 Into the rest, and so justis began
 On every part aboutin here and there; [man,
 Some brake his spere, some threw down horse and
 About the felde astray the stedis ran;
 And to behold their rule and govirnaunce
 I you ensure it was a grete plesaunce.

And so the justis last an hour and more,
 But tho that crownid were in laurir grene
 Did win the prise; their dintis were so fore
 That there was none agenst them might sustene,
 And the justing allè was left off clene;
 And fro ther horse the nine alight anon,
 And so did all the remnaunt everichone,

And forth they yede togidir twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight,
Toward the ladies on the grenè plain,
That song and dauncid, as I said now right;
The ladies as sone as they godely might
They brakin off both the song and the daunce,
And yede to mete them with full glad semblaunce:

And every lady toke full womanly
By the hond a knight, and so forth they yede
Unto a faire laurir that stode fast by,
With levis laid, the boughis of grete brede,
And to my dome ther nevir was indede
A man that had sene half so faire a tre,
For undirneath it there might well have be

An hundrid persons at ther own plesaunce
Shadowid fro the hete of Phœbus bright,
So that they shouldin have felt no grevaunce
Neithir for rain, ne haile, that them hurt might;
The favour eke rejoice would any wight
That hed be sick or melancholious,
It was so very gode and vertuous.

And with grete rev'rence they enclinid low
Unto the tre so fote and fair of hew,
And astir that within a litil throw
They all began to sing and daunce of new;
Some song of love, some plaining of untrew,
Environing the tre that stode upright,
And evir yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last I cast mine eie aside,
And was ware of a lusty company
That came roming out of the feldè wide,
And hond in hond a knight and a lady,
The ladies all in surcotes, that richly
Purfilid were with many a rich stone,
And every knight of grene ware mantlis on,

Embroulid wele, so as the surcots were,
And everich had a chapelet on her hed,
[Which did right wele upon the shining here]
Makid of godely flouris white and red,
The knightis eke that they in hondè led
In sute of them ware chaplets everichone,
And before them went minstrels many one,

As harpis, pipis, lutas, and fautory,
Allè in grene, and on ther hedis bare
Of diverse flouris made full craftily,
All in a sute, godely chaplets they ware,
And so dauncing into the mede they fare,
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
All ovirsprad with flouris in compas,

Whereto they enclined everichone
With grete rev'rence, and that full humbly;
And at the last there tho began anon
A lady for to sing right womanly
A bargaret in praïsing the daisie,
For (as methought) among her notis swete
She said *Si douce est la Margarete!*

Then they alle answerid her in fere
So passingly well and so plesauntly,
That it was a most blisfull noise to here;
But I 'not how it happid, sodainly
As about none the sonn so fervently
Waxe hotè that the pretty tendir floures
Had lost the beauty of their fresh collours.

For shronke with hete the ladies eke to brent,
That they ne wist where they them might bestow,
The knightis swelt, for lack of shade nie shent,
And astir that within a litil throw
The wind began so sturdily to blow
That down goth all the flowris everichone,
So that in all the mede there last not one,

Save such as succoured were among the leveis
Fro every storme that mightè them assaile,
Growing undir the heggis and thick greves;
And astir that there came a storme of haile
And rain in fere, so that withoutin faile
The ladies ne the knightis n'ade o' thred
Dry on them, so drooping wet was ther wede.

And when the storme was clene passid away
Tho in the white, that stode undir the tre,
They felt nothing of all the grete affray
That they in grene without had in ybe;
To them they yede for routh and for pite,
Them to comfort astir their grete disese,
So fain they were the helpelesse for to ese.

Than I was ware how one of them in grene
Had on a coron rich and well-fitting,
Wherefore I demid well she was a quene,
And tho in grene on her were awaiting;
The ladies then in white that were coming
Towardis them, and the knightis in fere,
Began to comfort them and make them chere.

The quene in white, that was of grete beauty,
Toke by the honde the quene that was in grene,
And seidè, Suster, I have grete pity
Of your annoy and of your troublous tene
Wherein ye and your company have bene
So long, alas! and if that it you plesè
To go with me I shall do you the ese

In al the plesure that I can or may;
Whereof that othir, humbly as she might,
Thankid her, for in right evil array
She was with storme and hete I you behight;
And every lady then anon right

That were in white one of them toke in grene
By the hond, which when the knightis had sene

In like manir eche of them toke a knight
Clad in the grene, and forth with them they fare
To an heggè, where that they anon right
To makin these justis they would not spare
Boughis to hew down, and eke trees to square,
Wherewith they made them statly firs grete
To dry ther clothis, that were wringing wete:

And astir that of herbis that there grew
They made for blistirs of the sonne brenning
Ointmentis very gode, wholsome and new,
Where that they yede the sick fast anointing;
And astir that they yede about gadring
Plesant saladis, which they made them etc
For to refreshe ther grete unkindely hete.

The lady of the Lesè then gan to pray
Her of the Floure [for so to my seming
They should be callid as by ther array]
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing
That she should with her all her pepill bringe,
And she ayen in right godely manere
Thankith her fast of her most frendly chere,

Saying plainely that she would obay
With all her hert all her commandement;
And then anon without lengir delay
The lady of the Lefe hath one ysent
To bring a palfray astir her intent,
Arrayid wele in fair harneis of gold,
For nothing lackid that to him long shold:

And astir that to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they nedid, and then full hastily
Even by the herbir where I was sitting
They passid all, so merrily singing
That it would have comfortid any wight:
But then I se a passing wondir light,

For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurir sete, and did her might
The whole service to sing longing to May,
All sodainly began to take her flight,
And to the lady of the Lefe forthright
She flew, and set her on her hand softly,
Which was a thing I mervail'd at gretly.

The goldfinch eke, that fro the medlar tre
Was fled for hete unto the bushis cold,
Unto the lady of the Flowre gan fle,
And on her hond he set him as he wold,
And plesauntly his wingis gan to fold,
And for to sing they peine them both as fore
As they had do of all the day before.

And so these ladies rode forth a grete pace,
And all the rout of knightis eke in fere;
And I that had sene all this wondir case
Thought that I would assay in some manere
To know fully the trouth of this mattere,
And what they were that rode so plesauntly;
And when they were the herbir passid by

I drest me forth, and happid mete anon
A right fair lady, I do you ensure,
And she came riding by her self alone,
Allè in white, with semblaunce full demure;
I her salued, bad her gode avinture
Mote her befall, as I coude most humbly,
And she answered, My doughtir, gramercy!

Madame, quoth I, if that I durst enquire
Of you, I wold fain of that company
Wit what they be that passid by this harbere.
And she ayen answerid right frendly,
My doughtir, all tho that passid hereby
In white clothing be servants everichone
Unto the Lefe, and I my self am one.

Se ye not her that crownid is (quod she)
Allè in white? Madame, then quod I, Yes.
That is Dian, goddess of Chastity,
And for bicause that she a maidin is
Into her hond the branch she berith this
That agnus castus men call proprly;
And all the ladies in her company

Which ye se of that herbe chaplets were
Be such as han alwey kept maidinhede,
And all they that of laurir chaplets bere
Be such as hardy were in many dede,
Victorious, name which nevyr may be dede
And all they were so worthy of their honde
In their time that no one might them withstonde;

And tho that were chaplets on ther hede
Of fresh wodebind be such as nevyr were
To Love untrue in word, in thought, ne dede,
But ay stedfast, ne for plesance ne fere,
Tho that they shulde ther hertis all to tere,
Woud never flit, but evir were stedfast
Till that ther livis there assundir brast.

Now, fair Madam! quod I, yet woud I pray
Your ladiship [if that it mightin be]
That I might knowe by some manir of wey,
Sithin that it hath likid your beaute
The trouth of these ladies for to tell me,
What that these knightis be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and were the Flour,
And why that some did rev'rence to the tre,
And some unto the plot of flouris fair?

With right gode wil, my doughtir fair! quod she,
Sith your desire is gode and debonaire:
Tho nine crownid be very exemplaire
Of all honour longing to chivalry,
And those certain be clept The Nine Worthy

Which that ye may se riding all before,
That in ther time did many a noble dede,
And for ther worthineis full oft have bore
The crown of laurir levis on ther hede,
As ye may in your oldè bokis rede,
And how that he that was a conqueror
Had by laurir alwey his most honour:

And tho that barin bowes in ther hond
Of the precious laurir so notable
Be such as were [I woll ye undirstond]
Most noble Knightis of The Round Table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they bere in the sign of victory,
As witness of ther dedis mightily:

Eke ther be Knightis old of the Gartir,
That in ther timis did right worthily,
And the honour they did to the laurir
Is for by it they have ther laud wholly,
Ther triumph eke and martial glory,
Which unto them is more perfite riches
Than any wight imagin can or gesse;

For one Lefe givin of that noble tre
To any wight that hath done worthily
[An it be done so as it ought to be]
Is more honour than any thing erthly,
Witness of Rome, that foundir was truly
Of all knighthode and dedis marvelous,
Record I take of Titus Livius.

And as for her that crownid is in grene,
It is Flora, of these flouris goddesse,
And all that here on her awaiting bene
It are such folk that lovid idlenesse,
And not delite in no kind besinesse
But for to hunt, and hawke, and pley in medes,
And many othir such like idle dedes.

And for the grete delite and the plesaunce
They have to the Flour, and so reverently
They unto it doin such obeisaunce,
As ye may se. Now, fair Madame! quod I,
[If I durst ask] what is the cause and why
That knightis have the ensigne of honour
Rathir by the Lefe than by the Flour?

Sothly, doughtir, quod she, this is the trowth,
For knightes evir should be persevering
To feke honour without feintise or slouth,
Fro wele to bettir in all manir thing,
In sign of which with levis ay lasting
They be rewardid aftir ther degre,
Whose lusty grene may not appairid be,

But ay keping ther beauty fresh and grene,
For ther n'is no storme that may them deface,
Ne hail nor snowe, ne wind nor frostis kene,
Wherefore they have this propriety and grace;
And for the flour within a litil space
Wollin be lost, so simple of nature

They be that they no grevaunce may endure :

And every storme woll blowe them sone away,
Ne they laste not but for a seson,

That is the cause [the very trowth to say]

That they may not by no way of reson

Be put to no such occupacion.

Madame, quod I, with all mine whole servise
I thank you now in my most humble wise;

For now I am ascertain'd thoroughly

Of every thing I desirid to knowe.

I am right glad that I have said, sothly,

Ought to your plesure, (if ye will me trow.)

Quod she ayen. But to whom do ye owe
Your service, and which wollin ye honour
[Pray tell me] this year, the Lefe or the Flour?

Madam, quod I, although I left worthy,
Unto the Lefe I ow mine observaunce.

That is, quod she, right well done certainly,

And I pray God to honour you advaunce,

And kepe you fro the wickid remembraunce

Of Malèbouch and all his cruilte,

And all that gode and well-condition'd be;

For here I may no lengir now abide,

But I must follow the grete company

That ye may se yondir before you ride;

And forthwith as I couth most humily

I toke my leve of her, and she gan hie

Aftir them as fast as evir she might,

And I drow homeward, for it was nigh night,

And put all that I had sene in writing,

Undir support of them that lust it rede.

O little boke! thou art so unconning,

How darst thou put thy self in prees for drede?

It is wondir that thou wexist not rede,

Sith that thou wost full lite who shall behold

Thy rude langage full boytously unfold.

THE COURT OF LOVE.*

With timorous herte and trembling hand of drede,
Of cunning nakid, bare of eloquence,
Unto the flour of port in womanhede
I write, as he that none intelligence
Of metris hath ne flouris of sentence,
Saufe that me list my writing to convey
In that I can to plesse her high nobley.

The blofomes fresh of Tullius gardein fote
Present thei not, my mattir for to borne,
Poemes of Virgile takin here no rote,
Ne crafte of Galfride may not here sojourne;
Why n'am I cunning? 'o well maie I morne
For lacke of science, that I can nat write
Unto the princes of my lyfe aright!

No termes are digne unto her excellence,
So is she spronge of noble stripe and high;
A world of honour and of revèrence
There is in her, this will I testifie:
Caliope, thou listir wise and fly,
And thou Minerva! guide me with thy grace,
That langage rude my mattir not deface.

Thy sugir dropis swete of Helicon
Distil in me, thou gentle Muse! I praye,
And the Melpomene I cal anone
Of ignoraunce the miste to chace awaye,
And geve me grace so for to write and saie
That she my lady of her worthinesse
Accept in gre this litil short tretesse,

That is entituled thus, *The Courte of Love*;
And ye that ben metrichiens me excuse,
I you beseeche, for Venus sake above,
For what I mene in this ye nede not muse;
And if so be my lady it refuse
For lake of ornate speche, I wolde be wo
That I presume to her to writin so.

* This book is an imitation of The Romaunt of the Rose, shewing that all are subject to love, what impediments soever to the contrary, containing also those 20 statutes that are to be observed in The Court of Love. Urry.

But my entente and all my busy cure
Is for to write this tretesse as I can,
Unto my lady stable, true, and sure,
Faithful and kind, sith firste that she began
Me to accept in service as her man;
To her be al the plesure of this boke,
That when her like she may it rede and loke.

When I was yong, at xviii yere of age,
Lusty and light, desirous of plesaunce,
Approching on full fadde and ripe corage,
Love artid me to do my observaunce
To his estate, and done him obeisaunce,
Commaunding me *The Court of Love* to se,
A lite beside the Mounte of Cithere;

There Citherea goddesse was and quene,
Honourid highly for her majeste,
And eke her sonne, the mighty god I wene,
Cupid the blind, that for his dignite
A M. lovirs worshipp on ther kne;
There was I bid in paine of deth to pere
By Mercury the wingid messingere:

So than I went by strange and ferre countrees,
Enquiringe aye what coaste had to it drewe
The Court of Love, and thidirward as bees
At last I se the peple gan pursue;
Anon me thought some wight was ther that knew
Where that the *Court* was holdin ferre or nie.
And astir than ful faste I ganne me hie.

Anon as I them ovirtoke I said,
Heile, frendis! whethir purpose ye to wend?
For soth, (quod one) that answered lyche a maid,
To *Love's Courte* now go we, gentil frend!
Where is that place, (quod I) my felowe hend?
At Citheron, Sir, saide he, without doute,
The kinge of Love, and al his noble route,

Dwelling within a castil rially.
So than apace I journid forth amonge;
And as he saide so fond I there truly,
For I behelde the touris high and stronge,

And high pinaculis large of hight and longe,
With plate of gold bespred on every side,
And precious stones, the stone werke for to hide.

No saphire of Inde, no rubie riche of price,
There lackid then, nor emeraude so grene,
Balis Turkis, ne thing to my devise
That may the castil makin for to shene,
All was as bright as sterres in wintir bene,
And Phœbus shone to make his pece ageine
For trespass done to high estatis tweine :

Venus and Mars, the god and goddesse clere,
When he them founde in armis cheinid faste,
Venus was than ful sad of herte and chere,
But Phœbus bemis, streight as is the maste,
Upon the castil ginnith he to cast
To plesse the lady, princes of that place,
In signe he lokith astir Lov's grace :

For ther n'is god in heven or hel iwys
But he hath ben right soget unto Love,
Jove, Pluto, or what so ever he is,
Ne creature in erth or yet above,
Of this the revers may no wight approve;
But furthirmore the castill to descric
Yet sawe I nevyr none so large and hie,

For unto heven it stretchith I suppose,
Within and out depeintid wondirly,
With many' a thousand daisy rede as rose,
And white also, this sawe I verily,
But what tho deisis might do signifie
Can I not tel, fause that the quen'is floure
Alceste it was, that kept ther her sojoure

Which undir Venus lady was and quene,
And Admete kyng and soverain of that place,
To whom obeied the ladies gode xix,
With many' a thousand othir bright of face,
And young men fele came forth with lusti pace,
And agid eke, ther homage to dispose,
But what they were I could not well disclose.

Yet nere and nere forth in I gan me dresse
Into an halle of noble apparaile,
With arras spred and cloth of gold I gesse,
And othir silke of esyir availe;
Undir the cloth of ther estate, fauns faile,
The king and quene there sat, as I beheld;
It passid joye of Helise the feld.

There saintis have ther cominge and reforte
To seen the kinge so rially besene
In purple clad, and eke the quene in sorte,
And on ther haddis sawe I crounis tweine
With stonis fret, so that it was no paine
Withoutin mete and drinke to stand and se
The king's honor and the rialte.

And for to trete of statis with the king,
That ben of counsell chefe, and with the quene;
The king had Daungir nere to him standing,
The quene of Love Disdain, and that was sene,
For by the faith I shal to God I wene
Was nevyr straungir none in her degre
Than was the quene in castinge of her eye.

And as I stode perceving her aparte,
And eke the bemis shininge of her eyen,
Me thought they werein shapin lyche a darte,
Sharpe and persinge, smale and streight as a line,

And al her here it shone as golde so fine,
Disshivil, crispe, doune hanging at her backe
A yard in length, and southely than I spake :
O bright *Regina* ! who made the so faire?
Who made thy colour vermelet and white?
Wher wonneth the god, how far above the eyre?
Grete was his crafte, and grete was his delite;
Now marvil I nothing that ye do hight
The quene of Love, and occupie the place
Of Cithare : now, swete lady ! thy grace.

In mewit spake I, so that nought asterte
By no condicion word that might be hard,
But in my inward thought I gan advertte,
And oft I said My wit is dul and hard,
For with her beautie thus God wot I ferde
As doeth the man yravishid with sight,
When I beheld her cristal eyen so bright,
No respecte havynge what was beste to done,
Till right anone beholding here and there
I spied a frend of myne, and that ful sone,
A gentil woman, was the chambirere
Unto the quene, that hote as ye shall here,
Philobone, that lovid al her life;
Whan she me sey she led me forth as blife,

And me demaundid how and in what wise
I thithir come, and what my erand was?
To sene the Courte (quod I) and al the guise,
And eke to sue for pardon and for grace,
And mercy aske for al my grete trespasse;
That I none erste come to The Court of Love
Foryeve me this, ye goddis al above.

That is well said (quod Philobone) in dede;
But were ye not assomoned to appere
By Mercurius, for that is al my drede?
Yes, gentill feire ! (quod I) now am I here.
Ye, yet what tho though that be true, my dere?
Of your fre wil ye shuld have come unsente,
For ye did not I deme ye will be shente :

For ye that reigne in youth and lustines,
Pampired with ese, and jalous in your age,
Your dutie is, as far as I can gesse,
To *Lov's Courte* to dreslin your viage
Assone as Nature makith you so sage
That ye may know a woman from a swan.
Or whan your fote is growin halfe a span.

But sithe that ye by wilful negligence
This xviii yere hath kept your selfe at large
The gretir is your trespass and offence,
And in your neck you mote bere all the charge,
For bettir were ye ben withoutin barge
Amidde the se in tempest and in rayne
Then bidin here receving wo and pain

That ordeined is for soche as them absente
Fro *Lov's Courte* by yeris long and fele;
I ley my life ye shal ful sone repente,
For Love wil reive youre coloure, lust, and hele,
Eke ye must baite on many' an hevvy mele :
No force iwys, I stired you longe agon
To drawe to Courte, quod litil Philobon;

Ye shal wel se how rough and angry face
The king of Love will shewe when ye him se;
By myn advise knele down and aske him grace,
Eschewing peril and adversite,

For wel I wot it wolde none othir be :
 Comforte is none ne counail to your ese,
 Why wil ye then the king of Love displese?

O mercie, God! (quod iche) I me repent,
 Caitife and wretche, in hert, in wil, and thought,
 And aftir this shal be mine whole entent
 To serve and plese, how dere that love be bought;
 Yet sith I have mine owne penaunce isought
 With humble spirite shal I it receve,
 Though that the king of Love my life bereve;

And though that fervent Lov'is qualite
 In me did nevyr worche truly, yet I
 With al obeisaunce and humilite,
 And benigne herte, shal serve him til I die;
 And he that lord of might is grete and hie
 Right as him list me chastice and correcte,
 And punishe me, with trespase thus enfecte.

These wordis said, she caught me by the lap,
 And led me furth in til a temple round,
 Bothe large and wide, and as my blessid hap
 And gode avinture was right sone I founde
 A tabernacle reifid from the grounde
 Where Venus sat and Cupid by her side,
 Yet half for drede I can my visage hide;

And est againe I lokid and behelde,
 Seing ful sundry peple in the place
 And mistir folke, and some that might not welde
 Ther limmis wele me thought a woundir case,
 The temple shone with windowes al of glasse
 Bright as the day, with manie' a faire ymage,
 And there I se the freshe Quene of Carthage,

Dido, that brent her beaute for the love
 Of fals Æneas, and the weimenting
 Of her Anelida, true as turtill dove
 To Arcite fals; and there was in peinting
 Of many' a prince and many' a doughty king
 Whose martirdom was shewed about the walles,
 And how that fele for love had suffrid falles.

But fore I was abashid and astonied
 Of al tho folke that there were in that tide,
 And than I askid where they haddin woned?
 In divers courtis, (quod she) here beside:
 In sondrie clothing mantilwise full wide
 They were arraied, and did ther sacrifice
 Unto the god and goddesse in ther guise.

Lo, yondir folke (quod she) that knele in blewe,
 They were the colour ay and evyr shal,
 In signe they were and evyr wil be true,
 Withoutin chaunge, and southely yondir all
 That ben in blak, with mourning crie and call
 Unto the goddes, for ther lovis bene
 Some ferre, som dede, som al to sherpe and kene.

Yea, than, (quod I) what done these prestis here,
 Nonnis, and hermites, freris, and all tho
 That sit in white, in russet, and in grene?
 Forsothe (quod she) they wailin of ther wo.
 O mercie, Lord! may they so come and go
 Frely to Court, and have soche libertie?
 Yea, men of eche condicion and degre.

And women eke, for truly there is none
 Expection made, ne nevyr was ne may;
 This Courte is ope and fre for everichone;
 The king of Love he wil not say them nay;

He takith al in pore or riche array
 That mekely sewe unto his excellence
 With al ther herte and al ther revèrence.

And walking thus aboute with Philobone
 I se where come a messengere in hie [anone
 Streight from the king, whiche let commaunde
 Throughout the Courte to make an ho and crie,
 All new come folke abide; and wote ye why?
 The king's lust is for to seen you sone:
 Come nere; let se; his wil mote nede be done.

Than gan I me present tofore the king
 Trembling for fere, with visage pale of hewe,
 And many' a lovyr with me was kneeling,
 Abashed fore, til unto the time they knewe
 The sentence yeve of his entent full trew;
 And at the last the king hath me behold
 With sterne visage, and seid, What doth this olde,

Thus ferre ystope in yeris, com so late
 Unto the Courte? For sothe, my liege, (quod I)
 An hundrid tyme I have ben at the gate
 Afore this tyme, yet coude I ner espie
 Of myne acquaintance eny in mine eye,
 And *Shamefastnes* away me ganne to chace,
 But now I me submitte unto your grace.

Wel, al is pardoned, with condicion
 That thou be trew from hensforth to thy might,
 And servin Love in thine entencion;
 Swere this, and than as ferre as it is right
 Thou shalte have grace here in my quen's sight.
 Yes, by the faith I owe your crown I swere,
 Though Deth therfore me thirlith with his spere.

And whan the kinge had sene us everychone
 He let commaunde an officir in hie
 To take our faith, and shew us one by one
 The statutes of the Courte full besily:
 Anon the boke was leide before ther eye,
 To rede and se what thing we must observe
 In *Lov's Courte* till that we dye and sterve.

And for that I was lettrid there I red
 The statutes whole of *Lov's Courte* and hall.
 The firste statute that on the boke was spred
 Was to be true in thought and dedis al
 Unto the king of Love, the lorde ryall,
 And to the quene as faithful and as kinde
 As I coude thinke with herte, and will, and minde.

The seconde statute secretly to kepe
 Council of Love, not blowing every where
 Al that I knowe, and let it sinke and flete;
 It may not sowne in every wight's ere,
 Exiling flaundir ay for dred and fere,
 And to my lady whiche I love and serve
 Be true and kinde, her grace for to deserve.

The thirde statute was clerely writ also,
 Withoutin chaunge to live and die the same,
 None othir love to take for wele ne wo,
 For blinde delite, for earnest nor for game,
 Without repent, for laughing or for grame,
 To bidin stil in ful perseveraunce;
 Al this was whole the king's ordinance.

The fourth statute to purchase er to here
 And stirin folke to love, and betin fire
 On Venus auter here aboute and there,

And preche to them of Love and hote desire,
And tel how Love wil quitin wel ther hire;
This must be kept; and loth me to displese
If Love be wroth passe, for therby is ese.

The V. statute not to be daungirous
If that a thought would reve me of my slepe,
Nor of a sight to be ovir squemous,
And so verely this statute was to kepe,
To turne and wallowe in my bed and wepe
When that my lady of her cruiltie
Would from her herte exilin al pite.

The VI. statute it was for me to use
Alone to wandir voide of company,
And on my lad'is beautie for to muse,
And to thinkin no force to live or die,
And est again to thinke the remedy
How to her grace I might anon attain,
And tel my wo unto my soveraine.

The VII. statute was to be pacient
Whethir my lady joyful were or wroth,
For wordis glad or hevy diligent,
Whedir that she me heldin lese or loth,
And hereupon I put was to mine othe
Her for to serve and lowely to obey,
And shewe my chere ye xx sith aday.

The VIII. statute, to my remembraunce,
Was for to speke and pray my lady dere
With hourelly labour and gret entendaunce
Me for to love with al her herte entere,
And me desire and make me joyful chere,
Right as she is surmouning every faire,
Of beautie wel, and gentil, debonaire.

The IX. statute, with lettris writ of golde,
This was the sentence, how that I and al
Shulde evir dred to be to ovirbolde
Her to displese, and truly so I shal,
But ben content for al thing that may fal,
And mekely take her chastisement and yerde,
And to offende her evir ben aferde.

The X. statute was egally to' discerne
Betwene the lady' and thine abilite,
And thinke thy selfe arte nevyr like to yerne
By right her mercy nor of equite,
But of her grace and womanly pite,
For though thy selfe be noble in thy strene
A thousande folde more nobil is thy quene.

Thy liv'is lady and thy soveraine,
That hath thin herte all whole in govirnaunce,
Thou maiest no wise it takin to disdaine
To put the humble at her ordinaunce,
And give her fre the reine of her plesaunce,
For *Libertie is thing that women loke,*
And truely els the mattir is acroke.

The XI. statute thy signis for to knowe
With eye and fingir, and with smilis softe,
And lowe to couche, and alwaie for to showe
For drede of spyis for to winkin ofte,
But secretly to bryng a sigh alofte,
And eke beware of ovir moche resorte,
For that para'venture spillith all thy sport.

The XII. statute remembir to oblieve,
For all the paine thou hast for love and wo
All is to lite her mercie to deserve;

Thou musten then thinke wher er thou ride or go,
And mortall woundis suffre thou also,
All for her sake, and thinke it well besette
Upon thy love, for it maie not be better.

The XIII. statute whilome is to thinke
What thing maie best thy ladie like and plese,
And in thine hert'is botome let it sinke;
Some thing devise, and take for it thine ese,
And sende it her, that maie her herte appese,
Some herte or ryng, or lettir or devise
Or precious stone; but spare not for no price.

The XIV. statute eke thou shalt assaie
Firmely to kepe the moste parte of thy life;
Wiske that thy ladie in thine armis laie,
And nightly dreme thou hast thy night's herte's
Swetly in armis, straining her as blife, [wife
And when thou seest it is but fantasie
Se that thou sing not ovir merily;

For *To moche joye bath ofte a wofull ende;*
It longith eke, this statute for to holde,
To deme thy ladie evirmore thy frende,
And thinke thy self in no wise a cocolde;
In every thyng she doeth but as she should:
Construe the best, beleve no talis newe,
For *Many' a lye is tolde that semeth full true;*

But thinke that she, so bounteous and faire,
Coud not be false; imagine this algate;
And think that tonges wickid would her appaire,
Slanderyng her name and worshipfull estate,
And lovirs true to settin at debate;
And though thou seest a faute right at thine eye
Excuse it blive, and glose it pretilie.

The XV. statute use to swere and stare,
And counterseite a lesyng hardily
To save thy ladie's honour every whare,
And put thy self to fightin boldily;
Saie she is gode, vertuous, and ghostly,
Clere of entent, and herte, and thought, and will;
And argue not for reson ne for skill.

Againe thy ladie's plesure ne entent,
For Love will not be counterpleted in dede;
Saie as she saith, then shalt thou not be shent,
The crowe is white. Ye, truly so I rede.
And aye what thing that she the will forbede
Eschue al that, and give her soverainte;
Her appetite folowe in all degre.

The XVI. statute kepe it if thou maie,
Seven sith at night, thy ladie for to plese,
And seven at midnight, se'ven at morow daie,
And drinke a caudill erely for thine ese:
Doe this, and kepe thine hedde from all disese,
And winne the garlande here of lovirs all
That evir came in Court or evir shall.

Full fewe think I this statute hold and kepe,
But truely this my reson giveth me fele
That some lovirs should rather fall aslepe
Then take on hand to plese so oft and wele:
There laie none othe to this statute adele,
But kepe who might as gave him his corage:
Now get this garlande lustie folke of age,

Now win who maie ye lustie folke of youth,
This garlande fresh, of flouris red and white,
Purple and blewe, and colours sell uncouth,

And I shall croune him kyng of all delite.
In all the Courte there was not to my sight
A lovyr true that he ne was adrede
When he expresse hath herd the statute rede.

The XVII. statute, when age approacheth on,
And lust is laied, and all the fire is queint,
As freshly then thou shalt begin to sonne
And dote in love, and all her image paint
In thy remembraunce till thou gin to faint,
As in the first seson thyne herte began,
And her desire, though thou ne maie ne can

Performe thy livyng actuell and lust.
Registir this in thyne remembraunce
Eke, when thou maist not kepe thy thing from rust
Yet speke and talke of plesaunt daliaunce,
For that shall make thyne hert rejoyce and daunce;
And when thou maist no more the game assaie
The statute bidde the praie for them that maie.

The XVIII. statute wholly to commende
To plesse thy ladie is, that thou eschewe
With sluttishnesse thy self for to offende;
Be joilife, fresh, and fete with thingis newe,
Courtlye with manir, this is all thy due,
Gentill of porte, and lovyng clenlinesse;
This is the thing that likith thy maistresse;

And not to wandir liche a dullid asse,
Raggid and torne, disguisid in araie,
Ribaude in speche, or out of mesure passe,
Thy bounde excedyng; thinke on this alwaie;
*For Women ben of tendir bertis aye,
And lightly set ther plesure in a place,
When thei misbinke they lightly let it passe.*

The XIX. statute mete and drinke forgete,
Eche othir daie se that thou fast for love,
For in the Courte thei live withoutin mete,
Save soche as cometh from Venus al above;
Thei take none hede in pain of grete reprove
Of mete and drinke, for that is all in vaine,
Onely thei live by sight of ther soveraine.

The XX. statute, last of everichone,
Enrolle it in thyne hert's privite,
To wring and waile, to turne, and sigh, and grone,
When that thy ladie absent is from the,
And eke renewe the wordis all that she
Betwene you twain had said, and all the chere
That the hath made thy liv'is lady dere.

And se thyne herte in quiete ne in rest
Sojourne to tyme thou seen thy ladie este,
But where she won, by south, or est, or west,
With all thy force now se it be not leste;
Be diligent till tyme thy life be reeste
In that thou maist thy ladie for to se;
This statute was of old antiquite.

An officir of high auctorite,
Yclepid Rigour, made us swere anone;
He n'as corrupt with parcialite,
Favour, prayir, ne gold that clerely shone.
Ye shall (quod he) now swerin her echone,
Both young and old, to kepe in that thei maie
The statutes truly after this daie.

O God! thought I, hard is to make this othe,
But to my powir shall I them observe:
In all this worlde n'as mattir halfe so lothe

To swere for all, for though my body sterve
I have no might them wholly to observe.
But herkin now the cace how it befell;
After my othe was made, the trouthe to tell,
I tournid levis, lokyng on this boke,
Where othir statutes were of women shene,
And right forthwith Rigour on me gan loke
Full angirly, and saied unto the quene
I traitour was, and chargid me let ben;
There maie no man (quod he) the statute knowe
That long to woman, hie degre ne lowe.

In secrete wife thei kepin ben full close,
Thei sounne echone to liberte, my frende;
Plesaunt thei be, and to ther own purpose;
There wote no wight of them but God and fende,
Ne naught shall wit unto the world's ende;
The quene hath yeve me charge, in pain to die,
Nevir to rede ne seen them with myne eye:

For men shall not so nere of counsaill ben
With womanhode, ne knowin of ther guise,
Ne what thei think, ne of ther wit th' engine;
I me report to Salomon the wise,
And mightie Sampson which begilid thrise
With Dalia was, he wot that in a throwe
There maie no man statute of women knowe;

For it pera'venture maie right so befall
That thei be bounde by Nature to disceve,
And spinne and wepe, and sugre strew on gal,
The herte of man to ravishe and to reve,
And what ther tonge as sharpe as swerde or gleve;
It maie betide this is ther ordinaunce,
So must thei lowlie doen ther observaunce,

And kepe the statute yevin them of Kinde,
Of soche as Love hath yeve 'hem in ther life;
Men maie not wete woby turnith every wind,
Nor waxin wise, nor ben inquisitive
To knowe secrete of maide, widowe, or wife,
For thei ther statutes have to them reserved,
And nevir man to knowe them hath deserved.

Now dresse you forth, the god of Love you guide,
Quod Rigour then, and seke the temple bright
Of Citherea, goddes here beside;
Beseeche her by the influence and might
Of all her vertue you to teche aright
How for to serve your ladies and to plesse,
Ye that ben sped, and set your herte in ese;

And ye that ben unpurveied, pray her eke
Comforte you sone with grace and destinie,
That ye may set your hert there ye maie like,
In soche a place that it to Love maie be
Honour, and worship, and felicitie,
To you for aie. Now goeth by one assent.
Graunt mercie, Sir! (quod we) and forth we went
Devoutly, soft and esie pace, to se
Venus the goddes image all of golde,
And there we found a thousand on ther kne,
Some freshe and faire, some dedly to beholde,
In sondrie mantils new, and some wer olde,
Some paintid were with flamis red as fire,
Outward, to shewe ther inward hote desire.

With dolefull chere, full fele in ther complaint,
Cried, "Ladie Venus! rewe upon our sore;
"Receive our billes, with teris all bedreint,

" We maie not wepe, there is no more in store,
 " But wo and pain us frettith more and more;
 " Thou blissefull planet! lovirs sterre so shene,
 " Have routh on us that sigh, and careful ben;
 " And punishe, ladie, grevously, we praie,
 " The false untrue with counterfeite plesaunce
 " That made ther othe be true to live or deie;
 " With chere assurid and with countinaunce,
 " And falsly now thei fotin Lov's daunce
 " Barain of routh, untrue of that thei saied,
 " Now that ther lust and plesure is alaid.
 " Yet este againe a thousande milion,
 " Rejoycing love, ledyng ther life in blisse,
 " Thei saied, Venus, redresse of all division,
 " Goddes eternell, thy name heryed is,
 " By lovirs bonde is knit all thing iwis,
 " Best unto best, the yerth to watir wanne,
 " Birde unto birde, and woman unto man.
 " This is the life of joye that we ben in,
 " Resemblyng life of heavenly paradise;
 " Love is elixir aie of vice and sinne,
 " Love makith hert's lustie to devise;
 " Honour and grace have thei in every wise
 " That ben to Lov's lawe obedient;
 " Love makith folke benigne and diligent,
 " Aie steryng them to dreden vice and shame;
 " In ther degre it maketh them honourable,
 " And swete it is of Love to bere the name,
 " So that his love be faithfull, true, and stable;
 " Love prunith hym to femin amiable,
 " Love hath no faute there it is exercised,
 " But sole with them that have all love dispised.
 " Honour to the, celestiall and clere
 " Goddes of Love, and to thy celsitude,
 " That yevest us light so ferre doune from thy spere,
 " Persyng our hertis with thy pulchritude;
 " Comparison none of similitude
 " Maie to thy grace be made in no degre,
 " That hast us set with Love in unitie.
 " Grete cause have we to praise thy name and the,
 " For thorough the we live in joye and blisse;
 " Blessid be thou, moste soveraine to se!
 " Thy holy Courte of gladnesse maie not misse;
 " A thousand sith we may rejoyce in this,
 " That we ben thine with herte and all yfere,
 " Enflamid with thy grace and heavenly fere."
 Musyng of tho that spakin in this wise
 I me bethought in my remembraunce
 Myne orison right godely to devise,
 And plesauntly with hert's obeisaunce
 Beseche the goddes voidin my grevaunce,
 For I loved eke, fause that I wist no where,
 Yet down I set, and saied as ye shall here:
 Fairist of all that evir were or be,
 Licour and light to pensife creature,
 Myne whole affiaunce and my ladie fre,
 My goddes bright, my fortune, and my ure!
 I yeve and yelde my herte to the full sure,
 Humbly besechyng, ladie, of thy grace
 Me to bestow in some blessid place,
 And here I vowe me faithfull, true, and kind,
 Without offence of mutabilitie,
 Humbly to serve while I have wit and mind,

Myne whole affiaunce and my ladie fre,
 In thilkè place there ye me signe to be;
 And sith this thing of newe is yeve me, aie
 To love and serve nedely must I obeie.
 Be merciable with thy fire of grace,
 And fixe mine herte there beautie is and routh,
 For hote I love; determine in no place,
 Saufe only this, by God and by my trouth
 Troublid I was with slombir, slepe, and slouth,
 This othir night, and in a visioun
 I se a woman romin up and doune
 Of mene stature, and semely to beholde,
 Lustie and fresh, demure of countinaunce,
 Yong and well shap, with here that shone as golde,
 With eyen as cristall, fercid with plesaunce,
 And she gan stirre mine herte a lite to daunce,
 But sodainlie she vanishe gan right there;
 Thus I maie saie I love and wote not where.
 For what she is ne her dwellyng I n'ot,
 And yet I fele that love distreinith me,
 Might iche her knowe, that would I faine God wot,
 Serve and obeye with all benignitie,
 And if that othir be my destinie,
 So that no wise I shall her nevir se,
 Then graunt me her that best maie likin me,
 With glad rejoyce to live in perfite hele,
 Devoide of wrathe, repent, or variaunce,
 And able me to doe that maie be wele
 Unto my ladie with herte's hie plesaunce;
 And, mightie goddes! through thy purviaunce
 My wit, my thought, my lust, and love, so guide
 That to thine honour I maie me provide
 To set mine hert in place there I maie like,
 And gladly serve with all affeccion;
 Grete is the pain which at mine hert doth sticke
 Till I be sped by thyne eleccion;
 Helpe, ladie goddes! that possession
 I might of her have that in all my life
 I clepin shal my quene and hert's wife;
 And in the *Courte of Love* to dwell for aie
 My will is, and doin the sacrifice,
 Daily with Diane eke to fight and fraie,
 And holdin werre, as might will me suffice;
 That goddes chaste I kepin in no wise
 To serve; a figge for all her chastite!
 Her lawe is for religiouseite.
 And thus gan finish prayir, laude, and preice,
 Whiche that I yove to Venus on my kne,
 And in myne herte to pondir and to peice
 I gan anone her image freshe beautie;
 Heile to that figure swete, and heile to the,
 Cupide! (quod I) and rose and yede my weie;
 And in the temple as I yede I seie
 A shrine surmountyng all in stonis riche,
 Of whiche the force was plesaunce to mine eye,
 With diamonde or saphire nevir liche
 I have none seen, ne wrought so wondirliche;
 So when I met with Philobone in hie
 I gan demaunde whose is this sepulture?
 Forsothe, (quod she) a tendir creature
 Is shrinid there, and Pitie is her name;
 She sawe an egle wreke hym on a flie,
 And plucke his wing, and eke him, in his game,

And tendir herte of that hath made her die;
 Eke she would wepe and mourne right pitoufly
 To seen a lovir suffre grete distresse;
 In all the Courte n'is none, as I do gesse
 That coud a lovir half so well availe,
 Ne of his wo the torment or the rage
 Askin, for he was sure withoutin faile
 That of his grief she coud the hete awage;
 In stede of Pitie spedith hote Corage
 The mattirs all of Courte; now she is dedde
 I me reporte in this to womanhedde; [pray

Forweile, and wepe, and crie, and speke, and
 Women would not have pitie on thy plaint,
 Ne by that mene to ese thine herte convaie,
 But the recevin for ther owne talent,
 And saie that Pitie causith them consent
 Of reuth to take thy service and thy paine,
 In that thou maiest, to plesse thy soveraine.

But this is counsaill, kepe it secretly,
 (Quod she;) I n'olde for all the worlde about
 The quene of Love it wist, and witte ye why?
 For if by me this mattir springin out
 In Courte no lengir should I out of doubt
 Dwellin, but shame in all my life endry:
 Now kepe it close (quod she) this hardily.

Well, all is well: now shall ye seen, she saied,
 The fairist ladie undir sonne that is:

Come on with me; demene you lich a maide
 With shamefast drede, for ye shall speke ywis
 With her that is the mirrour, joie, and blisse,
 But somewhat straunge and sad of her demene
 She is: beware your countinaunce be sene,

Not ovirlight, ne rechelesse, ne to holde,
 Ne malaperte, ne rennyng with your tong,
 For she will you obeisin and beholde,
 And you demaunde why ye wer hens so long
 Out of this Courte, without resort emong;
 And Rosiall her name is hote aright,
 Whose herte is yet yyeven to no wight.

And ye also ben, as I undirstonde,
 With Love but light avauncid by your worde;
 Might ye by hap your fredom makin bond,
 And fall in grace with her, and wele accorde,
 Well might ye thanke the god of Love and lord,
 For she that ye sawe in your dreame appere
 To love soche one what are thei then the nere?

Yet wote ye what? as my remembraunce
 Me yevith now, ye faine where that ye saie
 That ye with Love han nevir aquaintaunce
 Save in your dreame right late this othir daie;
 Why, yes parde, my life that durst I laie
 That ye were caught upon an heth when I
 Sawe you complain and sigh full pitoufly;

Within an herbir and gardein faire,
 Where flowirs growe and herbis vertuous,
 Of whiche the favour swete was and the eire,
 There were your self full hote and amorous;
 Ywis ye ben to nice and daungirous;
 I would ye now repent and love some newe.
 Naie, by my trothe, I saied, I nevir knewe

The godely wight whose I shal be for aye,
 Guide me the Lorde, that love hath made and me:
 But forthe we went into a chambre gaie

There was Rosiall, womanly to se,
 Whose stremis, sotill persyng of her eye,
 Mine hert gan thrill for beatie in the stonde;
 Alas (quod I) who hath me yeve this wounde!

And then I drede to speke till at the laste
 I grete the ladie reverently and wele,
 When that my sigh was gone and ovirpasse,
 And doune on knees full humbly gan I knele,
 Besechyng her my fervent wo to hele,
 For there I toke full purpose in my mynde
 Unto her grace my painfull herte to bynde.

For if I shall all fully her discrive
 Her hed was rounde by compasse of Nature,
 Her eere as gold, she passid all on live,
 And lillie forehed had this creature;
 With liveliske browis, flawe of colour pure,
 Betwene the which was mene disseveraunce,
 From every browe to shewin a distaunce;
 Her nose directed streght, and even as line,
 With forme and shape thereto convenient,
 In which the godis milkewhite path doth shine,
 And eke her eyen ben bright and orient
 As is the smaragde, unto my judgement,
 Or yet these sterris heavenly small and bright,
 Her visage is of lovely rede and white;

Her mouthe is short, and shutte in litil space,
 Flamyng somdele, not ovir redde I mene.
 With pregaunt lips, and thicke to kisse percase,
 For lippis thinne, not fat, but evir lene,
 They serve of naught, they be not worth a bene,
 For if the baffe ben full there is delite;
 Maximian truely thus doeth he write.

But to my purpose; I saie white as snowe
 Ben all her tethe, and in ordir thei stonde
 Of one stature, and eke her breth I trowe
 Surmountith all odours that er I founde,
 In swetenesse, and her body, face, and honde,
 Ben sharply slendir so that from the hedde
 Unto the fote all is but womanhedde.

I holde my pece of othir thingis hidde;
 Here shal my soule and not my tong bewrie;
 But how she was arraied, if ye me bidde,
 That shall I well discovir you and saie;
 A bende of gold and silk full freihe and gaie,
 With her intresse ybroudirid fuil wele,
 Right smothly kept, and shynyng every dele;

About her necke a flower of fresh devise,
 With rubies set that lustie were to sene,
 And she in gounce was light and sommir wise,
 Shapin full wele, the colour was of grene,
 With aureat sent aboute her sidis clene,
 With divers stonis precious and riche;
 Thus was she raied, yet sawe I ner her liche:

For if that Jove had this ladie yfeine,
 Tho the faire Calisto ne Alcmena
 Thei nevir haddin in his armis leine,
 Ne he had lovid the faire Europa,
 Ye, ne yet Danae ne Antiopa.
 For all ther beauteie stode in Rosiall;
 She semid lich a thyng celestially,

In bountie, favour, porte, and similineffe,
 Plesant of figure, mirrour of delite,
 Gracious to seen, rote of all gentilnesse,

With angell visage, lustie, redde, and white;
There was not lack, fause Daungir had alite
This godely freshe in rule and govirnaunce,
And somdele straunge she was for her plesaunce.

And truly sone I toke my leve and went
When she had me enquirid what I was,
For more and more impressin gan the dent
Of Lov'is darte while I behelde her face,
And este againe I come to sekin grace,
And up I put my bill with sentance clere
That foloweth aftir; rede, and ye shall here:

O, ye freshe lovelie! of beautie the rote,
That Nature hath formid so wele, and made
Princes and quene, and ye that maie do bote
Of all my langoure with your wordis glad,
Ye woundid me, ye made me wo bestad;
Of grace redresse my mortall grefe, as ye
Of all my harme the very caucir be.

Now am I caught, and unware sodainly,
With persfaunt stremis of your eyin clere,
Subjecte to ben and servin you mekely,
And all your man, ywis, my ladie dere!
Abidyng grace, of whiche I you requere,
That mercileffe ye cause me not to sterve,
But guerdon me liche as I maie deserve;

For by my trothe the dayis of my breth
I am and will be your in will and herte,
Pacient and meke for you to suffir deth
If it require; now rue upon my smerte
And this I swere, I never shall out sterte
From Lov'is Courte for none adversite,
So ye would rue on my distresse and me.

My destinie, my fate, and houre, I blisse,
That have me set to ben obedient
Onely to you, the floure of all ywis;
I trust to Venus never to repent,
For evir redy, glad, and diligent,
Ye shall me finde in service to your grace
Till deth my life out of my body rase.

Humble unto your excellence so digne
Enforcing aye my wittis and delite
To serve and plesse with glad herte and benigne,
And ben as Troilus, Troie's worthie knight,
Or Antonie for Cleopatra bright,
And never you me thinkis to renay;
This shall I kepe unto myne endyng day.

Enprint my speche in your memoriall
Sadly, my princes, salve of all my sore!
And thinke that for I would becomin thrall,
And ben your owne, as I have saied before,
Ye must of pitie cherishe more and more
Your man, and tendir aftir his deserte,
And give hym corage for to ben experte:

For where that one hath set his herte on fire,
And findith neithir refute ne plesaunce,
Ne worde of comforte, Deth will quite his hire;
Alas that there ne is none allegaunce
Of all ther wo! alas the grete grevaunce
To love unloved! but ye, my ladie dere!
In other wise maie governe this matere.

Truly gramercie, frende! of your gode will,
And of your profir in your humble wise,
But for your service take and kepe it still:

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And wher ye saie I ought you well to' cherishe,
And of your grefe the remedie devise,
I knowe not why; I n'am acquaintid well
With you, ne wote not sothly where ye dwell.

In art of love I write and songis make,
That maie be song in honour of the kyng
And quene of Love, and then I undirtake
He that is sadde shall then full mery syng,
And dangirous not ben in every thyng:
Beseeche I you but seen my will and rede,
And let your answere put me out of drede.

What is your name? reherse it here, I praie;
Of whens and where, of what condicion,
That ye ben of: let se; come of and saie;
Faine would I knowe your disposicion:
Ye have put on your old entencion,
But whate ye mene to serve me I ne wote,
Saufe that ye saie ye love me woundir hote.

My name, alas my herte! why makes thou straunge?
Philogenet I cal'd am ferre and nere,
Of Cambrige clerke, that never thinke to chaunge
Fro you, that with your heavenly stremis clere
Ravishe myne herte and ghost, and all in fere:
Since at the first I write my bill for grace
Me thinke I se some mercie in your face.

And what I mene, by God that al hath wrought,
My bille now makith final mencion,
That ye ben ladie in myne inward thought
Of all myne herte withoutin offencion,
That I beste love, and have sith I begon
To drawe to Courte; lo then what might I saie?
I yelde me here unto your high noble eye;

And if that I offende, or wilfully
By pompe of herte your precept disobaie,
Or doen againe your wille unskilfully,
Or grevin you for earnest or for plaie,
Correcte ye me right sharply then I praie,
As it is seen unto your womanhede,
And rewe on me, or els I n'am but dede.

Naie, God forbede to sesse you so with grace,
And for a word of sugrid eloquence
To have compassion in so lityl space!
Then were it tyme that some of us wer hens;
Ye shall not finde in me soche insolence:
Aye, what is this! maie ye not suffre sight?
How maie ye loke upon the candill light,

That clere is and hottir then is myne eye?
And yet ye saied the bemis perse and frete,
How shall ye then the candill light endrie?
For well wotte ye that hath the sharpir hete:
And there ye bidde me you correct and bete
If ye offende; naie, that maie not be doen;
There come but few that sped in here so sone,

Withdrawe your eye, withdrawe from presens
Hurte not your self through foly with a loke; [eke;
I would be fory so to make you sicke;
A woman should beware eke whom she toke:
Ye beth a clerke, go ferchin wel my boke
If any women ben so light to winne:
Naie; abide a while tho ye were all my kinne;

So sone ye maie not win myne hert in truth;
The guise of Court will seen your stedfastnesse,
And as you doen to have upon you reuth;

M m

Your owne deserte and lowly gentilnesse
That will reward you joye for hevinesse,
And tho ye waxin pale, and grene, and dede,
Ye muste it use a while withoutin drede,

And it accept, and grutchin in no wise:
But wheras ye me hastily desire
To bene to love, me thinke ye be not wise;
Cese of your language, cese I you requere,
For he that hath this xxvye bene here
May nat optaine; than marvaile I that ye
Be now so bold of love to trete with me.

A, mercy, hert! my lady and my love,
My rightwise princeesse and my lyv'is guide!
Nowe may I plein to Venus al above
That routhles ye me gave this wounde so wide:
What have I done? why may it not betide
That for my trouthe I may recevid be?

Alas than your daungir and cruilte!
In woful houre I gote was, welawey!
In woful hour fostirid and yfedde,
In woful hour yborne, that I ne may
My suplication swetely have yspedde;
The frosty grave and cold muste be my bedde
Withoute ye list your grace and mercy shewe,
Death with his axe so faste on me doth hewe.

So grete disese and in so litil while,
So litil joy that felte I never yet,
And at my wo Fortune ginnith to smyle,
That never erst I felte so harde a fitte;
Confoundid ben my spirites and my witte
Fil that my lady take me to her cure
Whiche I love beste of erthely creature.

But that I like that may I not come by,
Of that I plain that have I habondaunce;
Sorowe and thought they sit me wondir nye;
Me is withhold that might be my plesaunce;
Yet turne again my worldly suffisaunce,
O lady bright! and sause your faithful true,
And or I die yet ones upon me rewe.

With that I fell in sounde and dede as stone,
With coloure flaine and wanne as ashe pale,
And by the hande she caught me up anon;
Arise! (quod she) what have ye dronkin dwale?
Why slepin ye? it is no nitirtale.
Now mercy, swete! (quod I) iwis affraied.

What thing (quod she) hath made you so dismaied?

Now wote I wel that ye a lovir be,
Your hew is witnesse in this thing, she said;
Yf ye were secret ye might knowe (quod she)
Curteise and kinde all this shuld be aleide;
And now, myne herte! al that I have misseid
I shal amend, and set your herte in ese.

That worde it is (quod I) that doth me plesse.
But this I charge, that ye the stentis kepe,
And breke them not for sloth nor ignoraunce;
With that she gan to smile and laughin depe.
Ywis (quod I) I will do your plesaunce;
The xvi statute doth me grete grevaunce,
But ye must that releffe or modifie.

I graunte, (quod she) and so I wil truly.

And softely than her coloure gan appeire
As rose so red throughout her visage al.
Wherefore me thinke that it is according here

That she of right be clepid Rosial.
Thus have I wonne with wordis gret and sma!
Some godely worde of her that I love best,
And trust she shall yet sette mine herte in rest.

Goth on, she said to Philobone, and take
This man with you, and lede him al aboute
Within the Courte, and shewe him for my sake
What lovirs dwel within, and al the route
Of officirs, for he is oute of doute
A straungir yet. Come on, (quod Philobone)
Philogenet, with me now must ye gon.

And stalking softely with esy pace I sawe
Aboute the king ystondin environ
Attendaunce, Diligence, and ther fellow
Forthirir Asperaunce, and many one,
Dred to offende there stode, and not alone,
For there was eke the cruil adversarye,
The lovirs so, that cleped is Displesure,

Whiche unto me spake angrily and felle,
And said, My lady me dissevin shall;
Trowest thou (quod she) that al that she did tell
Is true? nay, nay, but undir hony gall
Thy birth and hers thei be nothing egal;
Caste of thine herte for all her wordis white,
For gode faith she lovith the but alite;

And eke remembre thine habilitie
May not compare with her, this wel thou wot.
Ye, than come Hope, and said, My frende, let be,
Beleve him not; Dispaire he ginnith dote.
Alas, (quod I) here is both cold and hote!
The tone me biddith love, the todir nay,
Thus wote I not what me is best to say;

But wel wote I my lady grauntid me
Truly to be my wound'is remedy;
Her gentilnesse may not infectid be
With doublenesse, thus trust I til I die;
So cast I voide Dispairis company,
And takin Hope to council and to frende.
Yea, kepe that wel (quod Philabone) in minde.

And there beside, within a bay windowe,
Stod one in grene ful large of bred and length,
His berd as black as fethirs of the crow,
His name was Lust, of woundir might and strength,
And with Delite to argue there he thinkth,
For this was alway his opinion
That love was sinne, and so he hath begonne.

To reson faste, and ledge auctorite.
Nay, (quod Delite) Love is a vertue clere
And from the soule his progresse holdith he;
Blinde appetite of Lust doth oftin stere,
And that is sinne, for reson lackith there,
For thou doest think thy neighbour's wife to winne,
Yet thinke it wel that love may not be sinne:

For God and seint they love right verily,
Voide of al synne and vise, this know I well;
Affeccion of fleshe is sinne truly,
But verray love is vertue, as I fele,
For verray love may freile desire ackele,
For love is love withoutin any sinne.

Nowe flint, (quod Lust) thou spekest not worth a
And there I left them in ther arguing, [pinne.
Roming ferthir into the castil wide,
And in a cornir Lier stode talking

Of lesings fast with Flattery there beside;
He said that women were attire of pride,
And men were founde of nature variaunte,
And coulde be false and shewin beau semblaunt.

Than Flatiry bespake, and said, I wis,
Se, so she goth on patins faire and fete,
It doth right well; what pretty man is this
That romith here? now truly drink ne mete
Nede I not have, mine herte for joye doth bete
Him to beholde, so is he godely freshe,
It semeth for love his herte is tendre' and neshe.

This is the Courte of lusty folke and glad,
And wel becometh ther abite and arraye;
O! why be som so sory and so sadde,
Complaining thus in blak, and white, and gray?
Freris they ben and monkis in gode say:
Alas for routh! gret dole it is to sene
To se them thus bewaile and sory bene.

Se how they crie and wring ther handis whit
For they so sone went to religioun,
And eke the nonnes with vail and wimple plight
Ther thought that they ben in confusion:
Alas! they sain we sain perfeccion
In clothis wide and lacke our libertie,
But al the sinne mote on our frendis be:

For Venus wote we wold as faine as ye,
That bene attirid here and wel besene,
Desyrin man, and love in our degre
Ferme and faithful, right as ywold the quene:
Our frendis wicke, in tendir youth and grene,
Ayenst our will made us religious,
That is the cause we mourne and wailin thus.

Then saide the monke and freris in the tide,
Wel may we curse our abbis and our place,
Our statutes sharpe to sing in copis wide,
Chastely to kepe us oute of Lov's grace,
And nevir to fele comforte ne solace,
Yet suffre we the hete of Lovis fire,
And astir othir happily we desire.

O Fortune courfid! why nowe and wherefore
Hast thou, they said, berafte us libertie,
Sithe Nature yave us instrument in store,
And appetite to love and lovirs be?
Why mot we suffer soche adversite
Diane to serve and Venus to refuse?
Ful oftin sythe this matier doth us muse.

We serve and honour sore ayenste our will
Of Chastite the goddes and the quene;
Us lesir were with Venus bidin stil,
And have reward for Love, and soget bene
Unto these women courtely, freshe and shene.
Fortune! we curse thy whele of variaunce,
Ther we were wel thou revist our plesaunce.

Thus leve I them with voice of plaint and care
In raging wo crying ful pitously;
And as I yede ful nakid and ful bare
Some I beholde loking dispiteously,
On Povirte that dedly cast ther eye,
And Welaway they cried, and were not faine,
For they ne might ther glad desire attaine,

For lacke of richesse worldly and of gode
They banne, and curse, and wepe, and sain Alas!
That poverté hath us hent that whilom stode

At hert's ese, and fre, and in gode case,
But now we dare not shew our selfe in place,
Ne us embolde to dwel in company
There as our hert wold love right faithfully.

And yet againewarde shrikid every nonne,
The pange of love so strainith them to crie;
Nowe wo the time (quod they) that we be boun!
This hateful ordre nise wil doen us die,
We sigh and sobbe, and bleding inwardly,
Freting our selfe with thought and hard complaint,
That nye for love we waxin wode and faint.

And as I stode beholding here and there
I was ware of a sorte ful languishing,
Savage and wilde of loking and of chere,
Ther mantilles and ther clothis ey tering,
And ofte they were of Nature complaining,
For they ther membirs lackid fote and hand,
With visage wry, and blinde I undirstand.

They lackid shap and beautie to preferre
Them self in love, and said that God and Kind
Hath forgid them to worshipping the sterre
Venus the bright, and lestin al behinde
His othir werkis clene and oute of minde,
For othir have ther full shappe and beautie,
And we (quod they) ben in deformite.

And nye to them there was a company
That have the Sustirs waried and mislaide,
I mene the thre of fatall Destine,
That be our werdis; sodenly abraide
Oute gan they crie as they had ben affraied,
We curse (quod they) that evir hath Nature
Yformid us this wofull life to endure.

And there he was contrite and gan repent,
Confessing whole the wounde that Cithere
Hath with the darte of hote desire him sent,
And howe that he to Love muste subject be,
Than held he al his skornis vanite,
And said hat lovirs lede a blissid life,
Yong men and olde, and widowe, maid, and wife,

Bereve me, goddesse, (quod he) of thy might
My skornis al and skoffis that I have,
No powir for to mockin any wight
That in thy service dwel, for I did rave,
This knowe I wel right now, so God me save,
And I shal be the chief post of thy faith,
And love uphold, the revers who so faith.

Dissemble stode not ferre from him in trouth,
With party mantil, party hode and hose,
And said he had upon his lady routh,
And thus he wound him in and gan to glose,
Of his entent full double I suppose,
And al the worlde he said he loved it wele,
But ay me thought he loved her nere adele.

Eke *Shamefastnesse* was there, as I toke hede,
That blushid rede, and darst nat ben aknowe
She lovir was, for therof had she drede;
She stode and hing her visage downe alowe,
But soche a sight it was to sene I trowe
As of these rosis rody on ther stalke,
Ther coud no wight her spy to speke or talke.

In Lov's arte so gan she to abashe,
Ne durst not uttir al her privite,
Many a stripe and many a grevous lashe

She gave to them that woldin lovirs be,
And hindered fore the simple comi'naltie,
That in no wise durst grace and mercie crave,
For were not she they nede but aske and have;

Where yf they now aprochin for to speke,
Than *Shamefastnesse* returnith them again,
They thinke if we our secret counsel breke
Our ladies wil have scorne on us certein,
And peravinture thinkin grete disdain;
Thus *Shamefastnesse* may bringin in Dispeire;
When she is dede the todir will be heire.

Come forth Avauntir, now I ring thy bel;
I spied him sone to God I make a vowe;
He lokid black as fendis doth in hell.
The firste (quod he) that evir did I wowe
Within a worde she come, I wotte not how,
So that in armis was my lady fre,
And so hath ben a thousande mo than she

In England, Britain, Spain, and Picardie,
Artois, and Fraunce, and up in Hie Holande,
In Burgoine, Naples, and in Italye,
Navarre, and Grece, and up in Hethin lond;
Was nevir woman yet that wolde withstond
To ben at commaundement whan I wolde;
I lackid neithir silver coigne ne gold:

And there I met with this estate and that,
And here I brochid her, and here, I trowe:
Lo! there goeth one of myn; and wotte ye what?
Yon freshe attirid have I leide ful lowe;
And soche one yondir eke right wel I knowe;
I kepte the statute whan we lay isere,
And yet yon same hath made me right gode chere.

Thus hath Avauntir blowin every where
Al that he knoweth, and more a thousande fold;
His auncistrice of kinne was to Lier,
For firste he makith promise for to hold
His ladis council, and it not unfold,
Wherefore the secrete when he doth unhitte
Than lyith he that all the worlde maye witte.

For falsing so his promise and beheste
I wondir fore he hath soche fantasie;
He lackith witte I trowe or is a beste,
That can no bette himselfe with reson gay;
By mine advice Love shall be contrarie
To his avail, and him eke dishonoure,
So that in Courte he shall no more sojoure.

Take hede (quod she this litil Philobone)
Where Envie rockith in the cornir yonde,
And sittith derke, and ye shal se anone
His lene bodie, his fading face and honde;
Him self he frettith, as I undirstonde,
Witnesse of Ovide Metamorphosofe;
The lovirs so he is, I will not glose:

For where a lovirs thinkith him promote
Envie wil grutche, repining at his wele;
It swellith fore about his hertis rote,
That in no wise he canne not live in hele;
And if the faithful to his lady stele
Envie will noife and ringe it rounde aboute,
And sey moch worse than done is out of doute.

And Privie Thought, rejoyfing of him selfe,
Stode not ferre thens in abite mervilous;
Yon is, thought I, some spirite or some else,

His sotil image is so curious;
How is (quod I) that he is shadid thus
With yondir cloth, I n'ot of what coloure?
And nere I went, and gan to lere and pore,
And fainid him a question ful harde;
Whate is (quod I) the thing thou lovist beste,
Or what is bote unto thy painis harde?
Me thinke thou livist here in gret unrest,
Thou wandrist aye from south to est and west,
And est to northe: as ferre as I canne se
There is no place in Court may holdin the.

Whom folowest thou? wher is thy hert iset?
But my demaunde asoile I the require.
Me thought (quod he) no creature may let
Me to ben here and where as I desire,
For whare as Absence hath done out the fire
My mery thought it kindeleth yet againe,
That bodily me thinke with my soveraine

I stand, and speke, and laugh, and kisse, and halfe,
So that my thought comfortith me ful oft;
I think, God wote, though al the world be false
I wil be true; I thinke also howe softe
My lady is in speche, and this on lost
Bringith mine herte with joie and gret gladnesse,
This privey thought alaieth mine hevinesse.

And whate I thinke or where to be no man
In al this erthe can tel ywis but I,
And eke there n'is no swalow swift ne swan
So wight of wing, ne halfe so yerne can fle,
For I canne ben, and that right sodenly,
In heven, in hell, in paradise, and here,
And with my lady whan I wil desire.

I am of counsel ferre and wide I wote
With lorde and lady, and ther privitie
I wotte it al, and be it hote or colde
They shall not speke without licence of me;
I myne in soche as sesonable be,
For firste the thing is thought within the hert
Er any worde oute from the mouth asterte.

And with that word Thought bad farewell and
Eke furthe went I to sene the Court's guise, [yede;
And at the dore came in, so God me spede,
Twenty courteours of age and of assise,
Liche high and brode, and as I me advise
The Goldin Love and Ledin Love they hight,
The tone was sad, the t'odir glad and light.

Yes, draw your hert with all your force and
To lustinesse, and ben as ye have seid, [might
And thinke that I no drope of favour hight,
Ne ner had unto your desire obeide,
Til sodenly me thought me was affraied
To sene you waxe so dede of countinaunce,
And Pite bade me done you some plesaunce;

Oute of her shrine she rose from deth to live,
And in mine ere ful privily she spake,
Doth not your servaunt hens away to drive,
Rosial, (quod she) and than mine herte brake,
For tendiriche, and where I founde moch lacke
In your persone, then I my self bethought,
And saide This is the man myne herte hath sought.

Gramercy! Pite, might I not suffice
To yeve due laude unto thy shrine of golde?
God wotte I wold, for sith that ye did rise

From deth to live for me I am behold
To thankin you a thousand tymis tolde,
And eke my lady Rosial the shene,
Whiche hath in comforte set mine herte I wene.

And here I make myne protestacion,
And depely swere as mine powir to bene
Faithful, devoide of variacion,
And her forbere in angir or in tene,
And serviceable to my world's quene
With al my reson and intelligence,
To done her honour high and reverence.

I had not spoke so sone the worde but she
My soverain did thanke me hertily,
And said, Abide, ye shal dwelle still with me
Till seson come of May, for than truly
The king of Love and al his company
Shall holde his feste ful rially and welle;
And there I bode til that the seson felle.

On May-day whan the lark began to ryse
To matins went the lusty nightingale
Within a temple shapin hauthorn wise,
He might not slepe in all the nyghtirtale,
But *Domine labia* gan he crie and gale;
My lippis opin, lord of Love, I crie,
And let my mouth thy praising now bewrye.

The egle sang *Venite* bodies al,
And let us joye to Love, that is oure helth,
And to the deske anon they gan to fall,
And who came late he precid in by stelth,
Then saied the faucon, our owen hertis welth,
Domine Dominus noster, I wote
Ye be the god that donne us brenne thus hote.

Celi enarrant, said the poppingay,
Your might is told in heaven and firmament,
And then came in the goldfinche freshe and gay,
And saied this psalme with hertely glad intent,
Domini est terra, this Latin intent
The god of Love bath yertb in govirnaunce,
And than the wren gan scippin and to daunce;

Jube Domine, O lord of Love! I pray
Commaunde me wel this lesson for to rede,
This legende is of al that woldin dye
Martirs for Love, God yef the foulis spede,
And to the Venus singe we oute of drede,
By influence of al thy vertue grete,
Beseching the to kepe us in our hete.

The seconde lesson robin redebreste sang,
Hail to the god and goddes of our lay!
And to the lectorn amorily he sprang,
Hail, (quod he) o thou freshe seson of May!
Our monith glad that singin on the spray,
Hail to the flouris rede, and white, and blewe,
Whiche by ther vertue makith our lust new!

The thirde lesson the turtill dove toke up,
And therat lough the mavis in a scorne,
He said, O God! as mote I dine or suppe

This folishe dove wil gife us al an horne,
There ben right here a M. bettir borne
To rede this lesson, whiche as wel as he,
And eke as hote, can love in al degre.

The turtill dove said, Welcom, welcom May,
Gladfom and light to lovirs that ben trewe,
I thanke the lord of Love that doth purvey
For me to rede this lesson al of dewe,
For in gode soth of corage I pursue
To serve my make tyll deth us must departe,
And than *Tu autem* sang he al aparte.

Te Deum amoris sang the thrustil cocke,
Tuball him self the firste musician
With key of armony coude not onlocke
So swete a tewne as that the thrustil can,
The lord of Love we praisin (quod he) than,
And so done al the foulis gret and lite,
Honour we May in fals lovirs dispite.

Dominus regnavit, said the pecocke there,
The lord of Love, that mighty prince iwis,
He is recevid here and every where.

Nowe *Jubilate* sang, what menith this?
Said than the lynet, *Welcom lord of blisse.*
Oute sterte the owle with *Benedicite!*

What menith al this mery fare? (quod he.)

Laudate sang the larke with voice ful shril,
And eke the kight *O admirabile!*

This quire wil throw min eris pers and thril,
But what? welcom this May seson (quod he)
And honoure to the lord of Love mote be,
That hath this feste so solempne and so hie;
Amen said al, and so said eke the pic.

And forth the cockowe gan procede anon
With *Benedictus!* thanking God in hast
That in this May wode visite them echon,
And gladdin them al while the fest shal last,
And therewithal a laughtir oute he braste,
I thanke it God that I shuld ende the song,
And al the service whiche hath ben so long.

Thus sang they al the service of the feste,
And that was done right erly to my dome,
And furth goth al the Courte both most and lest
To fetch the flouris fresh, and braunch, and blom
And namely hauthorn brought both page and grom
With fresh garlantis, party blew and white,
And than rejoyfin in ther grete delite.

Eke eche at othir threwe the flouris bright
The prymerose, the violete, and the gold,
So than as I beheld the roial sight
My lady gan me sodenly behold,
And with a trewe love plitid many a folde
She smot me through the very herte as blive
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

THE REMEDIE OF LOVE.

This book, taken for the most part out of The Proverbs of Solomon, is a warning to take heed of the deceitful company of women.

THE PROLOGUE.

SEYNG the manyfolde inconvenience
Falling by unbrydlid prosperite,
Whiche is not temprid with moral prudence,
Nothing more welthie than in youth's frelte,
Movid I am bothe of right and equite
To youth's wele somewhat for to endite
Whereby he may himselfin safecondite.

And firste I note as a thinge most noyous,
And unto youth a grevous malady,
Amongis us callid love encombrous,
Vexyng alway yonge peple straungely,
Oftin by force it causith 'hem to dye,
And age is also turmentid by love,
I mene bineth the girdle' and not above.

Wherefore this werke, whiche is right laborous,
For age me nedith nat in honde to take,
To youthe me owith to be' obsequious;
Nowe I begin thus to worke for his sake,
Whiche may the fervence of love aslake,
To the lovir as a mitigative,
To him that is none a preservative.

That mighty lorde whiche that me govirneth,
'Tis Youthe I mene, mesure if that I pace
In every matir whiche that him concerneth:
First, as is behoveful, I wol aske grace,
And forthwithal now in this same place
Er I begin I wol yknele and say
These fewe wordis, and him of helpè praye:

Thou flouring Youth, whiche hast the avauntage
In strength of body, in luste, and beaute,
Also a precelling haste above Age
In many' a singuler commodite,
Howe be it one thing he hath beyonde the
To thy most profite and gretist availe,
Whiche shuld the conduit, I mene sad counsaile.

And yet, gode lorde, of a presumpcion
I n'il deprave thy might and deite,
I lyve but undir thy protection,
I am thy subiecte, I were thy lyverie,
For thou arte grounde of my prosperite,

And freshift flowir of al my garlande,
My singu'ler aide, as I well undirstande.

But as he that oweth his lorde best service
And entire faithe, his honour to supporte,
Right so I speke, and in none othir wise;
I knowlege my self one of the left sorte
Of thy servautes, to our eldirs comforte,
Drawe sadde counsaile unto the if thou liste,
The and thy powir who maie then resiste?

Fie on Age, I say, undir wordis fewe,
And his erroneous opinion!
What spekist of him whiche saieth moste untrue
All youth to be of ill disposicion?
Dampnith us all without excepcion,
And for a colerable avauntage
He saieth in hym restith all counsaill sage.

Well sothly maie sadde counsaile in him rest,
But yet his dedis ben full ferre therefro;
He maie wel sayin with our parishe prest,
Doith as I saie and not as I do;
For I my selfin know wele one or two
Well strickin in age that for neighbourhedde
Ywollin to ther neighbours wivis bedde.

He will in presencc of the yongè man
Her clippe and kisse, ye, and her doune ylaie,
And to blere his eye thus he sayith than,
O suffre yet olde Morell for to plaie,
Now have I doin that I can or maie:
Thus he sayith her husband for to queme,
That he nor no man shouldin not misdeme.

In worde nor dede nedith him not be coie,
It's impossible that he doe amisse:
If the yong man speke, anon he saieth, Boie,
To rebuke age besemeth the not iwis:
And thus his olde face aye his warrant is;
All is in hym but sleight and subtilte,
And ferre from right reson, I tellin the.

And, shortly, Age is not abovin me;
Age is impotent, and of no resistance;
Age unweldie ne maie not fight nor fle;

What werin Age withoutin my defence?
Sad counsaile faiest, Givith hym assistance;
Right reson is freshist where that I ame,
Wherefore in thy saiyng thou art to blame.

Sith reson to me is rathir accompanied
Then unto Age, whiche is the opinion
Of every wise man not to be denied,
And sith sad counsaile procedith of reson,
Sad counsaile in me hath his chese mancion;
This is no naie; but what then is the ende
Of this thy suasion; what doest entende?

Age to compare unto thyne excellence
I n'ill presume hym so to dignifie,
Ye be not egall, how be it Experience
Hym avauntageth, for she moste certainly
Hym techith what thing to hym is contrary,
And ofte to fore se 'and warily eschewe
Whiche thou nevir assaidist yet nor knewe.

Experience makith a man moste certain
Of thing erthly, and of necessite
Sad counsaile requirith certaintie plain,
So ferre to movin thus whereto nede we?
But to my purpose, as thou commaundest me;
Shortly mine entent is thus, and none other,
Under thy licence to counsaile my brother.

How shouldist give any counsaile so yong,
Lacking experience? unto thine owne speche

I report me, I wote as for thy tong
Will serve the right wel, but than for to tech
I doubte me lest that thy wit woll not rech;
Youth and Experience thou saist be not convert,
How shouldist thou then teche well unexpert?

Scripture witnissith that God will oft shitte
Fro the' hie wittid man and shew it the child,
To hym I mene that of his owne witte
Presumeth not, but is debonaire and milde;
By counsaile I entend vertue to bilde,
Whiche of myne elders part have I borrowed,
And part of experience, which I have sorowed.

Well, than, if it be as thou lettist fare
Shewe forthe thy doctrine, be not ought agaste;
I woll the supporte; loke thou doe not spare
Maugre Age, although that he frete or gnaste;
To aske Age counsaile herein were but wast;
Boldely begin; go forthe to the processe;
Fere not, sithins thou art of soche surenesse.

Graunt mercie, lorde! sithin it the doeth like
To licence me, now I woll and dare boldly
Assaile my purpose; with scriptures autentike
My werke woll I ground, undirset, and fortessie;
Aspire my ginnyng, o thou wode Furie
Alecto, with thy sustirs! and in speciall
To the, mother of Jelousie, Juno, I call.

THE REMEDIE OF LOVE.

THIS werke who so shall se or yrede
Of incongruite do me not impeche;
Ordinatelie behoveth me first to procede
In deduccion thereof, right as the leche
His paciente's sicknes oweth first for to seche,
The which knowen medicin he should aplice,
And shortly as he can shape remedie.

Right so by counsaile, willing the to' exhort,
O yong man prosperous! which doth abounde
In thy floures of luste, belongeth on the sort,
Me first to considir what 'is rote and ground
Of thy mischese, whiche is plainlie yfound
Woman, yfarcid with fraud and disceipt,
To thy confusion moste allecive baite.

Flie the miswoman lest she the disceve,
Thus saith Salomon, which taught was fullie
The falsshed of women in his daies to' conceive;
The lips of a strumpet ben swetir than honie,
Her throte souplid with oile of flatirie,
How be it the ende and effecte of all
Bitterer is then any wormwode or gall.

Flie the miswoman if thou love thy life:
Beware of the straungir's blande eloquence;
Straungir I call her that is not thy wife;

Of her beautie have no concupiscence,
Her countinaunce, pretendyng benevo'lence;
Beware her signes and eye so amiable,
Holde it for ferme thei ben discevable.

Lo, here an ensample what women be
In ther signis and continuance shortlie!
I woll shewin the how loviris thre
Ylovid one woman right entirelie,
Eche of them knewe othiri's maladie,
Wherefore it was all ther daily labour
Who coud approchin next in her favour.

At sondrie sasons, as fortune requireth,
Severallie thei came to se her welfare,
But ones it happinid Love them so fireth,
To se ther ladie thei all would not spare;
Of othir's comyng none of them were ware,
Till all thei mette whereas thei in o place
Of ther ladie sawe the desirid face.

To suppir set, full smallie thei coude ete;
Full sobir and demure in countinaunce,
There taried none of 'hem for any mete,
But on his ladie to give attendaunce,
And in secrete wise some signifaunce

M m iij

Of love to have, the whiche percevyng she
Fetelie' executid thus her properte.

In due seson, as she alwaie aspied
Every thyng to' execute convenientlie,
Her one lovir first frendelie she eyed,
The second she offred the cuppe so curtislie,
The thirde she gave a tokin secretlie,
Undirneath the borde she trade on his fote,
Through his entrailis tiklid the herte rote.

By your leve, might I here aske a question
Of you my maistirs that sewe lov'is trace,
To you likely belongeth the solucion
Whiche of these thre ystode now in her grace!
Clerely to answere ye would aske long space,
The mattir is doubtfull and opinable;
To' ascertain you I woll my self enable.

Of the foresayid thre my self was one,
No man can answere it bettir then I;
Hertely of us bilovid was there none,
But Watt'is packe we bare all by and by,
Whiche at the last I my self gan asprie,
And time as me thought then I left the daunce;
O thoughtfull herte, gret is thy grevaunce!

Hence fro me! hence! that me for to endite
Halpe aie here afore, o ye Musis Nine!
Whilom ye were wont be mine aide and light,
My penne to direct, my brain to' illumine;
No lengir, alas! maie I sewe your doctrine,
The freshe lustie metirs I went to make
Have ben here afore I' uttirlic forsake.

Come hither Erinnyes, and ye Furies all
Whiche ser ben undre' us nigh the nethir pole,
Where Pluto reignith, o kyng Infernall!
Sende out thine Arpies, send Anguishe and Dole,
Miserie and Wo, leve ye me not tole,
Of right be present must Pain and Turment,
The pale Deth besemeth not to be absent.

To me now I call all this lothsome sort
My paines t' encrese, my sorowes to augment,
For worthie' I am to' be bare of all comfort,
Thus sith I have consumid and mispent
Not onely my daies but fivesolde talent
That my Lorde gave me, I can not recompence,
I maie n'ot to derely' aby my negligence.

By the' path of penaunce yet woll I revert
To the well of grace, mercie there to fetche;
Despisist not God the meke contrite herte,
Of the cocke crowe, alas! I would not retche,
And yet it is not late in the' seconde wetche:
Mercie shall I purchase by 'incessaunt cryng,
The mercies of our Lorde er shall I syng.

But well mayist thou waile, wicked woman,
That thou shuldest disceve thus an innocent;
In recompence of my sinne, so' as I can,
To' al wol I make and leve this monument,
In shewing part of thy falsheid is myne entent,
For all were to moche, I cann'ot, well I wote,
The cause shewith plainly he that thus wrote.

If al the yerth wer parchment scribable,
Spedie for the hande, and all manir wode
Wer hewed and proporcioned to pennis able,
All water ynke eithir in damme or flode,
Every man being a parsite scribe and gode,
The cursidnesse yet and desceipt of women
Coud not be shewid by the mene of penne.

I flie all odious ressemblaunces;
The devil'is bronde call women I might,
Whereby man is encensid to mischaunces,
Or a stinkyng rose, that faire is in sight,
Or dedly' empoison, like the sugir white,
Whiche by his swetnesse causith man to tast,
And sodainly sleeth and bringeth him to' his last.

It 'is not my manir to use soche langage,
But this my doctrine as I maie lawfullie
I' woll wholly grounde with aucthoritie sage,
Willing wisedome and vertue edefie:
Wine and women into apostasie
Cause wisemen to fall; what is that to saie?
Of wisedome cause them to forget the waie:

Wherefore the wisemen doith the advise,
In whose wordis can be founde no lesyng,
With the straungir to sittin in no wise
Whiche is not thy wife; fall not in clippyng
With her, but beware eke of her kysyng,
Kepe with her in wine no altercacion,
Lest thyne herte fall by inclinacion.

Maie a man, thinkist, hide and safely laie
Fire in his bosome without empairement
And brenning of his clothes? or whider he may
Walke on hotte colis his fete not ybrente?
As who saith naie, and whereby is mente
This foresaied proverbe and similitude,
But that thou ridde the plainly to denude

From the flattirirs forgettyng her gide,
The gide of her youth, I mene Shamfastnes,
Whiche should cause her maidinhed to abide,
Her Godd'is behest eke she full rechelesse
Not retching committeth to forgetfulnes,
Neithir God ne shame in her havying place;
Nedis must soche a woman lacke grace.

And all that neighin her in waie of sin
To tourne of grace shall lacke the influence,
The pathis of life no more to come in,
Wherefore first frende the with Sapience,
Remembring God, and astir with Prudence,
To thyne owne wele, that so thei may the kepe,
Unto thyne herte lest her wordis crepe.

In his boke where I take my moste ground,
And in his Proverbis, sage Salomon
Tellith a tale which is plainly found
In the fiveth chapter, whedir in dede don
Or mekely feined to our instruccion
Let clerkes determine, but this am I sure,
Moche like thyng I my self have had in ure.

At my windowe, saith he, I lokid out,
Faire yonge peple where I sawe many,
Emong 'hem all, as I lokid about,
To a yong man fortunèd I lent myne eye,
Estraungid from his minde it was likely;
By the' stretè at a cornir, nigh his own hous,
He went about with eye right curious.

When that the daie his light began withdrawe,
And the pight approchid in the twilight,
How a woman came and met hym I sawe,
Talking with him undir shade of the night;
Now blessid be God (quod she) of his might,
Whiche hath fulfillid myne hert'is desire,
Aslaked my painis, which were hote as fire.

And yet myne aucthour, as it is gode skill,
To folowe I must tell her araiment;

She was full nicè soulis like to spill,
As nice in countinaunce yet as in garmente,
For janglyng she was of rest impaciente,
Wandirynge still in no place she ystode,
But restlesse now, and now out forthe she yode :

Now in the hous she was, now in the strete,
Now at a cornir she standeth in awaite,
Incessauntly busie her praie to gete,
To bring to the lure whom she doith laite.
Now where I left unto my mattir straite
I woll tournin again, how she hym met,
Swetily kissid, and frendly him grette.

With wordes of curtisie many' and diverse,
Right as in part I have before ytolde,
Now as I can I purpose to reherse
How she flattiring saied with visage bolde,
I have made vowes and offringes manifolde
For thy sake, o myne herte! o my love dere?
This daie I thanke God all performid were;

Therefore I came out and made thus asterte,
Verie desirous your welfare to se;
Now I have seen you plesid is myne herte;
In faith shall none yhave my love but ye;
As true as I am to you be to me:
I praie you hertily, dere herte! come home,
No man should be to me so much welcome.

And in gode faith, the sothe for to saie,
Your comyng unto me ran in my thought:
Harke in your ere; my bedde freshe and gaie
I have behanged with tapettis new bought,
From Egypte and from far countries ybrought,
Steinid with many a lustie freshe hewe,
Excedyng golde or jaspir in value:

My chambir is strowed with mirre and insense,
With sote sav'oring aloes and sinnamome,
Brethyng an aromatique redolence,
Surmountyng olibane in any man's dome;
Ye shall bitwene my brestes rest if ye come;
Let us now have our desirid halfyng,
For we maie safe be till in the mornyng.

Myne husband is not at home, he is went
Forthe in his journey a farre waie from hence,
A bagge with money he hath with hym hent,
As hym thought nedefull was for his expence;
Unto my wordis give faith and credence;
Now is the monè yong and of light dulle,
Ere he come home it woll be at the fulle.

And thus craftily hath she hym besette
With her lime rodys, and pantir, and snare,
The felie soule ycaught hath in her nette,
Of her sugrid mouthe, alas! nothyng ware;
And thus is he left gracielesse and bare
Of helpe, and comfort, and ghostly succour,
And, furthirmore, as sayith myne aucthour,

As a best ledde to his deth doith pante
This yong man folowith her in that stounde,
And as a wanton lambe full ignorante
How he is pulled and drawin to be bounde
Unto the tyme he hath his deth's wounde,
And like a birde that hastith to the grin,
Not knowyng the perill of his life therein.

Now, gentle sonne, saith Salomon, take hede,
My wordis in thy brest kepe and make faste,
Let her not thy mynde in her waies mislede,
Be not decevid, lestith not thy taste,

Many hath she woundid, many doune caste,
Many strong men by her hath losse ther breth;
Her waies are waies of hell ledyng to deth.

And in this lite narracion precedente
The womanne's manifolde gilte I attende,
The yongè man, alas, how she hath shent!
Discevid her husbände her own next frend;
In these bothe her God she doith offende;
To breke her spousail to her is of no weight.
Furdirmore to shew woman's craft and sleight,

A woman at her dore fate on a stall
To se folke passe by stretes of the cite,
With eye and countinaunce eke she gan call,
If there be any pretie' onè come to me,
Come hithir ye piggis nye, ye little babe!
At last she saied to a yong man hertlesse,
Of her deceit unware and defencelesse,

Moche swetir, she saith, and more acceptable,
Is drinke when it is stollin privily
Then when it is taken in form avowable;
Bread hiddin and gottin jeoperdouslie
Ymust nedis be swete and femblablie;
Venison stolin is aie the swetir,
The ferthir the narowir fet the bettir.

And whom this woman, saith Salomon, festes
The yong man wotith not whom she doth fede;
Of the darke depenesse of hell ben her gestes;
Beware, o yong man! therefore I the rede,
And how be it chiefly for thy gode spede
This werke to compile I have take in charge
I must of pitie my charitie' enlarge;

With the felie man whiche is thus begiled,
Her husband I mene, I wol wepe and waile
His painfull infortune, whereby reviled
Causelesse he is, nevir to convaile;
Every man yong and olde woll him assaile
With wordes of occasion with the loth name,
And, alas, gode soule! he nothyng to blame:

But she whiche that coud so ill doe and wolde,
Hers be the blame for her foule demerite,
And leve that opprobrious name Cuckold
To apropr to hym as in dispite:
Ransake yet we wouldin if that we might
Of this wordè the true ortographie,
The verie discent and etymologie.

The well and grounde of the firste invencion
To knowe the' ortographie we must derive,
Whiche is Coke and Cold in composicion,
By reson as nigh as I contrive,
Then how it is writtin we knowe belive;
But yet, lo! by what reson and what grounde
Ywas it of these two wordis compounde?

As of one cause to give very judgement,
The' etymologie let us firste beholde;
Eche lettir an whole worde doeth represent,
As C put for Colde, and O put for Olde,
K is for Knave; thus divers men don holde:
The firste parte of this name we have yfounde,
Let us ethimologise the seconnde.

As the firste findir mente I am right sure
C for Calot, for Of we havin O,
And L for Leude, and D for Demeanure,
The craft of the' enventour ye maie se, lo!
How one name signifieth personis two,

A Colde Olde Knave, Cokcold himself wenyng,
And eke a Calot of Leude Demenyng.

The seconde cause of the' imposition
Of this foresayid name was jelousie :
To be jelouse is gretist occasion
To be cokcold that men can wel aspie,
And though the passion be very fire,
And of continuell fervence and hete,
The pacient aye sufferith colde on his fete.

And who that 'is jelous and aye in a drede
Is full of melancolie and gallie ire;
His wiv'is nose if she onis misfetrede
He woll cut off, ye, and he woll conspire
His deth who evir that woll her desire,
Whiche she percevyng brastith streight his gall;
And anone his grete wodenesse doith fall.

As sone as she hath knit for him that knot
Now is he tame that was so ramagious;
Mekely sittith he doune and takith his lot;
Layid ben now his lokes so furious,
And he but late as a coke batailous,
Hote in his quarell, to avenge hym bolde,
Now is he callid both Coke and Colde.

This saying, to' all curtise dissonant,
Which ysemith that it of malice grewe,
In this rude tretise I ne woll not plant
As parcell thereof, but onely to shewe
The opinion of the talcatise shrewe,
Whiche in ill sayng is ever merie
No man as Ii thereof so werie.

But I as parcell of this my lite boke
Woll graffin in some sadde counsaill wherby
The weddid man, if that he daigne to loke
In it, the bettir shall mowin hym gie,
And provide for his saied infortunie,
Whiche as I have sayid with him complaine
I woll, as partinir of his grete paine.

As moſte expedient unto his wele
I woulde that all jelousie were abjecte,
If he be jelous that he it concele,
And in his labour be full circumspecte,
To knowe her waies if thei sein suspecte,
And not for to breke, for one worde brokin
She woll not misse but she woll be brokin.

Forbid her not that thou n'oldist have don,
For loke what thyng so e're she is forbod
To that of all thyngis she is most prone,
Namely if it be ill and no gode;
Till it be executid she' is nigh wode :
Soche is a woman, and soche is her fete;
Her craft by craft than labour to defete.

If thou hereaftir, now a single man,
Shouldist be jelous if thou haddest a wife,
Wedde not but if thou can trust a woman,
For els shouldist thou lede a carefull life;
That thou moſte lothist should ybe full rise;
Yet I ne will gainsaie matrimonie,
But *Mellus est nubere quam uri.*

That is to saie, Bettir is in wedlocke
A wife to take, as the churche doith kenne,
Then for to ben undir the flesh'is yoke,
In fleshlie lustis alwaie for to brenne;
But, as I sayid, for all jelous menne,
So thei livin chaste, I holde it lasse ill
That thei ne wedde not than them selfin spill.

The single man whiche that is yet to wedde,
And not the weddid man, thus I arede,
To warne hym now he is to farre yspedde,
It is all to late hym for to forbede,
But let hym take as for his ownè nede
Soche counsaile as is hym before ytolde,
These wordis folowyng eke to beholde.

Thy watir to kepe the wiseman doth teche,
That thou in no wise let it have issue,
At a narowe rifte waie it woll yseche;
And semblablie the woman that 'is untrue
To give her fre walke in all wise eschue;
If she at large, not at thine handè, walke
She woll the shamin, thou shalt it not balke.

Weddid or single thus saith the wiseman,
Her which that both daie and night evirmore
Lithe in thy bosome, wife or yet lemman,
Love not to hote, lest thou repent it fore,
Lest she the bryngin into some ill lore :
Thy wife not to love yet I n'ill support,
But that thou doe not thus I the exhort.

Lo ! if thou love her love thine honestie;
Be she not idill for what woll betide;
If she sit idle' of very necessitie
Her mindè woll serchin ferre and eke wide,
Namelie if she be not accompanide :
How accompanied? not with yongè men,
But with maidinis I mene or women.

Maidin servauntes be right convenient
In house to helpin to doe her service,
In whom she maie use her commandement
In the seson all at her owne device;
To techin 'hem gode yeve her thine advice
To make them huswifis : thus businesse
Maie yet refrainin her from idlenesse.

But bid not her that thou wolt have her do,
Of thine entent that might be a lettyng,
But craſtily encourage her therto
By othir menis, as by commendyng,
And not to moche, but dailyng mengyng
Bothe praise and blame, and in thy reson
First raise wisely the place and seson.

Of faithfull will and hertè full tender
One thing I call into remembèraunce
Again which though my wit be to slender
Astir my powir and my suffisaunce
I purpose to makin a purveiaunce,
Sith women of nature ben chaungeable,
Frele, and not ware, also discevable.

Be it that thy wife be excellently gode,
That none be bet of disposicion,
In proceſſe of time she might turn her mode
By some misse-liver's instigacion;
Divers men to thilke occupation
Aplyin daily ther mynde and eke herte,
From ther godenesse frele women to perverte.

If thou aspie any suspect person,
Drawe to thy wife, beware in allè wise;
To hym nor her of thy suspeccion
Breke not one worde though that thine herteagrife;
Kindle no fire and no smoke woll arise :
Although he be of a corrupt entent
She peraventure is not of assent.

A SAIYNG OF DAN JOHN.

THER bethe four thingis that maketh man a sole;
 Honour first puttith him into outrage,
 And aldir next solitarie and sole;
 The second is unweldy crokid age;
 Women also bring men into dotage;
 And mighty wine in many divers wise
 Distemprin folke which ben yholdin wife.

YET OF THE SAME.

THER ben four thingis causyng grete folye;
 Honour first; and second unwildy age;
 Women and wine I dare eke specify
 Ymake wise men fallin into dotage;
 Wherefore by counsell of philosophers sage
 In gret honour lernith this rule of me,
 With thine estate havith humilite.

MOTTO TO JACK UPLAND.

Or freris I have told before
 Now in a making of a crede,
 And yet I could tell worfe and more,
 But men would werrien it to rede.

THE HOUSE OF FAME.

IN THREE BOOKES,

*In this book is shewed how the deeds of all men and women, be they good or bad, are
carry'd by report to posterity.*

THE PROLOGUE.

God tourne us everie dreme to gode,
For it is wondir thyng by the' rode,
To my wite, what causith swevines
On the morowe or on evines,
And why the' effecte foloweth of some,
And of some it shall nevir come,
Why that is in avision,
And this a revelacion,
Why this dreme, why that a sweven,
And not to every man liche even,
Why this a fantome' why that oricles
I n'ot; but whofo of these miracles
The causies knowith bet than I
Define he, for I certainly
Ne can 'hem not, ne nevir thinke
To busie my witte for to swinke
To knowe of ther significacions,
The gendris ne the distinecions
Of the tymes of 'hem, ne the causis,
Or why that this is more then that is,
Or if folkis complexions
Make 'hem dreme of reflexions;
Or ellis thus, as other faine,
For the' grete feblenesse of ther braine,
By abstinence or by sicknesse,
By prison, stricf, or grete distresse;

Or ellis by disordinaunce,
Or natural accustomaunce,
That some men be to curious
In studie or melancolious;
Or thus, so inly full of drede
That no man maie 'hem botc rede;
Or ellis that devocion
Of some and contemplacion
Causin to them soche dremis ofte;
Or that the cruil life unsofte
Of 'hem that unkind lovis leden,
That oftin hopin moche or dreden,
That purely ther impressions
Causin 'hem to have visions:
Or if that spirites han the might
To makin folke to dreme on night,
Or if the soul of propir kinde
Be so perfite as men yfinde,
That it wele wote what is to come,
And that he warnith all and some
Of everiche of ther avintures
By avisions or by figures,
But that our flesh ne hath no might
To understandin it aright,
For it is warnid to derkely,
But why the cause is not wote I;

Well wotin of this thyngē clerkes
 That tretē of that and othir werkes,
 For I of none opinion
 N'ill as now makin mencion,
 But only that the holy rode
 Tournēg us every dreme to gode,
 For nevir sithin I was borne,
 Ne no man ellis me beforne,
 Ymette I trowe right stedfastly
 So wondirfull a dreme as I
 The tenthe daie now of December,
 The whiche, as I can remember,
 I woll you tellin every dele:
 But at beginnyng trustith wele
 I woll make invocacion
 With devoute speciall devocion
 Unto the god of Slepe anone,
 That dwellith in a cave of stone,
 Upon a streame that cometh fro Lete,
 That is a flode of hell unswete,
 Beside a fulke men clepe Cimerie
 There slepith aye this god unmerie,
 With his slepie thousande sonis;
 That alwaie to slepe ther won is;
 And to this god that I of rede
 Praie I that he wollin me spede
 My swevin for to tell aright,
 If every dreme stande in his might,

And he that movir is of all
 That is and was, and evir shall,
 So give 'hem joye that it here
 Of all that thei dremin to yere,
 And for to standin all in grace
 Of ther lovis, or in what place
 That 'hem were levist for to stonde,
 And shalde 'hem from povertē and shonde,
 And from every unhappe and disese,
 And sende 'hem that which maie 'hem plese,
 That takith well and scornith nought,
 Ne it misdemin in ther thought
 Through malicious entencion;
 And whofo through presumpcion,
 Or hate, or scorne, or though envie,
 Dispite, or jape, or felonie,
 Misdeme it, praie I Jesus gode,
 Dreme he barefote or dreme he shode,
 That every harme that any man
 Hath had sithin the worlde began
 Befall hym thereof or he sterve,
 And graunt that he maie it deserve!

Lo! with right soche conclusion
 As had of his avision
 Cresus, that was the Kyng of Lyde,
 That high upon a gibet dyde,
 This prayir shall he have of me,
 I am no bette in charite,

THE FIRST BOKE.

Now herkin, as I have you saied,
 What that I mette or I abraied.
 Of December the tenth daie
 When it was night to slepe I laie.
 Right as I was wonte for to doen,
 And fill aslepē wondir sone,
 As he that was werie forgo
 On pilgrimagē milis two
 To the corps of Sainct Leonarde,
 To makin lithe that erst was harde.

But as me slept me mette I was
 Within a temple imade of glas,
 In whiche there werin mo images
 Of golde standyng in sondrie stages,
 Sette in mo riche tabirnacles,
 And with perrē mo pinnacles,

And mo curious portraitureis
 And queint manir of figuris
 Of golde worke then I sawe evir:
 But certainly I n'ist nevir
 Where that it was, but well wist I
 It was of Venus redily
 This temple, for in purtreiture
 I sawe anone right her figure
 Nakid yfletyng in a se,
 And also on her hedde parde
 Her rosy garland white and redde,
 And her combe for to kembe her hedde,
 Her dovis, and Dan Cupido
 Her blindē sonne, and Vulcano,
 That in his face ywas full brounc,
 But as I romid up and doun

I founde that on the wall there was
Thus writtin on a table of bras;

I wold now syng, if that I can,

The armies and also the man

That first came through his destine

Fugitive fro Troye the countre

Into Italie, with full moche pine,

Unto the flondis of Lavine:

And tho began the storie anon

As I shall tellin you echone.

First sawe I the distrucion
Of Troie thorough the Greke Sinon

With his false untrue forswerynges,

And with his chere and his lesynges,

That made a horse brought into Troye

By whiche Trojans loste all ther joye.

And aftir this was graved, alas!

How Ilion's castill assailed was

And won, and Kyng Priamus slain,

And Polites his sonne certain,

Dispitously of Dan Pyrrhus.

And next that sawe I howe Venus,

When that she sawe the castill brende,

Doune from hevin she gan discende,

And bade her sonne Æneas fle,

And how he fled, and how that he

Escapid was from all the pres,

And toke his fathre, olde Anchises,

And bare hym on his backe awaie,

Crying Alas and Welawaie!

The whiche Anchises in his hande

Bare tho the goddis of the lande,

I mene thilke that unbrennid were.

Then sawe I next that all in fere

How Creusa, Dan Æneas wife,

Whom that he lovid all his life,

And her yong sonne clepid Julo,

And eke Ascanius also,

Fleddin eke with full drerie chere,

That it was pite for to here,

And in a forest as thei went

How at a tournyng of a went

Creusa was iloste, alas!

That rede not I how that it was,

How he her sought, and how her ghoſte

Bad hym to fle the Grekis hoſte,

And ſaied he muſt into Itaile,

As was his deſtinie ſauns faile,

That it was pitie for to here,

When that her ſpirite gan appere,

The wordis that ſhe to hym ſaied,

And for to kepe her ſonne hym praied.

There sawe I gravin eke how he,

His fathir eke and his meine,

With his shippis began to faile

Toward the countrey of Italie

As ſtreight as ere thei mightin go.

There sawe I eke the cruill Juno,

That art Dan Jupiter his wife.

That haſt ihatid all thy life

Mercileſs all the Trojan blode,

Rennin and crie as thou were wode

On Æolus, the god of Windes,

To blewin out of alle kindes

So loudè, that he ſhould ydrenche
Lord and ladie, and grome and wenche,

Of all the Tojanis nacion

Without any of ther ſalvacion.

There sawe I ſoche tempeſt ariſe

That evèry herte might ariſe

To ſe it paintid on the wall.

There sawe I eke gravin withall

Venus, how ye, my ladie dere!

Ywepying with full wofull chere,

Yprayid Jupiter on hie

To ſave and kepin that navie

Of that dere Trojan Æneas,

Sithins that he your ſonne ywas.

There sawe I Jovis Venus kiſſe,

And grauntid was of the tempeſt liſſe.

There sawe I how the tempeſt ſtente,

And how with allè pine he went

And privilie toke a rivage

Into the countrie of Carthage,

And on the morowe how that he

And a knight that hight Achate

Ymettin with Venus that daie

Goyng in a full queinte araie,

As ſhe had be an huntireſſe,

With winde blowing upon her treſſe,

And how Æneas gan to plaine,

When that he knewe her, of his paine,

And how his ſhippis dreint ywere

Or els iloſte, he n'iſte not where,

How ſhe began hym comforte tho,

And bade hym unto Carthage go.

And there he ſhould his folke yfinde

That in the ſe were left behinde:

And, ſhortly of this thyng to pace,

She made Æneas ſo in grace

Of Dido, Quene of that countre,

That, ſhortly for to tellin, ſhe

Became his love, and let hym do

All that weddyng ylongith to:

What ſhould I ſpekin it more quainte,

Or pain me my wordis to painte?

To ſpeke of love it wold not be,

I can not of that faculte,

And eke to tellen of the manere

How that thei firſt acquaintid were

It were a long proceſſe to tell,

And ovir long for you to dwell

There sawe I grave howe Æneas

Tolde to Dido evèry caas

That hym was tidde upon the ſe.

And eſt gravin was how that ſhe

Made of hym, ſhortly at a worde,

Her life, her love, her luſt, her lorde,

And did to hym all revèrence,

And laied on hym all the diſpence

That any woman might ydo,

Wenyng that it had all be ſo

As he her ſwore, and hereby demed

That he was gode, for he ſoche ſemed:

Alas! what barne doth apparence

When it is falſe in exiſtence!

For he to her a traitour was,

Wherefore ſhe flowe her ſelf, alas!

Lo, how a woman doeth amis
To love him that unknowin is!
For by Christ lo thus it farith,
It is not all golde that glarith;
For al so broke I well myne hedde
There maie be undir godelibedde
Cowirid many a sbreude vice;
Therefore let no wight be so nice
To take a love only for chere,
Or speche. or for frendly manere,
For this shall every woman finde
That some man of his purè kinde
Woll shewin outward the fairist
Till he have caught that what hym list,
And then anon woll causis finde,
And swere how that she is unkinde,
Or false, or privie', or double was:
All this saie I by Æneas
And Dido, and her nicè left,
That lovid all to sone a gest;
Wherefore I woll saie o proverbe,
That *He that fullie knoweth the herbe*
Maie safely laie it to his eye;
Withoutin drede this is no lie.

But let us speke of Æneas
How he betrayid her, alas!
And left her full unkindèlie,

So when she sawe all uttirlye
That he would her of trouthe faile,
And wendin from her into' ltaile,
She gan to wring her handis two.

Alas! (quod she) that me is wo!
Alas! is every man thus true,
That every yere woll have a newe,
If it so longè tyme endure,
Or ellis thre peravinture?
And thus of one he woll have fame
In magnifying his owne name,
An othir for frendship saith he,
And yet there shall the thirde ybe,
That is ytakin for delite,
Lo! 'or els for singuler profite.
In soche wordis began complaine
This wofull Dido of her paine,
As me mette dremyng redily,
None other auctour aledge woll I,

Alas, (quod she) my swetè herte!
Have pitie on my sorowes smerte,
And fle me not; go not awaie.

O wofull Dido! welawaie!
(Quod she) unto her selvin tho.

O Æneas! what woll ye do?
O that your love, neither your bonde,
Which that yefwore with your right honde,
Ne yet my my cruill deth, (quod she)
Maie holdin you still here with me!

O! have ye' of my deth no pite?
Iwis, myne own dere herte! that ye
Knowin full well that nevir yet,
As farre as evir I had wit,
Agilte you in thought ne in dede.

O! have ye men soche godelihede
In speche, and ner a dele of trouthe?
Alas, alas! that er had routh

Any woman on a false man!

Now I se well and tellin can
We wretchid women can no arte,
For certaine for the more parte
Thus we ben servid everichone,
How sore so that ye men can grone;
Anon as we have you received
Full certainlie we ben deceived,
For though your love last a ceson,
Waite upon the conclusion,
And loke eke how ye determine,
And for the more partè define;
O welawaie that I was born!
For thorough you my name is lorne,
And mine actis are redde and song
O'er all this lande in every tong.

O wickid Fame! for there n'is
Nothing so swifte, lo! as she is;
O sothe is, *Every thing is wist*
Though it be coverde with the mist;
Eke though that I might durin ever
That I have done recovre' I never,
That it ne shall be saied, alas!
I shamid was through Æneas,
And that I shall thus judgid be,

Lo! right as she hath doen now she
Woll doen eftsonis hardily,
Thus saie the peple privily;
But that is doen n'is not done:
But all her complaint ne her mone
Certain availed her not a stre.
And when she wist sothely that he
Was forthe into his ship agone
She into chambir went anone,
And callid on her sustir Anne,
And gan her to complainin thanne,
And saied that she the cause ywas
That she first lovid him, alas!
And first counsaillid her thereto;
But what whan this was saied and do
She roste her selvin to the herte,
And deide thorough the woundis smerte;
But all the manir how she deide,
And all the wordis how she seide,
Who so to knowe it hath purpose,
Rede Virgile in Æneidos,
Or the Epistils of Ovide,
What that she wrote or that she dide;
And n'ereit to longe to endite
By God I would it here ywrite.
But welawaie! the harme and routh
That hath betide for soche untrouth,
As men maie oft in bokis rede,
And al daie seen it yet in dede,
That for to thinkin it tene is,

Lo! Demophon, Duke of Athenis,
How he forswore him falsly,
And trayid Phyllis wickidly,
That Kingis doughtir was of Trace,
And falsely gan his termè pace;
And whan she wist that he was false
She hong herself right by the halfe,
For he had doen her such untrouthe;
Lo! was not this a wo and routh?

Eke loke howe false and rechèles
Was to Briseida Achilles,
And Paris eke to Oenone,
And Jason to Hypsipile,
And este Jason to Medea,
And Hercules to Deianira,
For he left her for Iole,
That made hym take his deth parde.

How false was eke Duke Theseus,
That as the storie tellith us
How he betrayid Adriane?
The devill be his soul's bane!
For, had he laughid or iloured,
He must have ben anone devoured
If Ariadne ne had be;

And for she had of hym pite
She made hym fro the deth escape,
And he made her a full false jape;
For aftir this within a while
He left her slepyng in an ile,
Desert alone right in the se,
And stale awaie and let her be,
And toke her sustir Phædra tho
With hym, and gan to shippe ygo;
And yet he had ysworne to here,
On all that evir he could swere,
That so she savid hym his life
He would takin her to his wife,
For she desirid nothings elles
In certain, as the boke us telles.

But for to' excuse this Æneas
Fulliche of all his grete trespas
The boke sayith withoutin faile
The goddes bad hym go to Itaile,
And levin Affriques regioun
And faire Dido and her faire toun.
Tho sawe I grave how to Itaile
Dan Æneas gan for to saile,
And how the tempest all began,
And howe he lost his sterisman,
Which that the sterne or he toke kepe
Smote ovir the borde as he slepe.

And also saugh I how Sibile
And Æneas beside an ile
To helle went yfere for to se
His father Anchises the fre,
And how he there founde Palinurus;
And also Dido and Deiphobus,
And everiche tourment eke in hell
Sawe he, whiche long is for to tell,
Whiche painis who so liste to knowe
He must redin many a rowe
In Virgile or in Claudian,
Or Dantes, that it tellin can.

Tho sawe I alle the arivaile
That Æneas made in Itaile,

And with Kyng Latine his tret,
And all the battailis that he
Was at himselfin and his knightes
Or he had all iwonne his rightes,
And how he Turnus reſte his life,
And wan Lavinia to his wife,
And all the marveilous signals
Of the goddis Celestials,
How maugre Juno Æneas,
For all her sleighte and her compas,
Atchivid all his avinture,
For Jupiter toke on hym cure
At the praier of his modir Venus,
Whiohe I praie alwaie savin us,
And us aie of our sorowes light.

When I had sein all this sight
Within this noble temple thus,
Hey! Lord, thought I, that madist us,
Yet sawe I never ſoche nobleſſe
Of imagis, nor ſoche richeſſe,
As I ſe gravin in this church;
But nought wote I who did 'hem worche,
Ne where I am, ne' in what countre,
But now will I out gone and ſe,
Right at the wickit, if I can
Seen oughtwhere ſterying any man
That maie me tellen where I am.

When I out of the dore cam
I faſte aboutin me behelde,
Then ſawe I but a large felde
As farre as evir I might ſe,
Withoutin toun, or houſe, or tre,
Or buſhe or graſſe, or arid lande,
For all the felde was but of ſande
As ſmal as men maye ſe at eye
In the deſertis of Lybye;
Ne ferthir no manir cature
That is yformid by Nature
Ne ſawe I, me to rede or wiſſe;
O Criſt! thought I, that art in bliſſe,
From fanton and illuſion
Me ſave, and with devocyon
Myne eyin to the heven I caſte;
Tho was I ware, lo! at the laſte,
That faſtè by the ſonne on hie,
As kennin myght I with mine eye;
Me thought I ſawe an egle ſore.
But that it ſemid mochil more
Than I had anye egle' yſeine,
This is a ſothe as deth certaine,
It was of golde, and ſhone ſo bright,
That nevir ſawe men ſoche a ſight,
But yf the hevin had ywonne
Al newe of God anothir ſonne,
So ſhone the eg'lis fethirs bright,
And ſomwhat downwarde gan it lyght.

THE SECOND BOKE.

Nowe herkin everye manir man
That Englishe undirstandè can,
And lystith of my dreame to here,
For now at erst shallin ye lere
So sely' and dredefull avysion,
That I saye neithir Scipion
Ne Kinge Nabugodnosore,
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore,
Ne mettin soche a dreame as this.
Nowe, o thou faire blisful Cipris!
So be my favour at this time
That ye me to endite and rime
Helpith that in Parnassus dwel,
Besyde Helicon the clere wel.

O Thought! that wrote al that I met,
And in the tresorie it set
Of my braine, now shal men yse
If any vertue in the be;
To tellin al my dreame aright
Nowe kithe thy engin and thy might.

This egle', of whiche I have you tolde,
That with fethirs shone al of golde,
Whiche that so hie began to fore,
I gan beholdin more and more
To sene her beaute and the wonder,
But nevir was that dente of thonder,
Ne that thinge that men callin foudre,
That smite sometime a toure to poudre,
And in his swifte comminge brende,
That so swithe gan downward discende
As this foule whan that it behelde
That I arowne was in the felde,
And with his grim pawis so stronge
Within his sharpe nailis longe
Me fleyng at a swappe he hent,
And with his fours again up wente,
Me caryng in his clawis starke
As lightly' as I had ben a larke,
Howe hye I can not tellin yowe,
For I came up I n'ist ner howe,
For so astonied and asweved
Was every virtue in me heved,
What with his fours and with my dred,
That al my felinge gan to ded;

For why? it was a gret affraye.

Thus I longe in his clawis laye,
Til at the last he to me spake
In mann'is voice, and said, Awake,
And be not agast so for shame,
And callid me tho' by my name;
And for I shulde bettir abraide
Me to awakin thus he saide,
Right in the same voice and stevin
That usith one I can nevin,
And with that voice, the sothe to saine,
My minde ycame to me againe,
For it was godely saide to me,
So n'as it nevir wonte to be;
And herewithal I gan to sterc
As he me in his fete ybere,
Til that he felte that I had hete,
And felte eke tho mine herte ybete;
And tho gan he me to disporte,
And with gentil wordes me comforte,
And sayid twise, by Saint Mary
Thou arte a noyous thinge to cary,
And nothings nedith it parde,
For all so wisly God helpe me
As thou no harme shalt have of this,
And this case that betidde the is
Is for thy lore and for thy prowé:
Lette se; darist thou loke yet nowé?
Be ful ensurid boldily
I am thy frende: and therewith I
Gan for to wondir in my minde.

O God! (quod I) that madist al kinde,
Shal I none otherwise ydie?
Whedir Jove wil me stellyfie,
Or what thing may this signifie?
I' am neithir Enocke ne Helye,
Ne Romulus ne Ganimede,
That werin bore up, as men rede,
To hevin with Dan Jupiter,
And made the goddis botiler;
Lo! this was tho my fantasie.
But he that bare me gan asprie
That I so thought, and sayid this;
Thou demist of thy selfe amis,

For Jove ne is not thereaboutre,
 I dare the put ful out of doute,
 To makin of the yet a sterre;
 But er I berin the moche ferre
 I wil the tellin what I am,
 And where thou shalte, and why I came
 To doin this, so that thou take
 Gode herte, and not fore fere yquake.
 Gladly, (quod I.) Now wel, (quod he.)
 First I, that in my fete have the,
 Of whom thou hast grete fere and wonder,
 And dwellinge with the god of Thonder,
 Whiche men ycallin Jupiter,
 That doth me flyin ful ofte fer
 To do all his commaundement,
 And for this cause he hath me sent
 To the; herkin now by thy trouthe;
 Certaine he hath of the grete routhe,
 For that thou hast so truilly
 So long servid ententilly
 His blindē nephewe Cupido
 And the faire quene Venus also
 Withoutin guerden evir yet,
 And nathēles hast set thy wit,
 Althoughe in thy hed ful litē is,
 To make bokes, songis, and ditis,
 In rime or ellis in cadence,
 As thou best canst, in reverence
 Of Love and of his servautes eke,
 That have his service fought and seke,
 And painist the to praise his arte,
 Althoughe thou haddist nevir parte;
 Wherefore, so wisly God me blesse,
 Jovis yhalte it grete humbleesse
 And vertue eke that thou wilt make
 Anight ful oft thine hed to ake
 In thy studye; so thou ywritest,
 And evirmore of love enditest,
 In honour of him and praifinges,
 And in his folkis fourthiringes,
 And in ther matir al devisest,
 And not him ne his folke dispisest,
 Althoughe thou maiste go in the daunce
 Of them that him lyst not avaunce;
 Wherefore, as I nowe saide, ywis
 Jupiter considrih wel this,
 And als, beaūfire, of othir thinges,
 That is, that thou haste no tidinges
 Of Lov's folke if they be glade;
 Ne of nothings els that God made,
 And not onely fro ferre countre
 That no tidinges comin to the,
 Not of thy very neighbouris,
 That dwellen almost at thy doris,
 Thou herist neither that ne this,
 For whan thy labour al done is,
 And haste made al thy reckiniges,
 In stede of reste and of newe thinges
 Thou goest home to thine house anone,
 And al so dombe as any stone
 Thou sittist at another boke
 Tyll fully dafid is thy lōke,
 And lyvist thus as an hermite,
 Although thine abstinepce is lyte;

And therefore Jovis throughe his grace
 Wil that I bere the to a place
 Whiche that yhight The House of Fame,
 And for to doe the sport and game,
 In some recompensacion
 Of thy labour and devocion
 That thou haste hadde, lo! causeles,
 To god Cupido the recheles,
 And thus this god throughe his merite
 Wil with some manir thing the quite,
 So that thou wilt be of gode chere;
 For trustith wel that thou shalte here,
 Whan we ben comen there as I say,
 Mo wondir thingis dare I lay,
 And of Love's folke mo tidingis,
 Bothe sothfawis and lesingis,
 And of mo lovis newe begon,
 And longe servid tyl love is won,
 And of mo lovirs casuelly
 That ben betide, no man wote why,
 But as a blinde man starteth an hare,
 And more jolite and welfare,
 Whilis they findin love of stele,
 As thinkin men, and o'r al wele
 Mo discordes and mo jalousies,
 Mo murmures and mo novilries,
 And also mo dissimulacions,
 And eke seinid reperacons,
 And mo berdis in two houres,
 Withoutin rasour or lisours
 Ymade, than grainis be of sandes,
 And eke mo holdinge in mo handes,
 And also mo renovelaunces,
 Of olde forletin aqueintaunces,
 Mo love dayis and mo accordes,
 Than on instrumentis ben cordes,
 And eke of love mo exchaungis
 Than evir corne were in graungis;
 Unnethis maist thou trowin this,
 (Quod he.) No so', helpe me God as wis,
 (Quod I.) No, why? (quod he.) For it
 Were impossible to my wit,
 Although that Fame had al the pyes
 In al a relme and al aspies,
 Howe that yet he shulde here al this
 Or they espyin. O! yes, yes,
 (Quod he to me) that can I preve
 By reson worthy for to leve,
 So that thou give thin advertence
 To understandin my sentence.
 First shalt thou here where she dwelleth,
 Right so as thine owne boke tellith:
 Her palais standeth, as I shal say,
 Right even amiddis of the way
 Bytwene hevin, and yerthe, and se,
 That what so er in al these thre
 Is spoken in prive or apperte,
 The way therto is so overte,
 And stante eke in so juste a place,
 That every sowne mote to it pace,
 Or what so cometh from anie tongue,
 Whethre it be rownid, redde, or songe,
 Or spokin in fuerte or drede,
 Certaine it motin thidir nede.

Nowe herkin wel; for why! I wil
Ytellin the a propir skil,
And worthy demonstracion
In mine imaginacion.

Geffray, thou wottist full wel this,
That every kindly thinge that is
Yhath a kyndely stede, there he
May best in it conserved be,
Unto whiche place every thinge,
Thorough his kyndely enclininge
Ymovith for to comin to
Whan that it is away therfro;
As thus, lo! thou maiste al day se,
Take any thinge that hevy be,
As stone or led, or thinge of weight,
And bere it ner so hie on height,
Let go thine hande it fallith downe;
Right so say I by fire or fowne,
Or smoke, or othir thingis light,
Alway they seke upwarde on height,
Light thinges up and hevie down charge
While everiche of 'hem be at large;
And for this cause thou maist wel se
That every rivir to the se
Enclinid is to go by kynde,
And by these skillis as I finde
Have fishes dwellinge in fode and se,
And treis eke on the erthe be:
Thus every thinge by his reson
Hath his owne propir mancion,
To whiche he sekith to repaire
There as it shuldin nat appaire.

Lo! this sentence is knowin couthe
Of every philosophir's mouthe,
As Aristotle and Dan Platone,
And othir clerkis many one;
And to confirm my resoun
Thou wottist wel that speche is fowne,
Or ellis no man might it here;
Nowe herkin what I wol the lere.

Sowne is not but eyre ybrokin,
And every speche that is spokin,
Where loude or prive, foule or faire,
In his substance he is but eyre;
For as flame is but lightid smoke,
Right so is fowne but eyre ybroke:
But this may be in many wise,
Of the whiche I will the devise,
As fowne comish of pype or harpe,
For whan a pype is blowin sharpe
The eyre is twist with violence
And rent; lo! this is my sentence:
Eke whan that men harpestringis smyte,
Whedir that it be moche or lyte,
Lo! with the stroke the eyre it breketh,
And right so breketh it whan men speketh;
Thus wost thou wel what thing is speche:
Nowe hennisforthe I wil the teche
Howe everiche speche, voice, or fowne,
Throughe his multiplicaciowne,
Thoughe it were pipid of a moute,
Mote nedis come to Fam's House:
I prove it thus; takith hede nowe
By experience, for if that thou

Threwe in a watir nowe a stone,
Wel wost thou it wil make anone
A lityl roundil as a circle,
Para'venture as brode as a covirle,
And right anone thou shalte se wele
That circle cause anothir whele,
And that the thirde, and so-forthe, brother,
Every circle causinge other
Moch brodir than himselfin was,
And thus from roundil to compas
Eche aboutin othir goinge
Ycausith of othirs steringe
And multiplying evirme,
Tyl that it be so far ygo
That it at bothè brinkis be,
Although thou mayist it not se
Above, yet gothe it alwaye under,
Although thou thinke it a grete wonder,
And whofo saithe of trouthe I vary,
Bydde him provin the contrary:
And right thus every worde ywis,
That loude or pryve' yspokin is,
Ymovith firste an eyre aboute,
And of his movinge out of doute
Anothir eyre anone is moved,
As I have of the watir proved,
That every circle causith other;
Right so of eyre, my levè brother,
Everiche eyre anothir sterith
More and more, and speche up berith,
Or voise or noyse, or worde or fowne,
Aye through multiplicaciowne,
Tyl it be at The House of Fame,
Take it in ernest or in game.
Nowe have I tolde, if thou have mind,
Howe speche or fowne of pure kinde
Enclinid is upward to meve,
This mayist thou sefe wel by preve,
And that same kindly stede ywis,
That every thinge enclined to is,
Yhath also his kyndelyche stede,
That shewith it withoutin drede,
That kindly the mancoun
Of everyche speche, of every soun,
All be it either foule or faire,
Yhath his kindly place in eyre;
And sith that every thinge ywis
Out of his kindly place ywis
Ay movith thidir for to go,
Yf that it awaye be therfro,
As I have before provid the,
It shewith every sonne perde
Ymovith kindly to pace
As up into his kindly place;
And this place of whiche I the tel,
There as Fame doth yliste to dwell,
Is sette amiddis of these thre,
Hevin, and erthe, and eke the se,
As moste conservatise of soun;
Than is this the conclusion
That every speche of every manne,
As I the tellin firste beganne,
Ymovith up on height to pace
Kindely unto Fam's place.

Tellith me this nowe faithfully,
 Have I not provid thus simply,
 Withoutin any subtilte
 Of speche, or grète prolixyte
 Of termis of philosophie,
 Of figuris of poetrie,
 Or colouris of rhetorike?
 Perde it oughtin the to like,
 For harde langage and harde matere
 Is incombrous for the to here
 At onis, wofte thou not wel this?
 And I answerid and said, Yes.

Ah ha! (quod he) lo! so I can
 Leudlye unto a leudè man
 Yspeke, and shewin him soche skilles
 That he maye shake 'hem by the bylles,
 So palpable they shuldin be;
 But tel me this nowe praye I the,
 Howe thinketh the my conclusioun?

Parde a gode persuasioun
 (Quod I) it is, and lyke to be,
 Right so as thou haste provid me.
 By God (quod he) and as I leve
 Thou shalte have it or it be eve,
 Of every worde of this sentence
 A profe by thine experience,
 And with thine eris herin wel
 The toppe and taile, and every del,
 That every worde that spokin is
 Comith into Fame's Houfe ywis
 As I have saide; what wilt thou more?
 And with this worde uppir to fore
 He began, and saide, By sainte Jame
 Nowe wyll we spekin al of game.

Howe farest thou now? quod he to me.
 Right wel, (quod I.) Now se (quod he)
 By thy trouthe yondir adowne,
 Where that thou knowist any towne
 Or house, or any othir thinge,
 And whan thou haste of ought knowynge
 Tho lokith that thou warnè me,
 And I anone shal tellin the
 How farre that thou arte nowe therfro.

And I adoune gan lokin tho,
 And behelde the feldis and plainis,
 Nowe hyllis and nowe mountainis,
 Nowe valeys and nowe forestis,
 And nowe unnethis grete bestis,
 Nowe riveris nowe citeis,
 Nowe townis and nowe grete treis,
 Nowe shippis sailinge in the se;
 But thus sone in a while he
 Was flowin fro the grounde so hye
 That al the worlde, as to myne eye,
 No more ysemid than a pricke,
 Or ellis was the eyre so thicke
 That I ne might it not discerne;
 With that he spake to me so yerne,
 And said, Seist thou any token,
 Or ought that in this worlde's of spoken?

I answered Naye. No wondir is,
 (Quod he) for halfe so hye as this
 N'as Alexandre', of Macedon
 Kynge, ne of Rome Dan Scipion,

That sawe in dreame at pointe devise
 Heven and erthe, hel and paradise,
 Ne eke the bold wretche Dædalus,
 Ne yet his childe, nice Icarus,
 That flewe so hiè that the hete
 Hys wingis molte, and he fel wete
 In mydde the se, and there he dreinte,
 For whom was made a grete complainte.

Nowe tourne upwarde (quod he) thy face,
 And beholde here this large place,
 This eyre, but loke that thou ne be
 Adrad of hem that thou shalt se,
 For in this regioun certaine
 Dwellith many a citizeine,
 Of whiche yspekith Dan Plato,
 These ben the cyrishe bestis, lo!
 And tho sawe I al the menyne
 That bothe ygone and also flye.

Lo there! (quod he) cast up thine eye,
 Se yondir, lo! the Galaxie,
 The whiche men clepe The Milky Way,
 For it is white, and some parfay
 Ycallin it han Watlynge strete,
 That onis was brente with the hete,
 Whan that the sunn'is sonne the rede,
 Which that hite Phaëton, wolde lede
 Algate his fathir's carte and gie.

The carte horsis gan wel asprie
 That he ne coude no govirnaunce,
 And gonin for to lepe and prauce,
 And bere him now up and nowe downe
 Tyl that he sawe the Scorpiowne,
 Whiche that in heven a signe is yit,
 And he for fere ylost his wit
 Of that, and let the reinis gone
 Of his horsis, and they anone
 Sone up to mounte and downe discende,
 Tyl bothe the eyre and erthe ybrende,
 Tyl Jupiter, lo! at the laste
 Hym flewe, and fro the carte ycaste.

*Lo! is it not a grete mischaunce
 To let a fole have govirnaunce
 Of thinges that he can not demaine?*

And with this worde, sothe for to faine,
 He gan alway uppir to fore,
 And gladid me than more and more,
 So faithfully to me spake he.

Tho gan I to loke undir me,
 And behelde the eyrishe bestis
 Cloudis, mystis, and tempistis,
 Snowis, hailis, rainis, and windes,
 And the engendringe in ther kindes,
 Al the way thoroughe whiche I came;
 O God! (quod I) that made Adame,
 Moche is thy myght and noblenes!

And tho thought I upon Boece,
 That writeth a thought may flye so hie
 With fethirs of philosophie
 To passin everyche element;
 And when he hath so farre ywent
 Than may ben sene behinde his backe
 Cloude, erthe, and al that I of spake,

Tho gan I wexin in a were,
 And said, I wote wel I am here,

But whether in body or in gost
I n'ot ywis, but God thou wost,
For a more clere entendement
N'as to me nevir yet ysent.
And than thought I on Marcian,
And eke of Anticlaudian,
That sothe was ther discripcion
Of al the hevin's region,
As farre as that I sawe the preve,
And therefore I can 'hem beleve.
With that the egle gan to crie,
Let be (quod he) thy fantasie :
Wylte thou lernin of sterris ought ?

Nay, certainly, (quod I) right nought.
And why ? (quod he.) For I am olde.
Or ellis wolde I the have tolde
(Quod he) the starris namis, lo !
And al the hevin's signis to,
And whiche they be. No force (quod I.)

Yes perde, (quod he;) wost thou why ?
For whan thou redist poëtry,
Howe the goddis can stellify
A birde, a fyshe, or him or her,
As of birdes the ravyn and other,
Or Ariones harpè fyne,
Or Castor Pollux, or Delphine,
Or Atlante's doughtirs seven,
How al these are yset in heven,
For though thou have 'hem ofte in hande
Yet n'ost thou nat where that they stande.

No force, (quod I;) it is no nede :
As wel I leye, so God me spede,
'Hem that writin of this matere
As though I knewe ther placis here,
And eke they semin here so bright
That it shulde shendin al my sight
To loke on 'hem. That may wel be,
(Quod he;) and so forth bare he me
A while, and tho began to crie,
That nevir herde I thinge so hie ;
Holde up thine hed, for al is wel
Sainte Julian, lo ! bonne hostel !
Se here The House of Fame, lo !
Mayist thou not here that I do ?

Here what ? (quod I.) The gretè fowne
(Quod he) that romblith up and downe
In Fam'is House, ful of tidinges
Bothe of faire speche and of chidinges,
And of false and sothe compownid ;
Herkin wel, it is not rownid.

Herist thou not the gretè swough ?
Yes, perde, (quod I) well ynough.
And what fowne is it lyke ? (quod he.)

Peter ! lyke the' beting of the se
(Quod I) against the rochis halowe,
Whan tempestes done ther shippis swalow,

And that a man stande out of doute
A myle off thens and here it route ;
Or ellis lyke to the humblinge
Aftir the clappe of a thundringe,
Whan Jovis hath the eyre ybete,
But it doth me for fere to swete.

Nay, drede the not therof, (quod he)
It 'is nothing that will bytin the ;
Thou shalte have no harme truily.

And with that worde both he and I
As nighe the place arrivid were
As men might castin with a spere :
I ne wist howe, but in a strete
He set me faire upon my fete,
And sayid, Walkith forth a pace,
And tel thine advinture and case
That thou shalte finde in Fam'is place.

Nowe (quod I) while that we have space
To speke, or that I go fro the,
For the love of God tellith me
In sothe that I will of the lere,
If this ilke noise which that I here
Be as I have herde the me tell,
Of folke that done in erthe ydwell,
And comith here in the same wise
As I the herde or this devise,
And that here liv'is body n'is
In all that House that yondir is
That makith al this loudè fare.

No, (answerid he) by Sainte Clare,
And al so wissely God rede me :
But o thinge I will warnè the,
Of the whiche thou wilt have wondir.

Lo ! to The House of Fame yondir.
Thou woste howe comith every speche,
It nedith not the este to teche ;
But understande now right wel this,
Whan any speche ycomin is
Up to the palais, anone right
It wexith like the samè wight
Whiche that the worde in erth yspake,
Be he clothid in red or blake,
And hath so very his likenesse
That spake the worde, that thou wilt gessè
That it the samè body be,
Wher man or woman, he or she.

And is not this a wondir thinge ?
Yes, (quod I) tho by hevin kinge :
And with this worde Farewel, (quod he)
And here wil I abydin the,
And God of hevin sende the grace
Some gode to lernin in this place !
And I of him toke leve anone,
And gan forth to the palays gone.

THE THIRD BOKE.

Thou, god of Science and of Light,
 Apollo! thorough thy grete might
 This litil last boke now thou gye,
 Nowe that I will for maistèrie
 Here arte potencial be shewde,
 But for the rime is lyght and lewde
 Yet make it somewhat agreable,
 Though some verse faile in a syllable,
 And that I do no diligence
 To shewin craftè but sentence;
 And if that divine virtue thou
 Wylte helpin me to shewin nowe
 That in my hed ymarkid is,
 Lo! that is for to menin this,
 The House of Fame for to discrive,
 Thou shalt yse me go as blive
 Unto the next laurir I se,
 And kyffe it for it is thy tre:
 Nowe entre in my brest anone.

Whan I was from the egle gone,
 I gan beholde upon this place,
 And certaine or I furthir passe
 I wol you al the shape devise
 Of House and cite, and al the wise
 Howe I gan to this place approche,
 That stode upon so hie a roche,
 Hyir ystandith none in Spaine;
 But up I clambe with mochil paine,
 And though to clime ygrevid me
 Yet I ententise was to se,
 And for to parin wondre lowe,
 If I coude any wise yknowe
 What manir stonè this roche ywas,
 For it was lyke a limid glas,
 But that it stonè ful more clere,
 But of what congelid matere
 It was I ne wiste redily;
 But at the laste espyid I,
 And founde that it was everydele
 A roche of yse and not of stele:

Thought I, by Saint Thomas of Kent
 This were a feble foundement
 To buildin on a place so hie;
 He ought hym lite to glorifie
 That heron builte, God so me save.

Tho sawe I all the hall igrave
 With famous folkis namis fele
 That haddin ben in mechil wele,
 And ther famis full wide iblowe,
 But well unnethis might I knowe
 Any lettiris for to rede
 Ther namis by, for out of drede
 Thei werin almoſte of thawed so
 That of the lettiris one or two
 Were molte awaie of every name,
 So unfamous was wexe ther fame;
 But men saie, *What maie ewir last?*

Tho gan I in myne hertè cast
 That thei were molte awaie for hete,
 And not awaie with stormis betè,
 For on that othir side I sey
 Of this hill, that northward yley,
 How it was writin full of names
 Of folke that had afore grete fames
 Of oldè tyme, and yet thei were
 As freshe as men had written 'hem there
 The self daie, or that verry houre,
 That I on 'hem began to poure;
 But well I wiste what it made,
 It was conservid with the shade,
 All the writyng which that I sie,
 Of a castill that stode on hie,
 And stode eke in so cold a place
 That hete ne might it not deface.

Tho gan I on this hill to gone,
 And found upon the coppe a wone,
 That all the men that ben on live
 Ne han the connyng to discrive
 The beaute of that ilke place,
 Ne coudin castin no compasse

Soche an othir for to ymake
 That might of beautie be his make,
 Ne one so wondirly iwrought,
 That it astonieth yet my thought,
 And makith all my witte to swinke,
 Upon this castill for to thinke,
 So that the wondir grete beautie,
 Caste, craft, and curiositie,
 Ne can I not to you devise,
 My witte ne maie me not suffise,
 But nathelasse all the substaunce
 I have yet in my remembraunce;
 For why? me thoughtin, by Sainct Gile,
 That all was stone of berile
 Bothè the castill and the toure,
 And eke the hall and every boure;
 Withoutin pecis or joynnynges,
 But many subtill compassynges,
 As barbicans and pinnacles,
 Imageries and tabernacles,
 I sawe, and full eke of windowes,
 As flakis fallin in grete snowes,
 And eke in eche of the pinacles
 Ywerin sondrie habitacles,
 In whiche stodin all withoutin
 Full the castill all aboutin
 Of all manir of minstrelis
 And jestours, that tellin talis
 Bothe of wepyng and eke of game,
 And all that longith unto Fame:
 There herde I playing on an harpe,
 That yfounid bothe well and sharpe,
 Hym Orpheus full craftily,
 And on this othir side fast by
 Yfatte the harpir Orion,
 And Gacides Chirion,
 And othir harpirs many one,
 And the Briton Glaskirion,
 And finalè harpirs with ther gleees
 Satte undir 'hem in divers sees,
 And gone on 'hem upwarde to gape,
 And counterfaiet 'hem as an ape,
 Or as Crafte counterfeitith Kinde.

'Tho sawe I standin 'hem behinde,
 Afarre from 'hem, al by 'hem selve,
 Many a thousande tymis twelve,
 That madin loudè minstrelis
 In cornmuse and eke in shalmies,
 And in many an othir pipe,
 That craftily began to pipe
 Bothe in doucid and eke in rede,
 That ben at festis with the brede,
 And many' a floite and litlyng horne,
 And pipis made of grenè corne,
 As have these little herdègromes
 That kepin bestis in the bromes.

There sawe I then Dan Citherus,
 And of Athenes Dan Proserus,
 And Mercia, that losse her skinne
 Bothe in the face, bodie, and chinne,
 For that she would envyin, lo!
 To pipin bette than Apollo.

There sawe I famous old and yong
 Pipiris of all the Duche tong,

To lernin love dauncis springis,
 Reyis, and the straunge thingis.

'Tho sawe I in an othir place,
 Ystandyng in a largè space,
 Of 'hem that makin blodie soun
 In trumpe, beme, and clarioun,
 For in fight and in blodeshednynges
 Is usid glad clarionynges.

There herde I trumpin Messenus,
 Of whom that spekith Virgilius.

There herd I Joab trumpe also,
 Theodomas, and othir mo,
 And all that usid clarion
 In Casteloigne and Aragon,
 That in ther tymis famous were,
 To lernin sawe I trumpin there.

There sawe I sit in othir sees,
 Playing on othir sondrie gleees,
 Whiche that I can not now nevin,
 Mo then sterris ben in hevin,
 Of whiche I n'ill as now not rime
 For ese of you and losse of time,
 For *Tyme ilost*, this knowin ye,
By no waie maie recovered be.

There sawe I playing jogèlours,
 Megiciens and tragètours,
 And Phetonissis, charmeressis,
 And olde witchis and forcereffis,
 That usen exorsifacions
 And eke subfumigacions,
 And clerkis eke which connin well
 All this magike hight Naturell,
 That craftily doe ther ententes
 To maken in certain ascendentis
 Imagis, lo! through whiche magike
 To maken a man ben whole or fike.

There sawe I the Quene Medea,
 And Circe and Caliophia.

There sawe I Hermes Ballenus,
 Limote, and eke Symon Magus.

There sawe I, and yknewe by name,
 That by soche arte doen men have fame.

There sawe I eke Coll Tragètour
 Upon a table of sicamour
 Playin an uncouth thyng to tell;
 I sawe hym cary a windemell
 Undir a walnote shale.

What should I makin lengir tale?
 Of all the peple that I sey
 I could not tell till dom'isdey.

When I had all this folke beholde,
 And founde me loce and not yholde,
 And I amusid a longe while
 Upon this wall all of berile,
 That shone lightir than any glas,
 And made well more then it ywas,
 As it kindly thing of Fame is,
 And then right anone astir this
 I gan forthe romin till I fonde
 The castill yate on my right honde,
 Whiche all so well ycorvin was
 That nevir soche an othir n'as,
 And yet it was by avinture
 Iwrought by grete and subtill cure;

It nedith not you more to tellen,
To makin you to long to dwellen,
Of these ilke yatis flourishynges,
Ne of compacis ne karvynges,
Ne the hackyng in masonries,
As corbettis and imageries.

But Lorde, so faire it was to shewe!
For it was all with golde behewe;
But in I went, and that anone:
There met I crying many one,
A larges, larges! holde up well;
God save the ladie of this pell,
Our ownè gentill Ladie Fame,
And 'hem that willen to have a name
Of us! Thus heard I cryin all,
And fast comin out of the hall
And shoke noblis and starlyngis,
And corounid were as kyngis
With crownis wrought full of losynges,
And many ribans many fringes
Were on ther clothis truily.

Tho at the last espyd I
That pursevauntes and heraudis,
That cryin riche folkis laudis,
It werin all; and every man
Of 'hem, as I you tellin can,
Had on him throwin a vesture
Whiche men yelepe a cote armure,
Embrondirid wondirly riche,
As though thei werin not iliche:
But nought will I, so mote I thrive,
Be now aboutin to discrive
All these armis that there yweren
That thei thus on ther cotis weren,
For to me were impossible,
Men might make of 'hem a Bible
Full twentie fote thicke as I trowe,
For certain who so coud it knowe
Ymight there all the armis sene
Of famous folke that er had bene
In Affrike, Europe, and Asie,
Sithins first began chivalrie.

Lo! how should I now tell all this!
Ne of the hall eke what nede is
To tellin you? that every wall
Of it, and rose, and flore withall,
Was platid halfe a fote thicke
Of golde, and that ne was not wicke,
But for to provin in all wise
As fine as ducket in Venise,
Of whiche to lite all in my pouche is;
And thei were set as thicke of ouchis
Fine, of the finist stonis faire
That men reden in the lapidaire,
Or as grassis growen in a mede;
But it were all to long to rede
The namis, and therefore I pace.
But in this lustie and riche place,
That Fam'is Hall yeallid was,
Full mochil pres of folke there n'as,
Ne crouding, for to mochil pres;
But all on hie above a des
Satte in a se imperiall
That made was of rubie roiall

I

Whiche that a carbuncle is called,
I sawe perpetually istalled
A femine cature,
That nevir formid by Nature
Was soche an othir thyng I saie;
For althirfirste, the sothe to saie;
Me thoughtin that she was so lite
That the smale length of a cubite
Was lengir than she semid be,
But thus sone in a while she
Her self tho' wondirly ystreight
That with her fete she th' erthe yreight,
And with her hedde she touchid heven,
There as shinith the sterris seven;
And thereto yet, as to my wit,
I sawin a grete wondir yit,
Upon her eyin to beholde,
But certainly' I 'hem nevir tolde,
For as fele eyin haddin she
As sethins upon foulis be,
Or werin on the bestis foure
That Godd'is trone can to honoure,
As writeth shon in the' Apocalyps,
Her here, that was owndie and crips,
As burnid golde it shone to se.

And, sothe to tellin also, she
Had also fele upstandyng eres,
And tongis as on best ben heres,
And on her fete woxin sawe I
Partrich'is wingis redily.

But Lorde! the perrie' and the richeffe
I sawe sitting on the goddesse,
And the hevinly melodie
Of songis full of armonie
I herde about her trone isong,
That all the palais wall yrong!
So songe the mightie Muse, she
That clepid is Caliope,
And her sevin sultirin eke,
That in ther facis semid meke,
And evirmore eternally
Thei songin of Fame; tho heard I,
Yheried be thou and thy name,
Goddesse of Renoun and of Fame!

Tho was I aware at the last,
As I myne eyin gan upcast,
That this ilke grete and noble quene
Upon her shuldirs gan sustene
Bothè the armis and the name
Of tho that haddin large fame,
Alifander and Hercules,
That with a sherte his life did lese;
And thus founde I sitting this goddesse
In noble honour and richeffe,
Of which I stinte a while now,
Of othir thing to tellin you.

Tho sawe I stande on th' other side,
Streight doune unto the doris wide,
From the dees many a pillere
Of metall that shone not full clere,
But though thei were of no richeffe
Yet were thei made for grete nobleffe,
And in 'hem was there grete sentence,
And folke of hie and digne reverence,

Of which to tellin will I fonde.

Upon a pillir sawe I stonde,
Alderfirst there yfie,
Upon a pillir stonde on hie,
That was of lede and iron fine,
Hym of the secte Saturnine,
The Ebraike Josephus the old,
That of the Jewis gestis told,
And he bare on his shuldurs hie
All the fame up of the Jurie;
And by hym stod in othir seven,
Full wise and worthie for to neven,
To helpe hym berin up the charge,
It was so hevie and so large;
And for thei writtin of battailes
As well as of othir marvailles,
Therefore ywas, lo! this pillere,
Of the whiche I you tellin here,
Of lede and iron bothe iwis,
For iron Mart'is metall is,
Whiche that the god is of Battaile,
And eke the lede withoutin faile
Is, lo! the metall of Saturne,
That hath ful largè whele to turne,
To standin forthe on eithir rowe
Of 'hem whiche that I could yknowe,
Though I by ordir 'hem not tell,
To makin you to long to dwell.

These, of the whiche I gan to rede,
These sawe I standin out of drede
Upon an iron pillir strong,
That painted was all endeloug
With tigr'is blode in every place,
The Tholason, with that height Stace,
That bare of Thebis up the name
Upon his sholdurs, and the fame
Also of cruill Achilles;
And by hym stode withoutin lese
Full wondir hie on a piller
Of iron he the grete Omer,
And with him Dares and Titus
Beside, and eke he Lollius,
And Guide eke de Columpnis,
And English Gafride eke iwis;
And eche of these, as I have joye,
Was busie for to bere up Troye,
So hevie thereof was the fame,
That for to bere it was no game;
But yet I gan full well espie
Betwene 'hem was a little' envie;
One saied that Omer made lies
And feinyng in his poëtries,
And was to the Grekes favourable,
And therefore helde he it but fable.

Tho sawe I stande on a pillere
That was of tinnid iron clere,
Him the Latine poete Virgile,
That hath bore up a longè while
The fame of pius Æneas.

And next him on a pillir was
Of coppir Venus clerke Ovide,
That hoth yfowin wondirs wide
The grete god of Lov'is fame,
And there he bare up well his name

Upon this piller al so hie,
As might se it with myne eye;
For why? this hall whereof I rede
Was woxe on height, and length, and brede
Well more by a thousande dele
Than it was erst, that sawe I wele.

Tho sawe I on a pillir by
Of iron, wrought full sternily,
The grete poete, him Dan Lucan,
That on his shouldurs bare up than,
As hie as that I might it se,
The fame of Julius and Pompe,
And by hym stod in all these clerkes
That write of Rom'is mightie werkes,
That if I would ther namis tell
Tho all to long ymust I dwell.

And nexte hym on a pillir stode
Of sulphure, liche as he were wode,
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell,
That bare up all the fame of hell,
Of Pluto and of Proserpine,
That quene is of the derke pine.
What should I more tellin of this?
The hall ywas all full iwis
Of 'hem that writtin oldè jestes
As ben on treis rokis nestes,
But it a full confuse mattere
Were all these jestis for to here
That thei of write, and how thei height;
But while that I beheld this sight
I herde a noise approchin blive,
That fareth as bees doen in an hive
Ayens ther tyme of out flying,
Right soche a manir murmuring
For all the worlde it semid me.

Tho gan I loke about, and se
That there come entryng into the' hall
A right grete companie withall,
And that of sondrie regions,
Of all kind of condicions
That dwell in yerthe undir the mone,
Bothe pore and riche: and also sone
As thei were come into the hall
Thei gan on kneis doune to fall
Before this ilkè noble quene,
And sayid, Graunt us, ladie shene!
Eche of us of thy grace a bone.
And some of 'hem she grauntid sone,
And some she warnid well and faire,
And some she grauntid the contrarie
Of ther askyng all uttirlic;
But this I saie you truilie,
What that her grace was I ne wist,
For of these folke full well I wist
Thei haddin gode fame eche deserved,
Although thei were diversly served,
Right as her sistir Dame Fortune
Is wont to servin in commune.

Now herkin how she gan to paie
'Hem that gan her of grace to praie,
And yet, lo! all this companie
Ysaide sothe, and not a lie.

Madame, (thus sayid thei) we be
Folke whiche that here besechin the

That thou grauntin as now gode Fame,
And let our workis have gode name;
In full recompensacion
Of gode worke give us gode renoun.

I warne it you (quod she anone)
Ye gettin of me gode Fame none
By God, and therefore go your waie.

Alas, (quod thei) and welawaie!
Tellith us what your cause maie be.

For that me liste it not, (quod she,)
No wight shall speke of you iwis
Ne gode ne harme ne that ne this.

And with that worde she gan to call
Her messengir that was in hall,
And bad that he should fast ygone,
Upon pain to be blinde anone,
For Æolus, the god of Winde,
In Thrace there ye shall hym yfinde,
And bid hym bryng his clarioun
That is full divers of his soun,
And it is clepid Clerè Laude.
With which he wont is to heraude
'Hem that that me list ipraisid be;
And also bid hym now that he
Bryng eke his othir clarioun,
That hight Sclaundir in every toun,
With whiche he wont is to diffame
'Hem that me list and doe 'hem shame.

This messengir gan fast to gone,
And founde where in a cave of stone,
In a countre which that hight Thrace,
This Æolus with hardè grace
Yhelde the windis in distresse,
And gan 'hem undir hym to presse,
That thei gone as the beris rore,
He bounde and pressid 'hem so sore.

This messengir gan fast to erie,
Rise up (quod he) and fast the hie
Untill thou at my ladie be,
And take thy clarions eke with the,
And spede the fast: and he anone
Toke to him one that hight Tritone,
His clarions to berin tho,
And let a certain winde ygo,
That blewe so hidously and hie
That it ne lestè not a skie
In all the welkin long and brode.

This Æolus no where abode
Till he was come to Fam'is fete,
And eke the man that Triton hete,
And there he stode as still as stone:
And here withall there came anone
An othir hugè companie
Of gode folke, and began to crie
Ladie! grauntith us now gode Fame,
And let our workis have that name,
Now in honour of gentilnesse,
And al so God your soule ybleffe,
For we han well deservid it,
Therefore is right that we be quit.

As thrive I (quod she) ye shall faile,
Gode workis shall you not availe
To have of me gode Fame as now;
But wote ye what? I grauntin yowe

That ye shall havin a shrewde name,
And wickid loos worfè Fame,
Though ye gode loos have well deserved;
Now goeth your waie, for ye ben served.
And thou Dan Æolus, (quod she)
Take forthe thy trompe anone, let se,
That is iclepid Sclaundir light,
And blowe ther loos, that every wight
Speke of 'hem harme and shreudinesse
In stede of gode and worthinesse,
For thou shalt trumpe all the contraire
Of that thei have doen well and faire.

Alas! thought I, what avintures
Yhavin these forie cretures,
That thei emongis al the pres
Should thus be shamid giltiles!
But what? it must nedis ybe.
What did this Æolus? but he
Toke out his blackè trompe of bras,
That foulir then the devill was.
And gan this trompè for to blowe
As all the worlde should ovirthrowe:
Throughout evèry regioun
Ywent this foulè trump'is soun
As swift as pellit out of gonne
When fire is in the poudir ronne,
And soche a smokè gan out wende
Out of the foulè trump'is ende,
Blacke, blue, and grenishe, swartishe, redde
As doith where that man melte lede,
Lo! all on hie from the tewell;
And therto one thyng sawe I well,
That ay the ferthir that it ranne
The gretir wexin it beganne,
As doeth the rivir from a well,
And it stanke as the pitte of hell:
Alas! thus was ther shame irong,
And giltlesse, on evèry tong,
Tho came the thirdè companie,
And gone up to the dees to hie,
And doune on knees thei fell anone,
And saidin, We ben everichone
Folke that yhan full truilie
Deservid Famè rightfullie,
And prayin you it might be knowe
Right as it is, and forthe yblowe.

I graunte (quod she), for now me list
That your gode workis shall be wist,
And yet ye shall have bettir loos,
Right in dispite of all your foos,
Then worthie is, and that anone:
Let now (quod she) thy trompè gone,
Thou Æolus, that is so blacke,
And out thyne othir trompè take
That hightin Laude, and blowe it so
That through the worlde ther Fame may go
All esily and not to fast,
That it be knowin at the last.

Ful gladly, ladie myne! he saied;
And out his trompe of golde he braied
Anone, and set it to his mouthe,
And blewe it est, and west, and southe,
And northe, as loude as any thonder,
That every wight hath of it wonder,

So brode it ran or that it stent;
And certis all the breth that went
Out of his tramp's mouthe ysmelde
As men a potte full of baume helde
Emong a baskit full of roses;
This favour did he to ther lofes.

And right with this I gan espie
There came the fowirth companie,
But certaine thei were wondir fewe,
And gonne to standin on a rewe,
And saidin, Certis, ladie bright!
We have doen well with all our might,
But we ne kepe to havin Fame;
Hidith our workis and our name
For Godd's love, for certis we
Have surely doen it for bounte,
And for no manir othir thyng.

I grauntin you all your askyng,
(Quod she;) let your workis be dedde.

With that about I tourned my hedde,
And sawe anone the fivith rout,
That to this ladie gan to lout,
And doune on knees anone to fall,
And to her tho besoughtin all
To hidin ther gode workis eke,
And sayid, thei yeve not a leke
For no Fame, ne no soche renoun;
For thei for contemplacioun
And Godd's love had it ywrought,
Ne of Fame wouldin thei have nought.

What! (quod she) and be ye so wode?
And wenin ye for to doe gode,
And for to have of that no Fame?
Have ye dispite to have my name?
Naie, ye shall lyin everichone.
Blowith thy trumpe, and that anone;
(Quod she) thou Æolus, I hote,
And ring these folkis workes by note,
That all the worlde maie of it here:
And he gan blowe ther loos so clere
Within his goldin clarioun,
That through the worlde ywent the soun
Al so kindly and eke so soft
That ther Fams was yblowe aloft.

And tho came the sixt companie,
And gonin fast to Fame to crie
Right verily in this manere;
Thei saidin, Mercie, ladie dere!
To tellin certain as it is
We have doen neithir that ne this,
But idill all our life hath be;
But nathelasse yet prayin we
That we maie have as gode a Fame,
And grete renome and knowin name,
As thei that have doe noble jesses,
And have achevid all ther questes,
As wel of love as othir thyng,
All was us nevir broche ne ryng,
Ne ellis what fro women sent,
Ne onis in ther herte iment,
To maken us onely frendly chere,
But mought ytemin us on bere,
Yet let us to the peple seme
Soche as the worlde maie of us deme

That women lovin us for wode,
It shall do us as mochil gode,
And to our herte as moche availe
The countirpeise, ese, and travaile,
As we had wonnin with labour,
For that is dere ybought honour,
At the regard of our grete ese;
And yet ye must us more yplese,
Let us beholdin eke thereto
Worthie, and wise, and gode also,
And riche, and happie unto love,
For Godd's love that sitteth above;
Though we may not the bodie have
Of women, yet, so God me save,
Let men yglewe on us the name;
Suffisith that we have the Fame.

I graunt it (quod she), by my trouth.
Now, Æolus, withoutin slouth
Take out thy trumpe of golde, (quod she)
And blowe as thei have askid me,
That every man wene 'hem at ese
Although thei go in full badde lesse.
This Æolus gan it so blowe
That through the worlde it was iknowe.

Tho came the seventh route anone,
And fill on knees everichone,
And sayid, Ladie, graunte us sone
The same thyng, the same bone,
Which that this nexte folke you have done.

Fie on you (quod she) everichone!
Ye nastie swine, ye idle wretches,
Fullfillid of rottin slowe tetches!
What! false thevis, where ye wolde
Ben famid gode, and nothyng n'olde
Deservin why, ne nevir thought,
Men rathir you to hangin ought,
For ye be like the slepie cat,
That would have fishe, but wost thou what?
He woll nothyng wete his clawis:
Evill thrifte come to your jawis,
And on myne, if I you it graunte,
Or doe favour you to avaunte.

Thou Æolus, thou Kyng of Thrace,
Go blowe this folke a sorie grace
(Quod she) anone; and wost thou how?
As I shall tellin the right now;
Say these ben they that wolde honour
Have, and do no kinde of labour,
Ne do no gode, and yet have laude,
And that men wende that belle I faude
Ne coude 'hem not of love werne,
And yet she that ygrint at querne
Is all to gode to ese ther herte.
This Æolus anone up sterte,
And with his blacke clarioun
He gan to blasin out a soun
As loud as bellith winde in hel,
And eke therewith, the sothe to tel,
This sowne was so full of japes
As evir mowis were in apes,
And that went al the worlde aboute,
That every wight gan on 'hem shoute
And for to laugh as they were wode,
Soche game yfounde they in ther hode.

Tho came anothir companye
That had ydone the trechery,
The harme and the grete wickednesse,
That any herte coudin ygesse,
And prayid her to have gode Fame,
And that she n'olde do 'hem no shame,
But give 'hem loos and gode renoun,
And do it blowe in clarioun.

Nay, wis, (quod she) it were a vyce;
Al be there in me no justice
Me lyst not for to do it nowe,
Ne this I ne will graunt it you.

Tho came there lepinge in a route,
And gan to clappin al aboute
Every man upon the crowne,
That al the hal began to fowne,
And sayid, Lady lese and dere!
We ben soche folkes, as ye may here,
To tellin all the tale aright,
We ben shrewis every wight,
And have delite in wickidnesse,
As gode folke havin in godenesse,
And joye to ben yknowin shrewes,
And ful of vice and wickid thewes,
Wherefore we praye you on a rowe
That our Fame be soche yknowe
In al thingis right as it is.

I graunte it you, (quod she) ywis;
But what arte thou that saiest this tale,
That werist on thy hose a pale,
And on thy tippet soche a bel?

Madame, (quod he) the sothe to tel,
I am that ilke shrewe ywis
That brent the temple' of Ifidis
In Athenis, lo! that cyte.
And wherefore diddest thou so? (quod she.)
By my trouthe, (answerid he) Madame,
I woldè faine have had a name,
As othir folke had in the towne;
Although they were of grete renowne
For ther vertue and ther thewis,
Thought I, as grete Fame have shrewis
(Though it be nought) for shrewdnesse
As gode folke havin for godenesse,
And sithen I may not have that one
That othir n'yl I not forgone,
As for to gettin a Fame here,
The temple set I al on fire.

Nowe done our loos be blowin swithe,
As wisly be thou evir blythe.

Gladly (quod she.), Thou Æolus,
Herist thou not what they prayen us?
Madame, I here ful wel, (quod he)
And I will trumpin it parde;
And toke his blacke trumpe faste,
And gan to puffin and to blaste
Tyl it was at the world's ende.

With that I gan aboutin wende,
For one that stode right at my bake
Me thought ful godely to me spake,
And sayid, Frende, what is thy name?
Arte thou come hidir to have Fame?

Have Fame! nay, for sothe, frende, (quod I)
I come nat hithir, grant mercy!

For no soche cause, by my hed,
Suffisith me as I were ded
That no wight have my name in honde;
I wot my selfe best howe I stonde,
For what I drie or what I thinke
I wol my selfin al it drinke,
Certainly for the more parte,
As ferforth as I can mine arte.

What doist thou here than? (quod he.)

(Quod I) That wol I tellin the:
The cause why I standin here
Is some new tidinges for to lere,
Some newè thing, I ne wot what,
Tydingis eythir this or that,
Of love, or of soche thingis glade,
For certainly he that me made
To comin hidir said to me
I shuldin bothe yhere and se
In this place many wondir thinges,
But these ne be no soche tidinges
As I yment of. No? (quod he.)
And I answerid, No, parde,
For ful wel I wote evir yet,
Sithinis that firste I had wit,
That some folke han desirid Fame
Diversly, and loos and gode name,
But certainly I ne wist how
Ne where that Fame dwellid or nowe,
Ne eke of her discipcion,
No also her condicion,
Ne eke the ordir of her dome
Knewe I not till I hithir come.

Why than be, lo! these tidinges
Which that thou nowe hethir bringis,
That thou hast herde? (quod he to me:)
But nowe no force, for wel I se
What thou desirist for to lere:
Come forthe, and stande no lengir here,
And I wol the, withoutin drede,
In to soche anothir place lede
There thou shalte herin many one.

Tho gan I forthe with him to gone
Out of the castil, sothe to sey.

Tho sawe I stande in a valey,
Undir the castil faste by,
An house that *Domus Dædali*,
That *Labyrinthus*, ycleped is,
N'as made so wondirly ywis,
Ne halfe so quently was ywrought;
And evirmo as swifte as thought
This queint House aboutin ywent,
That nevirmo it still ystent,
And there came out so gret a noise,
That had it stondin upon Oyse
Men might have herde it esily
To Rome, I trowin sikirly;
And the noise whiche that I yherde
For al the worlde right so it ferde
As dothe the routing of the stone
That fro th' engin is letyn gone.

And al this House of whiche I rede
Was made of twyggis falowe, rede,
And grene eke, and some werin white,
Soche as men to the cagis twhite,

Or makin of these paniers,
 Or ellis hutchis or doffers,
 That for the swough and for the twigges
 This House was also full of gigges,
 And al so ful eke of chirkinges,
 And of many othir wirkinges,
 And eke this House hath of entrees
 As many' as levis ben on trees
 In sommir whan that they ben grene,
 And on the rose yet men may sene
 A thousande bolis, and well mo,
 To lettin the fowne out ygo;
 And by day in every tyde
 Ben al the doris opin wide,
 And by night eche one is unshette;
 Ne portir is there none to lette
 No manir tydings in to pace,
 Ne nevir rest is in that place,
 That it n'is filled full of tidinges,
 Eythir loude or of whisperinges,
 And evir all the Housis angles
 Is full of rowninges and of jangles,
 Of werres, of pece, of mariages,
 Of restes, of labour, of viages,
 Of abode, of dethe, and of lyfe,
 Of love, of hate, accorde, of strife,
 Of losse, of lore, and of winninges,
 Of hele, of sickenesse, or lesinges,
 Of faire wethir and tempestis,
 Of qualme, of folke and of bestis,
 Of divers transmutacions
 Of estates and of regions,
 Of trust, of drede, of jealousy,
 Of witte, of winning, of foly,
 Of plenty and of grete famine,
 Of chepe, of derthe, and of ruine,
 Of gode or of misgovernement,
 Of fyre, and divers accident.

And lo! this House of whiche I write
 Sykir be ye it n'as no lite,
 For it was syxtie mile of length;
 Al was the tymbir of no strength,
 Yet it is foundid to endure
 While that it lyfte to Avinture,
 That is the mothir of Tidinges,
 As the fe of wellis and springes,
 And it was shapin lyke a cage.

Certis, (quod I) in al mine age
 Ne sawe I soche an House as this.
 And as I wondrid me ywis
 Upon this House, tho ware was I
 How that myne egle faste by
 Was perchid hye upon a stone,
 And I gan streight to him to gone,
 And sayid him thus, I pray the
 That thou a while abidin me
 For Godd'is love, and let me sene
 What wondirs in that place ybene,
 For yet parauntir I may lere
 Some gode therin, or somewhat here,
 That lese me were or that I went.

Peter, that is nowe myne entent,
 (Quod he to me) therefore I dwel;
 But certaine one thinge I the tel,

That but I bringin the therin
 Ne shal thou nevir conne the gin
 To come in to it out of doute,
 So faste it whirlith, lo! aboute;
 But sithe that Jov'is of his grace,
 As I have said, wil the solace
 Finally with these ilke thinges,
 These uncouth fightis and tidinges,
 To passe away thine hevinesse,
 Soche routh hath he of thy distresse
 That thou suffrest debonairly,
 And woste thy selvin uttirly
 Wholy desperate of al blisse,
 Sithe that Fortune hath made amisse
 The sote of al thine hert'is rest
 Languishe, and eke in pointe to brest,
 But he through his mightie melite
 Wil do the ese, al be it lite,
 And gave in expresse commaundement,
 To whiche I am obedient,
 To forthir the with al my myght,
 And wishe and techin the aright
 Where thou maiste moste tidings here,
 Thou shalte here many one ylere.
 And with this worde he right anone
 Yhent me up bytwene his tone,
 And at a windowe in me brought
 That in this House was, as me thought,
 And therewithal me thought it stent,
 And nothings it aboutin wente,
 And me set in the flore adoun;
 But soche grete congregacioun
 Of folke as I sawe rome about,
 Some it within and some without,
 N'as nevir sene, ne shal be este,
 That certis in this worlde n'is leste
 So many formid by Nature,
 Ne ded so many a cature,
 That wel unnethis in that place
 Had I a for'is brede of space;
 And every wight that I sawe there
 Rownid everiche in othir's ere
 A newe tidinge privily,
 Or els he tolde it opinly,
 Right thus, and said, Ne wost nat thou
 That is betiddin, lo! right nowe?

No, certis, (quod he;) tel me what;
 And than he tolde him this and that,
 And swore therto that it was sothe,
 Thus hath he said, and thus he dothe,
 And this shal be, and thus herde I say,
 That shal be founde, and dare I lay;
 That al the folke that is on lyve
 Ne have the konninge to discrive
 Tho thingis that I herdin there,
 What aloude and what in the ere;
 But al the wondir moste was this,
 Whan one had herde a thinge ywis
 He came streight to anothir wight,
 And gan him tellin anone right
 The same tale that to him was tolde
 Or it a forlonge way was olde,
 And began somewhat for to eche
 Unto this tidinge in his speche

More than evir it spokin was,
 And nat so sone departid n'as
 Tho fro him that he ne ymette
 With the thirde man, and er he lette
 Any stounde he ytolde him alse;
 Werin the tidinges sothe or false
 Yet wolde he tel it nathèles,
 And evirmore with mo ences
 That it was crft: thus northe and southe
 Went every tidinge fro mouth to mouthe,
 And that encrefinge evirmo,
 As fire is wont to quicken and go,
 From a sparcle sprongin amis,
 Tyl al a cite brent up is.

And whan that that was ful up spronge,
 And waxin more on every tonge
 Than er it was, and went anone
 Up to a windowe out to gone,
 Or but it might out there ypassè
 It gan out crepe at some crevasse,
 And flewe forthe faste for the honès.

And somtyme I sawe there at ones
 A lesinge and a sadde sothesawe,
 That gonnin of avinture drawe
 Out at a windowe for to pace,
 And whan thei mettin in that place
 They were acheckid bothè two,
 And neithir of 'hem myght out go,
 For eche othir they gonne so croude,
 Tyl eche of 'hem gan cryin loude
 Let me gone first; Nay, but let me,
 And here I wol ensurin the
 With vowis that thou wolt do so,
 That I shal nevir fro the go,
 But be alway thin owne sworne brother;
 We wol meddle us eche in other,
 That no man be he ner so wrothe
 Shal have one of us two, but bothe
 At onis, as beside his leve,
 Come we amorowe or on eve,
 Be we ycryde or styl yrowned:
 Thus sawe I false and sothe compowned
 Togidir flye for o tidinge;
 Thus out at holis gonne to wringe
 Evèry tidinge streight to Fame,
 And she gan yevin eche his name
 Aftir her disposicion,
 And yeve 'hem eke duracion,
 Some to wexin and wanin sone,
 As dothe the faire and whitè mone,
 And let him gonne; there might I sein
 Wingid wondirs full fast flyin

Twenty thousande all in a route,
 As Æolus 'hem blewe aboute:
 And, Lorde! this House in allè times
 Was ful of shypmen and pilgrimes,
 With scrippis bretteful of lesinges,
 Entermedilid with tidinges;
 And eke alonè by 'hem selve
 A many thousande tymis twelve
 Sawe I eke of these pardoners,
 Currours, and eke of messaugers,
 With boxis crommid ful of lyes
 As evir vessil was with lies:
 And as I althirfastist went
 Aboute, and dyd al myne entent
 Me for to playen and for to lere,
 And eke a tiding for to here,
 That I had herde of some countre,
 That shal not now be tolde for me,
 For it no nede is, redyly
 Folke can yfinge it bet than I,
 For al mote out or late or rathe
 Allè the shevis in the fathe.

I herdin a grete noise withall
 Within a cornir of the hal,
 There men of love tydingis tolde,
 And I gan thidirwarde beholde,
 For I sawe renninge every wight
 As faste as that they haddin night,
 And everyche cride, What thinge is that?
 And some said, I n'ot nevir what:
 And whan they were al on an hepe
 Tho thei behinde gonnin up lepe,
 And clambin up on othir faste,
 And up the noise on hyghin caste,
 And tredin fast on othir's heles,
 And stampe, as men done aftir eles:
 But at the laste I sawe a man
 Whiche that I nought discrive ne can,
 But he yfemid for to be
 A man of grete auctorite.

And therewithal I anon abraide
 Out of my slepe halfe afraide,
 Remembring wel what I had sene,
 And howe hye and ferre I had bene,
 In my gost, and had grete wonder
 Of that the mighty god of Thonder
 Had let me knowen, and gan to write
 Lyke as ye have herde me endite,
 Wherfore to study' and rede alway
 I purpose to do day by day.

And thus in dreminge and in gamg
 Endith this litil Boke of Fame.

CERTAIN BALADES, &c.

Here foloweth a godely Balade of Chaucer.

MOTHER of norture, best beloved of all,
And freshe floure, to whom gode thy self God sende,
Your childe, if it luste you me so to call,
All be' I' unable my self so to pretende,
To your discrecion I recomende
Mine herte and all, with every circumstaunce,
All wholly to be' undir your govirnaunce.

Moste desire I, and have, and evir shall,
Thing which that might your hert'is ese amende;
Have me excused, my powir is but small;
Nathelesse of right ye ought for to commende
My gode will, whichè fainè would entende
To doe you service, for my suffisaunce
Is wholly to be' undir your govirnaunce.

Meulx'un in herte, whiche nevir shall apall,
Aie freshe and new, and right glad to dispende
My time in your service, what so befall,
Besechyng your excellence to defende
My simplenesse, if ignoraunce offende
In any wise, sith that myne affiaunce
Is whollie to be' undir your govirnaunce.

Daisie of light, very ground of comfort!
The Sunn'is doughtir ye hight, as I rede,
For when he westrith farwell your disport;
By your nature anone right for pure drede
Of the rude Night, that with his boistous wede
Of derkenesse shadewith our hemisphere,
Then closin ye, my liv'is ladie dere!

Daunyng the daie unto his kinde resort,
And Phœbus your fathir with his streames rede
Adorneth the morowe, consuming the fort
Of mistie cloudes, that wouldin ovirlede
True humble hertis with ther mistie hede,
Nere comfort adaies, when your eyin clere
Disclose and sprede, my liv'is ladie dere!

Je voudray; but the grete God disposeth
And makith casuell by his providence
Soche thing as mann'is frele wit purposeth,
All for the best, if that your conscience
Not grutche it, but in humble pacience
It receive, for God faith withoutin a fable
A faithfull herte evir is acceptable.

Cautelis whofo usith gladlie gloseth;
To eschewe soche it is right high prudence;
What ye saied onis mine herte opposeth,
That my writyng japis in your absence
Plesid you moche bettir than my presence,
Yet can I more, ye be not excusable;
A faithfull herte evir is acceptable.

Quakith my penne, my spirite supposeth
That in my writing ye find woll offence;
Min hert welknith thus sone, anon it riseth,
Now hotte, now colde, and est in grete fervence;
That misse is causid of negligence,
And not of malice, therefore beth merciabie;
A faithfull herte evir is acceptable.

L'envoye.

Forthe complaint, forthe thou lacking eloquence,
Forthe litil lettir, of enditing lame,
I have besought my ladie's sapience
Of thy behalfe for to accept in game
Thine inabilite, doe thou the same:
Abide, have more yet; *Je serve Joveisse*:
Now forth, I close the' in holy Venus name,
The shall unclothe my hert'is govirnesse.

A ballade in commendacion of our Ladie.

A THOUSANDE stories coud I mo reherce
Of olde poetis touching this matere,
How that Cupide the hertis gan so perce
Of his servauntis, settyng 'hem in fere.
Lo here the fine of th' errour and the fere,
Lo here of love the guerdone and grevaunce,
That er what wo her servauntes do avaunce!

Wherfore now plainly I woll my stile dresse
Of one to speke at nede that woll not faile;
Alas! for dole I ne can ne maie' expresse
Her passyng prife, and that is no mervaille.
O winde of grace! now blowe unto my saile,
O auriate licour of Clio! to write
My penne enspire of that I woll endite.

Alas! unworthie I am and unable
To love soche one, all women surmountyng,
But she be benigne to me and merciabie,
That is of pitie the welle and the spryng;
Wherfore of her in laude and in praisyng,
So as I can, supportid by her grace,
Right thus I saie, knelyng before her face:

O sterre of steris, with thy stremis clere,
Sterre of the se, to shipmen light and gide!
O lustie livyng, moste plesaunt to appere,
Whose bright bemis the cloudis maie not hide!
O waie of life to 'hem that go or ride,
Haven astir tempest, surist up to rive,
On me have mercie for thy joyis five!

O rightfull rule! o bote of holinesse!
And lightsome line of pitie for to plain,
Originall of grace and all godenesse,
And clenest conduct of vertue moste soverain!
Mothir of mercie, our trouble to restrain,
Chambir and cloist clenest of chastitie,
And namid herbrough of the deitie!

O cloist, gardin, voide of wedis wicke,
Cristallin welle, of clerenesse clere consigned,
Fruetified olive of foiles faire and thicke,
And redo'lent cedre most dere worthy digned!
Remember on finnis that to the be' affined
Or wickid fendis ther wrathe on 'hem wreche;
Lanterne of light! thou art ther livis leche.

Paradise of plesaunce, gladsome to all gode,
O benigne braunchilet of the pine tre,
Vinarie' envermailed, refreshir of bode,
Licour ayen langour that palled maie not be,
Blisful blomie blosme, bidyng in bounte!
Thy mantell of mercie on our miserie sprede,
And er we' awaie wrappe us undir thy wede.

O rodie rosier, flouing without spine,
Fountain filthlesse, as birill currant clere!
Sum drop of gracefull dewe to us propine;
Light without nebule shynyng in thy sphere,
Medicine to mischeves, pucell without pere!
Flambe down the full light of thin influence,
Remembring thy servantes for thy magnificence.

Of all Christin protectrice and tutele,
Retourne of exiled put in the proscricion,
To 'hem that erren in the' pathe of ther sequele,
To werie forwandrid tent and pavilion,
To faint and to freshe the paufacion,
To unrestie bothe rest and remedie,
Fruetfull to all tho that in her assie:

To 'hem that rennin thou art itinerarie,
O blisfull bracie to knightes of thy werre!
To werie werkmen she 'is diourne denarie,
Me .e unto mariners that have failed ferre,
Laureate coroune stremyng as a sterre,
To 'hem putin palastre for thy sake
Tours of ther conquest white as any lake.

O mirthe of martyrs! swetir than sitole,
Of confessours also riche donatife,
Unto virgines eternall lauriol,
Fore all woman havyng prerogatif,
Mothir and maide, bothe widowe and eke wife!
Of all the worlde is none but thou alone,
Now sith thou maie be succour to my mone,

Trustie turtle, truefastist of all true,
Curteise columbe, replete of all mekenesse,
O nightingale with thy notis newe!
O popinjaie! purid with all clenness,
O laveroke of love! singyng with swetnesse,
Phœbus waityng till on thy brest he light,
Undir thy wing at domisdaie us dight.

O rubie! rubified in the passion
Of thy sonne, us have emengis in minde,
O stedfast diametre of duracioun!
That fewe seris any time might thou finde.
For none to hym was foundin halfe so kinde;
O hardie herte! o lovyng creature!

What was 'it but love that made the so endure?
Semely saphre, depe loupe, and blewe ewage!
Stable as the loupe ewage of pitie,
This is to saie, the freshist of visage,
Thou lovest unchaungid 'hem that servin the,
And if offence or varyng in 'hem be
Thou art aie redie on ther wo to rue,
And 'hem recevist aye with herte full true.

O godelie gladdid! when that Gabriel
With joy the grette, that maie not be nombrid,
Or halfe the blisse who coud ywrite or tell
When the' Holy Ghoste to the was obumbrid,
Wherthrough fendes were bittirly encombrid?
O wemlesse maide! embelished in his birthe,
That man and angill therof haddin mirthe.

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glorie,
Of whiche the prophet so long spake beforne!
Lo here the fame that was in memorie
Of Esaie, so long or she was yborne!
Lo here of David the delicious corne!
Lo here the grounde of life in to bilde,
Becomyng man our ransome for to yilde!

O glorious voile, vite inviolate!
O firie Titan! persyng with thy bemes,
Whose vertuous brightnes was in brest vibrat,
That al the world embelished with the lemes,
Conservatrice of kinges, dukes, and relmes,
Of Jesse his sede the swete Sunamite,
Mesure my mourning mine own Margarite!

O soverainist ysought out of Syon!
Cockle with golde-dewe from above berainid,
Dewe-bushe unbrent, firelesse fire set on,
Flambyng with fervence, not with hete painid,
Duryng daisie that no wethir stainid,
Flece undefouled of gentilist Gidion,
And fructfyng fairist yerde of Aaron!

The mightie arche, the probatife piscine,
Laughyng Aurora, and of pece olive,
Columpne and base, up beryng from abime,
Why n'ere I connyng here for to discrive?
Chosin of Joseph, whom he toke to wive,
Unknowyng hym childyng by miracle,
And of our manly figure the tabernacle!

I have none Englishe convenient and digne,
Myne herte's hele lady! the with to honour,
Ivorie clene! therefore I woll resign
Into thyne hande till that thou list succour,
To helpe my makyng both florisse and flour,
Then should I shewe in love how that I brende,
In songis makyng thy name to commende:

For if I coud before thyne excellence
 Syngin in love I wouldin what I fele,
 And evir standin, ladie', I in thy presence,
 To shewe in opin how I love you wele,
 And sith although your heart be made of stele
 To you withoutin any discev'eraunce
J'ay en vous toute ma fiance.

Where might I love evir bettir beset
 Then in this lillie likyng to beholde,
 That lace of love, the bonde so well thou knit,
 That I maie se the or myne hertè colde,
 And or I passe out of my dayis olde,
 Tofore syngyng evirmore uttirly,
 Your eyin two woll fle me sodainly.

For love I langour, bliffed be soch sicknesse!
 Sith it 'is for you, my heretely suffisaunce,
 I can not ellis saie in my distresse,
 So faire one hath myne hert in govirnaunce,
 And astir I begin on esparaunce,
 With seble entune, though it thine hert percee,
 Yet for thy fake this letter I reherse.

God wote on musike I can 'not, but I gesse;
 Alas why so! that I might saie or syng,
 So love I you, my own soveraine maistresse,
 And evir shall withoutin departyng,
 Mirroure of beautie, for you' out should I ring,
 In remembraunce eke of your eyin clere,
 Thus ferre from you my soverain ladie dere!

So wouldin God your love would me yslo,
 Sith for your sake I singin daie by daie;
 O hertè! why ne nilt thou breke a two,
 Sith with my ladie dwellin I ne maie?
 Thus many' a roundell, many a virèlaie,
 In freshe Englishe, when I me leisir finde,
 I doe recorde, on you to havin mynde.
 Now, ladie mine! sith I you love and drede,
 And you' unchaunged ever finde in o degre,
 Whose grace ne maie flie fro your womanhede,
 Disdainith not for to remembre' on me,
 Myne herte bledith for I maie not you se;
 And sith ye wotte my menyng desirous
Pleures pour moy s'il vous plaist amoureux.

What marvaile is though I in pain ybe?
 I' am departid from you my soverain;
 Fortune alas! dont vient la desenie,
 That in no wise I can ne maie attain
 To se the beautie of your eyin twain,
 Wherefore I saie, for tristesse doeth me grame,
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame.

Why n'ere my wiffing brought to soche esplot
 That I might saie for joye of your presence
Or amon cœur ce qui vouloit
Or amon cœur? the highest excellence
 That er had wight, and sith mine advertence
 Is in you rewith on my painis smerte,
 I am so soro ywoundid to the herte.

To' live well merie two lovers were ifere,
 So maie I saie withoutin any blame,
 And if that any man to wilde were
 I could hym techin for to be full tame,
 Let hym go love and se where it be game,
 For I am bridlid unto sobirnesse
 For her that is of women chief princeesse.

But evir when thought my hert shuld embrace,
 Then unto me it is best remedie

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When I loke on your godely freshe face,
 So merie a mirroure coud I ner espie,
 And if I coud I would it magnifie,
 For nevir none ywas so faire yfounde,
 To reken 'hem all, and also Rosamonde.

And finally, with mouthe and will present,
 Of double eye withoutin repentaunce,
 Mine hert I yeve you, ladie', in this entent,
 That ye shall thereof have the govirnaunce,
 Taking my leve with hert's obeisaunce,
 (*Salve Regina*) syngyng last of all
 To be our helpe when that we to the call.

All our love is nought els but idlenesse,
 Save your love alone, who might therto' attain;
 Who so woll have a name of gentillesse
 I counsaile hym in love that he not fain;
 Thou swete ladie! refute in every pain,
 Whose mercie moste unto me availith,
 To gie by grace when that Fortune failith.

Nought maie be told, withoutin any fable,
 Your high renome, you womanly beaute,
 Your govirnaunce, to all worship able,
 Putteth every herte in ese in his degre;
 O violet! o flowir desire!
 Sithin I am for you so amerous
Esreignes moy de cœur joyeux.

With fervent hert my brest hath brost on fire,
L'ardant espoer en mon cœur point est mort,
D'avoir l'amour de celle que je desire,
 I menè you swete moste plesaunt of porte,
Et je scay bien que ce n'est pas mon tort,
 That for you syng so as I maie for mone,
 For your departyng alone I live alone.

Though that I might I would none othir chese,
 In your service I would ben foundin sadde,
 Therefore I love no labour that ye lese,
 When that in longyng forist ye be stadde;
 Loke up you lovis and be right gladde,
 Now ayenist Sainct Valentin's daie,
 For I have chese that ner forsake I maie.

Balade de bon conseil.

Is it befall that God the list visite
 With any tourment of adversite
 Thanke firste the Lorde, and tho thy selfe to quite
 Upon sufferaunce and humilite
 Founde thou thy quatril, what er that it be,
 Make thy defence, and thou shalt have no losse,
 The remembraunce of Christ and of his crosse.

SOMTYME the world so stedfast was and stable,
 That mannes' word was an obligacioun,
 And now it is so false and discevable;
 That worde and dede, as in conclusioun,
 Is nothyng like, for tourned is up so doun
 All the worlde, thorough mede and fikilnesse,
 That all is losse for lacke of stedfastnesse.

What maketh the worlde to be so variable
 But lust that men have in discension?
 For among us a man is holde unable
 But if he can by some collusion

Doe his neighbour wrong an oppression :
What causith this but wilful wretchidnesse ?
That all is losse for lacke of stedfastnesse.

Trouthe is put doune, resoun is holde fable,
Vertue hath now no dominacion,
Pitie 'is exiled, no man is merciable,
Through covetise is blente discrecion ;
The worlde hath made a permutacion
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikilnesse,
That ail is losse for lack of stedfastnesse.

L'envoye.

Prince, aye desire to be honourable,
Cherishe thy folke, and hate extorcion ;
Suffre nothing that maie be reprovabie
To thine estate doen in thy region ;
Shewe forthe the yerde of castigacion ;
Drede God, do law, love treuth and worthines,
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

Balade of the village without paintyng.

Plaintife to Fortune.

THIS wretched world 'is transmutacion,
As wele and wo, nowe pore and now honour,
Without ordir or due discrecion,
Govirnid is by fortun 'is errour,
But nathèlesse the lacke of her favour
Ne maie not doe me syng though that I die,
J'ay tout perdu mon temps et mon labeur,
For finally fortune I doe desie.

Yet is me left the sight of my resoun
To knowin frende fro foe in thy mirrour,
So moche hath yet thy touning up and down
Itaughtin me to knowin in an hour,
But truilly no force of thy reddour
To hym that ovir hymself hath maistrise ;
My suffisaunce yshal be my succour,
For finally fortune I do desie.

O Socrates! thou stedfast champion,
She ne might nevir be thy turmentour,
Thou nevir dreddist her oppression,
Ne in her chere foundin thou no favour ;
Thou knewe wele the disceipt of her colour,
And that her moste worship is for to lie ;
I knowe her eke a false dissimulour,
For finally fortune I do desie.

The answer of Fortune.

No man is wretchid but hymself it wene ;
He that yhath hymself hath suffisaunce,
Why saiest thou then I am to the so kene
That hast thy self out of my govirnaunce ?
Saie thus, graunt mercie of thin habundaunce,
That thou hast lent or this, thou shalt not strive ;
What wost thou yet how I the woll avaunce ?
And eke thou hast thy bestè frende alive.

I have the taught division betwene
Frende of effeete and frende of countinaunce,
The nedith not the gallè of an hine,
That curith eyin derke for ther penaunce,
Now seest thou clere that wer in ignoraunce ;
Yet holt thine anker, and thou maiest arive
There Bountie bereth the key of my substaunce,
And eke thou haste thy bestè frende alive.

How many have I refused to sustene
Sith I have the sostrid in thy plesaunce !
Wolt thou then make a statute on thy quene,
That I shall be aie at thine ordinaunce ?
Thou born art in my reign of variaunce ;
About the whele with othir must thou drive ;
My lore is bet, then wicke is thy grevaunce,
And eke thou hast thy bestè frende alive.

The answer to Fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, it is adversitie ;
My frend maist thou not revin, blind goddesse :
That I thy frendis knowe I thanke it the ;
Take 'hem again, let 'hem go lie a presse ;
The nigardis in kepyng ther richesse
Pronostike is thou wolt ther toure assaile ;
Wicke appetite cometh aie before sicknesse ;
In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

Fortune.

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitie,
For I the lent a droppe of my richesse,
And now me likith to withdrawin me
Why shouldist thou my roialte oppresse ?
The se maie ebbe and flowin more and lesse,
The welkin hath might to shine, rain, and haile,
Right so must I kithin my brotilnesse ;
In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

The Plaintiffe.

Lo! the' execucion of thy majestie
That all purveighith of his rightwisenesse,
That samè thyng Fortune yclepin ye,
Ye blindè bestis, full of leudeness !
The hevin hath propirtie of sikirness,
This worldè hath evir restlesse travaile,
The last daie is the ende of myne entresse ;
In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

Tb' envoye of Fortune.

Princes, I praie you of your gentilnesse,
Let not this man and me thus crie and plain,
And I shall quitin you this businesse ;
And if ye liste releve hym of his pain
Praie ye his best frende of his noblenesse
That to some bettir state he maie attain.

L'envoye.

To brokin ben the statutes hie in heven
That create were eternally t' endure,
Sith that I se the brightè goddis seven
Mowe wepe and waile and passion endure,
As maie in yerth a mortall creatüre ;
Alas! fro whenis maie this thing procede,
Of which errour I die almoeste for drede ?

By words eterne whilom was it yshape
That fro the fift circle in no manere
Ne might of teris nothing doune escape,
But now so wepith Venus in her sphere
That with her teris she woll dreuch us here :
Alas, Scogan! this is for thine offence ;
Thou causith this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not saied in blasphemie of the goddis,
Through pride or thorough thy gret rekilnes,
Soche thinges as in the law of love forbode is,
That for thy ladie sawe not thy distresse
Therefore thou yave her up at Mighelnesse ?

Alas, Scogan! of oldè folke ne yong
Was nevir erst Scogan blamed for his tong.

Thou drewe in scorn Cupide eke to recorde
Of thilkè rebell worde that thou hast spoken,
For whiche he woll no lengir be thy lorde;
And, Scogan, though his bowe be not ybroken
He woll not with his arowes be iwroken
On thee ne me, ne none of our figure;
We shall of hym have neither hurte ne cure.

Now certis, frende, I drede of thine unhappe,
Lest for thy gilte the wreche of love procede
On all 'hem that ben hore and round of shap,
That be so likely folkè for to spede,
Then we shall of our labour have our mede;
But well I wot thou wolt answere and saie,
Lo! oldè Grisill list to renne and plaie.

Naie, Scogan, saie not so, for I me' excuse,
God helpe me so, in no rime doutiles,
Ne thinke I nevir of slepe wake my muse,
That rustith in my sheth still and in pese;
While I was yong I put her forthe in prese,
But al shall passin that men prose or rime,
That every man his tourne as for his tyme.

Scogan, thou knelist at the strem'is hedde
Of grace, of honour, and of worthinesse,
In the ende of whiche I am dull as dedde,
Forgotten in solitarie wildirnesse;
Yet, Scogan, thinke on Tullius kindenesse,
Mynd thy frendè there it maie fructifie;
Farwell, and loke thou ner est love desie.

Go forthe, kyng, and rule the by sapience;
Bishoppe, be able to minister doctrine;
Lorde, to true counsaile yeve thou audience;
Womanhode, to chastitie er encline;
Knight, let thy dedis worship determine;
Be righteous, judge, in savyng of thy name;
Rich, do almose, lest thou lese blisse with shame;

Peple, obei your kyng and eke the lawe;
Age, be rulid by gode religion;
True servaunt, be dredfull, kepe the' under awe;
And thou, povir, fie on presumcion;
Inobedience to youth is uttir destruccion:
Remembir you how God hath set you, lo!
And doe your parte as ye be ordained to.

Chaucer to his emptis purse.

To you my purse, and to none othir wight,
Complain I, for ye be my ladie dere;
I am forie now that ye be so light,
For certis ye now make me hevie chere;
Me were as lese be laide upon a bere,
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crie,
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die.

Now vouchsafin this day or it be night
That I of you the blisful sowne may here,
Or se your colour lyke the sonnè bright,
That of yelownesse ne had nevir pere;
Ye be my life, ye be my hert'is stere;
Quene of comfort and of gode companye,
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die.

Nowe purse, that art to me my liv'is light,
And sayvour, as downe in this worlde here,
Oute of this townè helpe me by your might,
Sithin that you wol not be my trefoure,
For I am shave as nighe as any frere,
But I prayin unto your curtisye
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die.

Chaucer unto the Kinge.

O Conquèrour of Brut'is Albion!
Whiche that by lyne and fre eleccion
Ben very kinge, this unto you I sende,
And ye whiche that may al harmis amende
Have minde upon my supplication.

*A balade made by Chaucer, teching what is gentilnes, or
who is worthy to be caled gentil.*

THE firstè stocke, father of gentilnes,
What man desirith gentill for to be,
Must solowe' his trace, and all his wittis dres
Vertue to love and vicis for to fle,
For unto vertue longith dignite,
And not the revers, fasly dare I deme,
Al were he mitir, crowne, or diademe.

This firstè stocke was full of rightwisnes,
Trewe of his worde, sobir, pitous, and fre,
Clene of his goste, and lovid besinesse,
Against the vice of slouth in honeste,
And but his eyre love vertue as did he
He is not gentyl though he riche seme,
Al were he mitir, crowne or diademe.

Vicè may wel be eyre to olde Richesse,
But ther may no man, as men may well se,
Byquethe his eire his vertuous noblesse,
That is appropriated unto no degre
But to the first fathir in majeste,
That makith his eyre him that can him queme,
Al were he mitir, crowne, or diademe.

A proverbe agaynst covetise and negligence.

WHAT shal thes clothes thus manifolde
Lo, this hote somirs daye!
Aftir grete hetè comith colde;
No man caste his pilche awaye.

Of al this world the large compasse
Wil not in myne armes tweine,
Who so mōkil wol enbrace
Lite therof shall distreine.

*A balade whiche Chaucer made agaynst women
unconstaunt.*

MADAME, ye have for your newfanglenesse
Many a servaunt put out of your grace;
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,
For well I wote while ye to live have space
Ye can not love full halfe yere in a place;

O o ij

To newe thinges your luste is evere kene;
In stede of blew thus may ye were al grene.

Ryght as a mirour that nothing may enpresse
But lightli as it cometh so mote it passe,
So fareth your love, your workis bereth witnes;
Ther is no faithè may youre herte embrace,
But as a wedircock, that turneth his face
With every winde, ye fare, and that is sene;
In sted of blew thus may ye were al grene.

Ye might be shrined for your brotilnesse
Better than Dalila, Cresseide, or Candace,
For evir in chaunging stondeth your sikirnesse,
That tache may no wight from your heart arace;
If ye lose one ye can wel tweine purchase,
Al light for somar, ye' wot wel what I mene;
In stede of blew thus may ye were al grene.

*Here foloweth a balade whiche Chaucer made in the praise
or rather dispreise of women for ther doublenes.*

THIS world is full of variaunce
In everye thinge, who takith hede,
That faithè and truste, and all constaunce,
Exilid ben, this is no drede,
And save only in womanhed
I can yse no sikirnes;
But for all that yet, as I rede,
Beware alwaye of doublenes.

Al so that the freshe somir floures,
The white and rede, the blewe and grene,
Ben sodenly with wintir shours
Made seinte and fade, withoutin wene,
That trust is none, as ye may sene,
In no thing, nor no stedfastnes,
Except in women, thus I mene;
Yet aye beware of doublenes.

The crokid mone, this is no tale,
Some while ishene and bright of hewe,
And astir that ful derke and pale,
And every monith chaungith newe,
That who the veray sothè knew
Al thinge is bilt on brotlenes,
Save that women alwaye be trewe;
Yet aye beware of doublenes.

The lusty freshe sommirs daye,
And Phœbus with his bemis clere,
Towardis night they drawe awaye,
And non lengir list to appere,
That in this presente life now here
Nothinge abieth in his fairenes,
Save women aye be found intere,
And devoid of allè doublenes.

The se eke with his sternè wawes
Eche daye yflowith new againe,
And by the concours of his lawes
The ebbe yflowith in certeine;
Astir grete drought there cometh a raine;
That farewell here al stablness,
Save that women be whole and pleine;
Yet aye beware of doubleness.

Fortune's whele goith round aboute
A thousand timis daye and nightre,
Whose cours standith evir in doute

For to transmew, she is so lighte,
For whiche advertith in your sight
Th' untrust of worldely sikilnes,
Save women, whiche of kindly right
Ne hath no teche of doublenes.

What man ymay the wind restraine,
Or holdin a snake by the taile?
Who may a slipper ele constreine
That it will voide withoutin faile?
Or who can drivin so a naile
To make suere newfongilnes,
Save women, that can gie ther faile
To row ther bote with doubleness?

At every haven they can arive
Wher as they wote is gode passage;
Of innocence they can not strive
With wawis, nor no rockis rage;
So happy is ther lodemanage
With nedle' and stone ther cours to dresse
That Salomon was not so sage
To find in them no doublenes:

Therefore who so doth them accuse
Of any double entencion,
To speke rowne, othir to muse,
To pinch at ther condicion,
All is but false collusion,
I dare right wel the sothe expresse,
They have no bettir protection,
But shroud them undir doublenes.

So wel fortunid is ther chaunce,
The dice to turnin uppe so doune,
With sife and sincke they can avaunce,
And than by revolucioun
They set a fel conclusioun
Of lombis, as in sothefastnes,
Though clerkis makin mencionioun
Ther kinde is fret with doublenes.

Sampson yhad experience
That women were ful trew ifound
Whan Dalila of innocence
With spheris gan his here to round;
To speke also of Rosamonde,
And Cleopatri's feithfulness,
The stories plainly wil confounde
Men that apeche ther doublenes.

Single thinge ne is not ypraised,
Nor of olde is of no renoun,
In balaunce whan they be ypeised,
For lacke of waighte they be bore doune,
And for this cause of juste resoun
These women al of rightwisenes
Of choise and fre electionn
Most love eschaunge and doublenes.

L'envoye.

O ye women! whiche ben enclined
By influence of your nature
To ben as pure as golde yfined,
And in your trouth for to endure,
Armith your selse in strong armure,
Lest men assaile your sikirnes,
Set on your brest, your self to assure,
A mightie shelde of doublenes.

This worke folowinge was compiled by Chaucer, and is called the Craft of Lovers.

MORAL is a symylytude, who list ther balades sewe,
The Craft of Lovers curious arguments,
For som bin false and som ben foundin trewe,
And som bin double of entendements;
Thus lovirs with ther moral documents
And eloquent langage can exemplifye
The Craft of Love what it doth signifie.

Who list unto this balades have inspeccion
Thinke that Lov'is lordshipis excellent
Is remedy for disese and correccion
To woful herte and body impotente,
Suppose the maker that he be negligente
In his compilinge, holde him excusable,
Because his spi'rites be fory' and lamentable.

Soverain lady, surmounting your nobles,
O' intenuate jenipre' and daifi delicious!
My trust, mine helth, my cordial foundresse,
O medi'cine sanatife to sores lango'rous,
Comfortable cature of lovirs amo'rous!
O'excelente herbir of lovelie countinaunce!
Registir my love in your remembraunce.

Certis, Sir, your ypeinted eloquence,
So gaye, so freshe, and eke so talcatife,
It doth transcende the wit of Dame Prudence
For to declare your thought or to discrive,
So gloriously glad langage ye contrive
Of your conseite, your thought, and your entente,
I wil be ware, for drede or I be shent.

O rubi'cunde rose, and white as the lyly,
Clari'fied christal of worldly portraiture!
O courfin figure, resplendent with glory,
Geme of beaute'! o carbounle shining pure!
Your fairnes exceedeth the craft of Nature,
Most womanli your loveli countinaunce,
Registir my love in your remembraunce.

What availeth, Sir, your proclamacion
Of curious talking, not touching sadnes?
It is but winde, flatering and adulation,
Imesurable thought of worldly wildnes,
Whiche is chief cause of gostly feblenes;
Your wil, your thought, your double entendement,
I wil beware of drede or I be shent.

My witte, my thought, and myne entencion,
Is for to plesse you, my lady soveraine,
And for your love throw many a region
I would be' exiled, so ye wold not disdein
To have pity on me when I compleine,
In wele and wo to suffre perturbaunce,
So that ye wol have me in remembraunce.

What is your wil plainly ye doe expresse
That maketh this curious supplicacion;
Seyon, Sir, on hertely tendirnesse,
Beth well advised of veine delectacion,
At beginning think on the termination;
Passe not your boundes, be not to negligente,
And er beware for dred or ye be shente.

Your behaving, beaute, and countinaunce,
Maketh me encline to do you reverence,
Your lovely loking, glorious govirnaunce,
Overcometh my spirites, my wit, and prudence,

Some drop of grace of your magnificence
Unto your servaunt ye shewe attendaunce.
And register my love in your remembraunce.

O comberous thought of manne's fragilite!
O servente wil of lustis furious!
O cruel corage causinge adversite!
Of women corrupcion, and contrariouse,
Remembir man that chaunge is perilous,
To breke the' virginite of virgines innocente,
Wherfore beware mankinde or thou be shent.

My peine is prevy' impossible to' deserne,
My lamentabel thoughtes by casting mourninge,
O general juge Jesu! sitting superne,
Graciously converte the love of my swete thing;
O' amiable lady, gracious and benigne!
I put me wholly in your govirnaunce,
Exile me not out of your remembraunce,

Me semeth by langage ye be some potestate,
Or els som curious glosir discevable;
What is your name mekely I make regrate,
Or of what science or craft commendable?
I'm a lady' excellent and honorable,
He must be gay that should be to 'min entente,
Wherfore I wil be ware or I be shent.

Lorde God! this is a sharpe examinacion
Of her that is most in my memorie,
Unto you lady' I make certification,
My name' is Trew Love, of carnal desidery,
Of manne's copulacion the verye exemplary,
Which am one of your servauntes of plesaunce,
I must be chese callid to remembraunce.

I have sought true love of yeres gret proces,
Yet fond I nevir love but for a seson;
Some men be diverse, know no gentilnes,
And some lackin both wisdom and reson;
In som men is trust, in som men is treson,
Wherfore I wil conclude by avysemente,
And er beware for drede that I be shente.

The retour Tullius, gay of eloquence,
And Ovide, that sheweth Craft of Love expre,
With habundaunce of Salomon's prudence,
And pulcritude of Absalon's fairenesse,
And I wer possess'd with Job's grete richesse,
Manly' as Sampson my persone to avaunce,
Yet shuld I submit me' in your remembraunce.

Now Sir, yf that it plesse your nobilnesse
To gyve advertence to my question,
What thinge is the plesure of swetnesse,
And most bittir in final succession?
Or what thing gevith man occasion
In tender age to be concupiscent?
Resolve this question or drede, Sir, ye' be shent.

My soveraigne lady', Ovide in his writinge
Saith desire of worldly concupiscent
As for a time is swete in his worching;
And in his ende he causith grete offence;
Notwithstandinge, my lady Dame Prudence,
Grene flowring age and manly countinaunce
Causith ladies to have' it in remembraunce,

Your godely answir, so notable' in substantance,
Wold cause the hert of womanhede converte
Unto delyte of natural plesaunce;
But of one thing I wolde faine be experte,
Why menne's langage wol procure and trans-

The wil of women and virgines innocente,
Wherefore I am aferd or I be shente.

Let nevir the love of true love be losed,
My soveraine lady, in no manir wise;
In your confidence my wordes I have closed,
My' amyable love to you I doe promise;
So that ye knit the knot of exercyse
Both locke and key ye have in govirnaunce,
Emprint my love in your remembraunce.

Of very trust and I were certified,
The plain entencion of your herte's cordial,
Me semeth in blisse than were I glorified,
Unto your plesure I would be' at your call
But er I fere of chauncis casual,
Of fraude, disceipte, and langage insolent,
Then were I sure maidinshed should be shent.

Ther was ner tresour' of terrestial richesse,
Nor precious stones rekened innumerabell,
To be of comparison to your high godenes,
Above al cretures to' me most amiable;
Trust not the contrary', I was ner discevabell;
Kepe wel true love, forge no dissemblaunce,
And graciously take me to' your remembraunce.

Me semeth by feiture of manly properte
Ye shuld be trusty' and trewe of comprimis,
I finde in you no false duplicite,
Wherefore, True Love, ye have my hert I wis
And ermore shal endure, so have I blis,
The fede'rafy made with gode avisement,
God graunt grace that nothir of us be shent!

Whan Phœbus freshe wes in his chare splen-
dente,
In the moneth of Maye, erly in a morninge,
I herd two lovirs profir this argu'mente,
In the yere of our Lorde a M. by rekening,
CCCXL. and VII. yere folowing,
O potent princeffe! conserve true lovirs al,
Graunt them thy region and blisse celestial.

A balade.

Of ther nature they gretly them delite,
With holy face yfeinid for the nones,
In saintwarie ther frendis to visite,
More for reliquis than for saintis bones,
Though they be closid undir precious stones,
To gete them pardon, lyke ther olde usages,
Tok isse no shrines but lusty quike images.

Whan maidens ar wedded and household have
take
All ther humility' is exiled awaye,
And the' cruil hertes begynnith to awake,
They do' al the besy cure they can or maye
To vex ther householdes-maistirs, soth to saye,
Wherefore, ye yong men, I rede you forthy
Beware alwaye, *The blinde eteth many a fyre.*

Of this matir I dare make no relation,
In defaute of slepe my spirites wex feinte,
In my studie I have had long habitation,
My body and gost are grevously attaint,
And therefore I make no lengir complaint;
But whethir that the blind etc flesh or fish
I pray God kepe the fly out of my dishe!

Now' I make an ende, and laie me doun to
rest,

For I knowe by experience veramente
If maidinis and wivis knewe and wist
Who made the mattir he should sone be shent,
Wherefore I praie that God omnipotente
Hym save and kepin bothè night and daie.
Writtin in the lustie seson of Maie.

The X. Commaundements of Love.

CERTIS ferre extendith yet my reson
This matir as it should be to discrive,
But I truste your grace will in this seson
Confidir howe with conyng that I strive,
For in his favour coud I ner arrive,
Elo'quence this balade hath in grete dispite,
The makir lackith manir to endite.

Of Love's commaundementes x. is the number,
As astirward shall rudely be reherfed,
And lovirs, in no wise departe asunder
Where as thei be observid and redressed,
Daungir and unkindnes yben oppressed,
And he that is commaundid this to make
Is your owne, all othir for to forsake.

Faith.

Faith is the first and principally to tell,
And verie love requirith soche credence,
That eche beleve othir true as the gospel,
Without adulation or flatterying audience,
In true menyng and trustie confidence;
Paint not your connyng with colour ne fable,
For then your love must nedis be unstable.

Entencion.

In the seconde to trete of entencion,
Your lovir to plesse doe your busie cure,
For as myn aucthor Romance maketh mencion,
Without entent your love mai not endure,
As women will thereof, I am right sure,
Endevour with ther hertè, will, and thought,
To plesse hym onely that ther love hath sought,

Discrecion.

In your delyng evir ybe discrete,
Set not your love there as it shall be losed,
Advertise in your minde whether he be mete,
That unto hym your herte maie be disclosed,
And astir as you finde hym then disposed
Poinct by discrecion your hour, time, and place,
Conveniently metyng with armes to' embrace.

Pacience.

Of these commaundementes the iiii. is pacience:
Though by' irous corage your lovir be meved,
With soft wordis and humble obedience
His wrathe maie sone be swagid and releved,
And thus his love obtainid and acheved
Will in you rote with gretir diligence,
Bicause of your meke womanly pacience.

Secretnesse.

Secretlie behave you in your werkis,
In shewing countenance or mevyng your eye,
Though soche behavior to some folk be derke,

He that hath lovid will it sone aspie,
Thus you your self your counsaill maie descrie;
Make privy to your delyng few' as ye maie,
For iii. may kepe a counsel if twain be awaie.

Prudence.

Let prudence governe aye your bridil reine;
Set not your love in so fervent a wise
But that in godely hast ye may refreine,
If that your lovirs list you to dispise:
Romaunce min auctour wold you this advise,
To slacke your love, for if ye doe not so
That wanton list will tourne you into wo.

Perseverance.

Stablishe your love in so stedfast a wise,
If that ye thinke your lovir will be true,
As entirely as ere you can devise,
Love hym onely and refuse allè newe,
Then shall not your worship ychaunge his hew,
For certis, maistris, then is he to blame
But if that he will quite you with the same.

Pitie.

Be piteous to hym, as womanhod requireth,
That for your love endurith painis smerte,
Whom so sorely your plesant loke enfireth,
That printid is your beautie in his herte,
And woundid lyth without knife or darte;
There let your pitie spred without restrainte,
For lacke of it let not your servaunt feint.

Mesure.

Take mesure in your talkyng, be n'ot outrage
For this reherfith Romance de la Rose,
A man endued with plenteous langage
Oft tymis is denyid his purpose;
Take mesure in langage, wisedome ingrose,
For mesure, as right well proved is by reson,
Thyngis unsefo'nable settith in seson.

Mercie.

Soche daungir exile hym all uttirly,
Ovir all mercie to' occupie his place,
To piteous complaintis your eres applie,
And receive your true servaunte into grace;
To him that boundin is in Lov'is lace
Shewe favour, ladie', and be not merciles,
Lest ye be called a common murdires.

L'envoye.

When ye unto this balade have inspeccion
In my making holde me excusable,
It is submittid unto your correccion;
Considir that my connyng is disable
To write to you the figure uniable,
All devoide of connyng and experience,
Maner of indityng, reson, and eloquence.

Trust it well the makir is all your owne,
You to obeie while his life maie endure,
To doe you service as a man unknowne,
No guerdone desyryng of yerthly trefure,
But if it might accorde with your plesure
For his true service hym for to avaunce,
And call hym into your remembraunce,

*The IX. Ladies Worthe**Quene Sinope.*

PROFULGENT in preciousness, O Sinope the Quene!
Of all feminine berynge the sceptir and regalie,
Subduyng the large countrie of Armenie', as it
was sene,
For maugre ther mightis thou ybrought them for
to applie,
Thin honour to encrese, and thy power to mag-
nifie;
O most renowned Hercules! with al thy pom-
pous bolte
This princes toke the prisenir and put to fighte
thine host.

Ladie Hippolyte.

Yet Hercules waxed red for shame when I
spake of Hippolyt,
Chief patrones and captain of the peple of Sinope,
Which with her amorous chere and with coragi-
ous might
She smote the unto the ground for all thy crueltie,
Wherefore the dukeship of Diamedes and dignitie
Unto her gretè laudè and glorie perpetuall
Attributid by all is with triumphè laureall.

Lady Deiphile.

The most noble triumphè of this ladie Deiphile,
In releve and succor of the gret Duke of Athenis,
She chastisid and brought into perpetual exile
The aureat citizeinis of the mightie Thebis,
The strongè brasin pilliris there haddin no reles,
But she with her sistir Agrisè them did dounè cast,
And with furious fire cite ybrent at last.

Lady Teuca.

O pulchrior sole in beautie and full ylludent,
Of all feminine ceturis the mostè formous flour!
In Italy reigning with great chevalry right fervent,
Chastisid the Romainis as maistris and conquè-
rour,
O lady Teuca! mochil was thy glorie and honour,
Yet mochil more was to commende thy gretè
benignite
In thy perfite living and virginall chastitie.

Quene Penthesilea.

O ye Trojains! for this noble Quene Penthesilea
Sorowe her mortalitie with dolorous compassion,
Her lovè was towards you so pregnant and fer-
tile,
Which that against the proude Grekis made de-
fension,
With her victorious hand was al her affection
To lashe the Grekis to ground, and with ther
hert 'is joie [Troie.
To revengin the coward deth of noble' Hector of

Queen Thamyris.

O thou most rigorous Quene Thamyris invin-
cible!
Upon the strong and hideous peple of citees rein-
Whiche by thy gretè powir and by wittis sensible
O o iiii

Ytokist in battaile captive Cyrus, the grete King
Of Persia and of Media, his hed in blode lying;
Thou baddist him to drinkin of the blode he had
thurstid,
And xxii. M. of his hoste there were distressedid.

Ladie Lampedo.

The famous loude trumpe ymade of gold yfor-
gid so bright
Hath blowin so up the fame and glory environ
Of this lady Lampedo, with her sistr Masist,
That al the land of Feminie, Europe, and Epheson,
Be yeldin and applied lowly to her subjeccion;
Many an high toure she raisid, and ybilt touris
long,
Perpetuelly to lastin, with hugè wallis strong.

Queene Semiramis.

Lo here Semiramis, the Quene of grete Babilon,
The moste generous gem and the floure of loveily
favor,
Whose excellent powir from Mede unto Septen-
Florished in her regally as a mightie conqueror,
Subdued al Barbary, and Zorast the King of honor,
She slue Ethiop, and conquirid Armenie and Inde,
In which non entrid but Alexander and she as I
finde.

Ladie Menalippe.

Also the ladie Menalippe, thy sister so dere,
Whose martial powir there was no man that could
withstand,
For thorough the wide worldè there was not
yfound her pere,
The famous Duke of Athenis, Theseus, she had
in hande,
And she sorely chastisid him and conquirid his
lande;
The proude Grekis mightilie also she did assaile,
And ovrcame and vanquishid them bravely in
bataile.

Alone walkyng,
In thought plainyng,
And sore sighyng,

} All desolate,

Me remembryng
Of my livyng,
My death wishyng

} Both erly and late,

Infortunate
Is so my fate,
Thit wote ye what?

} Out of mesure

My life I hate.
Thus desperate
In soche pore estate

} Doe I endure.

Of othir cure
Am I not sure.
Thus to to endure

} Is hard certain.

Suche is my ure
I you ensure!
What creature

} Maie have more pain?

My truthe so plain
Is take in vain,
And grete disdain

} In remembrance;

Yet I full faine
Would me complaine
Me to abstaine

} From this penaunce;

But in substaunce
None allegeaunce
Of my grevaunce

} Can I not finde;

Right so my chaunce
With displeaunce
Doeth me avaunce;

} And thus an ende.

A ballade.

In Feverere, when that it was full colde,
Froste, snowe, haile, raine, hath dominacion,
With chaungable elementes and windes mani-
folde,

Whiche hath of ground, flour, herbe, jurrisdiccion
For to dispose after their correccion,
And yet Aprilis with his plefaunt floures
Dissolveth the snow and bringith forth the his
floures,

Of whose invencion lovirs maie be glade,
For thei bring in the kalendis of Maie,
And thei with countinuaunce demure, meke, and
sad,

Owe to worship the lustie floures alwaie,
And in speciall one called se of the dai,
The daisie, a flowir white and rede,
And in French callid *La bel Margarete*.

O commendable floure, and moste in minde!
O floure and gracious of excellence!
O amiable Marga'rite! of natife kind,
To whom I must resort with diligence,
With hert, wil, thought, most lowly obedience,
I to be your servaunt, ye my regent,
For life ne deth nevir for to repent.

Of this processe now forth will I procede,
Whiche happith unto me with grete disdain,
As for the time thereof I take lest hede,
For unto me was brought the sore paine,
Therefore my cause was the more to complaine,
Yet unto me my grevaunce was the lesse
That I was so nigh my ladie and maistresse.

There where she was present in this same
place,

I having in herte grete adversite,
Except onely the fortune and gode grace
Of her whose I am, the whiche releved me,
And my grete dures unlasid hath the,
And brought me out of the fearful grevaunce,
If it were her ese it were to me plefaunce.

As for the wo whiche that I did endure
It was to me a verie plefaunt pain,
Seyng it was for that faire creature
Whiche is my ladie and my soverain,
In whose presence I would be passyng fain,
So that I wist it werin her pleiure,
For she is from all distaunce my protectour.

Though unto me dreadfull ywere the chaunce,
No maner of gentilnes oweh me to blame,
For I' had levir suffre' of deth the penaunce
Than she should for me' have dishonor or shame,
Or in any wise losin her gode name;
So wisely God for his endlesse mercie
Graunt every lovir joy of his lady!

A ballade.

O Merciful and o merciabie
Kyng of kyngis, and fathir of pite,
Whose might and mercie is incomperable!
O prince eterne, o mightie Lorde! saie we,
To whom mercie is given of propirtie,
On thy servaunt that lieth in prison bounde
Have thou mercie or that his herte wounde.

And that thou wilt graunt to him thy prisoner
Fre libertie, and lose hym out of pain,
All his desires, and all his hevie chere
To all gladnesse thei were restored again,
Thy high vengeance why should thou not re-
frain,

And shewe mercie, sith he is penitent?
Now helpe hym Lorde, and let him not be shente

But sith it' is so there is a trespas done,
Unto Mercie let yelde the treipassour,
It is her office to redresse it sone,
For trespasse to Mercie is a mirrour,
And like as the swete hath the price by soure,
So by Trespasse Mercie hath all her might,
Without Trespasse Mercie hath lacke of light.

What should phisike doe but if sikenes were?
What nedith salve but if there were a sore?
What nedith drink wher thirst hath no power?
What should Mercie do but Trespas go' afore?
But Trespas Mercie woll be litil flore,
Without Trespas ner excusyon
Maie Mercie have ne chief perfeccion.

The cause at this time of my writyng,
And touchyng Mercie, to whom I make mone,
Is for fere lest my soveraigne and swetyng,
I menin her that lovelyir is none,
With me' is displeased for causis more than one;
What causis thei be that knoweth God and she,
But so do n'ot I; alas, it forthinketh me!

What se she' in me, what defeaute or offence?
What have I doe that she on me disdaine?
How might I doe come into her presence,
To tell my complaint, whereof I were faine?
I drede to loke, to speke, or to complaine,
'To her that hath my herte every dele;
So help me God I would al thing wer wele:

For in this case came I never or now
In Lov'is dauncè so ferre in the trace,
For with myne ese escapin I ne mow
Out of this daungir, except her gode grace,
For though my countenance be mery' in her
face,

As semith to her by worde or by chere,
Yet her gode grace settith myne herte nere.

And if my soveraine have any marvaile
Why I to her now and afore ywrote,
She maie well think it is no grete travaile

To him that is in love brought so hote;
It 's a simple tre that fallteb with one stroke;
That mene I, though that my soveraine to forn
Me hath denied yet grace may come to morn.

Maistris, for the gode will I have you ought,
And evir shall as long as life durith,
Pitie your servant, kepe him in your thought,
Give' him som comfort or medi'cin, and curith
His ague, that encrefith, that renuith:
So grievous ben his paines and sighis fore
That without mercy his dais be forlore.

Go, litil bill, go forth, and hie the fast,
Recommende me', and excuse me as you can,
For very feble am I at the last,
My pen is worn, my hew is pale and wan,
My eyen ben sonke, disfigured like no man,
Till Deth his dart that causith for to smert
My corps have consumed, then farewell swet hert.

Doughtre' of Phœbus in vertuous apparence,
My love elect in my remembérance,
My carefull herte distrained cause of absence,
Till ye my' empresse me relese my grevaunce
Upon you 'is set my life, myne attendaunce,
Is sette without recure I wis untill
Ye grauntin my true herte to have his will.

Thus, my dere swetyng! in a traunce I lye,
And shal, til drops of pitie from you spring,
I mene your mercie, that lieth my herte nye,
That me maii rejoyce, and cause for to syng
These termes of love; lo I have won the ring,
My godely maistris; thus of his gode grace
God graunt her blisse in heaven to have a place!

*Here followeth how Mercurie, with Pallas, Venus,
and Juno, appered to Paris of Troie, be slepyng by
a fountain*.*

Pallas loquitur ad Parin.

SONNE of Priam, gentill Paris of Troie,
Wake of thy slepe, beholde us goddesse thre,
We havin brought to the encrese of joye,
To thy discrecion reportyng our beautie;
Take here this appill, and well advise the
Whiche of us is the fairist in thy sight,
And give thou it, we praie the, gentil knight.

Juno loquitur primo.

If so be thou give it to me, Parise,
This shal I give unto thy worthines,
Honour and conquest, nobley, lose and prise,
Victorie, courage, force, and hardines,
Gode avinture, and famous manlines;
For that appil all this give I to the,
Confidir this P.ise, and give it me.

Venus loquitur ad Parin.

Naie, give it me, and this I shall you give,
A glad aspekte with favour and fairnes,

* The title in Speght and Urry runs, How Mercury, with Pallas, Venus, and Minerva, &c. but as Pallas and Minerva is one and the same goddess, and as Juno was the third goddess at this interview with Paris, her name in the title, and as one of the appellants to the Trojan prince, is substituted for that of Minerva.

And love of ladies also while ye live,
Famous stature and princely semelines,
Accordyng to your natife gentilnes;
Undirstand this gift well, I you advise,
And give it unto me hardly Parise.

Pallas loquitur ad Parin.

Ye, ye, Parise, takith hede unto me;
Thou art a prince yborne by thy discente,
And for to rule thy royall dignite
I shall the givin first intendemente,
Discrecion, prudence in right judgements,
Whiche in a prince is thing most covenable:
Give it to me; I am to have it able.

A balade plesante.

I HAVE a ladie, where so that she be,
That feldome is she soveraine of my thought,
On whose beautie when I beholde and se,
Remembryng me how well she is ywrought,
I thanke Fortune, that to her grace me brought,
So faire is she, but nothyng angelike,
Her beautie is unto none othir like.

For hardily and she were made of brasse,
Her face and all, she hath enough fairnesse;
Her eyen ben holow' and grene as any grasse,
And ravenish yelow is her sounitresse,
Thereto she hath of every comelinessse,
Soche quantitie givin her by Nature
That with the lest she is of her stature.

And as a bolt her browis ben ibent,
And betill browed she is also with all,
And of her witte as simple' and innocent
As is a childe that can no gode at all;
She is not thicke, her stature is but small;
Her fingers ben litil and nothyng long;
Her skin is smothe as any ox's tong:

Thereto she is so wise in daliaunce,
And beset her wordis so womanly,
That her to here it doeth me displeaunce,
For that she saieth is saied so connyngly
That when there be no mo then she and I
I had levir she were of talkyng still
Then that she should so godelie speche spill.

And slothe none shall ye have in her entresse,
So diligent is she and vertuleffe,
And so busie aie all gode to undresse,
That as she ape she is harmlesse,
And as an harnet meke and pitlesse,
With that she is so wise and circumspecte
That prudence none her folie can infecte.

Is it not joye that soche one of her age,
Within the boundes of so grete tendirnesse,
Should in her werke be so sadde and so sage,
That of the weddyng sawe all the noblesse
Of Quene Jane, and ywas tho as I gesse
But of the age of yeris ten and five?
I trowe there are not many soche alive.

For, as Jesu my sinfull soule save,
There n'is cature in all this worlde livyng
Like unto her that I would gladly have,
So plesith mine hert that goodely swete thyng,
Whose soule in haste unto his blis ybring

That first her formid to be a cature,
For were she well of me I did no cure.

An other balade.

O Mossie quince! yhangyng by your stalke,
The whiche no man dare plucke awaie nor take
Of all the folke that passe forthe by or walke,
Your flouris freshe be fallen awaie and shake;
I am right sorie, maistresse; for your sake;
Ye seme a thyng that all men have forgotten;
Ye be so ripe ye waxin almoste roten.

Your uglie chere deinous and froward,
Your grene eyin, frownyng and nothing glad,
Your chekes, enbolned like a melowe costard,
Colour of orange, your brestes fatournad,
Gilt on wara'ntise, the colour wil not fade,
Bawsin buttockid, belied like a tonne,
Men crie S. Barba'ry at the' losyng of your
gonne.

Lovely lende maistris, take consideration,
I 'am so sorrowfull there as ye be' absent,
Floure of the barkfate foulest of al the nacion,
To love you but a little' is myne entent;
The swert hath sent you, the smoke hath you
shent,
I trow y' have ben laid on some kill to drie,
You do soch worship there as ye be present,
Of al women I love you hest a M. timis fie.

*A balade warnyng men to beware of deceitfull
women,*

Loke well aboute ye that loviris be,
Let not your lustis lede you to dotage,
Be not enamoured on all thynges ye se;
Sampson the forte and Salomon the sage
Decevid were for all ther grete courage;
Men demin it right that thei se with eye,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a fie.*

I mene of women; for all ther cheres queint,
Trust them not to moch, ther truthe is but
treson

The fairist outward wel can thei ypaint,
Ther stedfastnesse endurith but a seson,
For thei faine frendlines and worchin treson,
And for thei are chaungable natu'rally,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a fie*

What wight on lyve ytrustith on ther cheres
Shall have at last his guerdon and his mede;
Thei can shave nerir than rasours or sheres:
All is not gold that shinith, men take hede,
Their galle is hid undir a sugrid wede;
It is but queint ther fantasie to' aspie,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a fie.*

Though all the worldè doe his busie cure
To make women standin in stablenesse
It would not be; it is against nature;
The worlde is doe when thei lacke doublenes,
For thei laugh and love not, this is expresse;
To trust on them it is but fantasie,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a fie.*

Women of kindè hath condicions thre;
The first is that thei be full of disseite,
To spinnin also is ther propertie,
And women have a wondirfull conseite,
For thei can wepe oft, and all is a fleite,
And when thei list the tere is in the eye,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.*

In soth to saie, though all the yerth so wanne
Wer parchèment smoth, white and scribabbell,
And the gret se, that called is the' Ocean,
Were tournid into ynke blacker than fabell,
Eche sticke a pen, eche man a scrivener abel,
Not coud thei writin woman's trechirie,
Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.*

*A balade declaring that womens chastite doeth moche
excel all trefure worldly.*

In womanhede, as auctours al ywrite,
Most thing commendid is chaste honeste,
Thing most flaund'rous ther nobles to atwite,
As when women of hasty fraélite
Exceden the bondes of wisely chastite,
For what availeth lynage or rial blode
When of ther lvyng the report 'is not gode?

The holy bed defoild of marriage
For ones defoiled may not recovered be.
The vice goth forth and the froward langage
By many' a relme and many' a grete cite;
Slaundir hath a custome, and that' is grete pite,
That true or fals, by a contrarious sounne,
Onis arise it goth not lyghtly downe:

For when a lechour by force or mastery
Defoild hath of virgins the clennes,
Widous oppressed, and ly in advoutry,
Assailid wives that stode in stablenes,
Who may then ther flaundèrous harme redresse
When ther gode name is hurt by soch report?
For fame lost ones can ner have his resort.

A thefe may robbe a man of his richesse,
And by some mene make restitution,
And some man maye dysherit and oppresse
A povir man from his possession,
And astir make him satisfaccion,
But *No man may restore in no degre
A maid robbid of her virginite,*

A man may also bete a castil doune,
And bilde it astir more freshe to the sight,
Exile a man out of his regiounne,
And him revoke whether it be wrong or right,
But *No man hath the powir ne the might
For to restore the palace virginal
Of Chastite when brokin is the wal.*

Men may also put out of ther service,
And officirs remeve out of ther place,
And at a day, when Fortune list devise,
They may again restorid be to grace,
But *Ther n'is time nothir set ne space;
Nor ner in flory neithir rad ne saine,
That maydenhode lost recovered was again:*

For whiche men shouldin have a conscience,
Rewe in ther hertis and repentin fore,
And havin a remorse of gret offence
To ravishe thing which they may not restore,
For it is saide, and hath be said ful yore,
*The emeraud grene of parfite chastite
Stole ones away may not recovered be.*

And hard it is to ravishe a trefour
Whiche of nature is not recuperable;
Lordship may not of kinge nor emperour
Reforme a thinge whiche is nat reformable;
Rust of defamè is inseparable,
And *Maidinhode ylost of newe or yore
No man in live may it again restore.*

The Romanes olde thorough ther pacience
Suffrid tyrauntes in ther tyranyes
On ther cites to do grete violence,
The peple to oppresse with ther roberies,
But them to punishe they set gret espies
On false avouterers, as it is wel couth,
Which widowes ravish and maidens in ther
youth.

Chaucer's wordes unto his own scrivener.

ADAM SCRIVENERE, yf ever it the befalle
Boece or Troiles for to write new
Under thy longe lockes thou maist have the
scalle,
But after my makynge thou write more true,
So ofte adaye I mote thy werke renew
It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And al is thorow thy negligence and rape.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY,

Containing his

SONGS,
SONNETS,

ELEGIES,
TRANSLATIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

To which is prefixed

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Here noble SURREY felt the sacred rage,
SURREY, the GRANVILLE of a former age,
Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance :
In the same shades the Cupids tun'd his lyre
To the same notes, of love, and soft desire ;
Fair GERALDINE, bright object of his vow,
Then fill'd the groves as heavenly MIRA now.

POPE'S WINDSOR FOREST.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MUNDELL AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

Anno 1793.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY,

Containing his

POEMS,
TRANSLATIONS,

SONNETS,
SONGS,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By JOHN H. P. H.

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Thus noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,
Surrey, the GRANVILLE of a former age,
Match'd his pen, victorious was his lance,
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:
In the same shades the Cupids and his lyre
To the same notes of love, and soft desire;
Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,
Then fill'd the grove as heavenly Mira now.

JOHN H. P. H. H.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MURRAY AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

1792.

THE LIFE OF SURREY.

AFTER the death of Chaucer, no considerable improvements were made in English poetry, till about the beginning of the sixteenth century. At that period, our intercourse with Italy, not only introduced the study of classical literature into England, but gave a new turn to our vernacular poetry. The language and the manners of Italy, were esteemed and studied. The sonnets of Petrarch, were the great models of composition. They entered into the genius of the fashionable manners; and in the boisterous, but polished court of Henry the Eighth, Petrarch of course became the popular poet.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, the unrivalled ornament of that court, and of his age, led the way to great improvements in English poetry, by a happy imitation of Petrarch, and other Italian poets, who had been most successful in painting the anxieties of love with pathos and propriety.

He was the son and grandson of two Lord Treasurers, Dukes of Norfolk; and in his early childhood, discovered the most promising marks of lively parts, and an active mind.

While a boy, he was habituated to the modes of a court at Windsor Castle, where he resided, yet under the care of proper instructors, in the quality of a companion to Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, a natural son of King Henry, and of the highest expectations.

A friendship of the closest kind commencing between them, about 1530, they were both removed to Cardinal Wolsey's College at Oxford; which was one of the first seminaries of an English university that professed to explode the pedantries of the old barbarous philosophy, and to cultivate the graces of polite literature.

Two years afterwards, he accompanied his noble friend into France, where they received King Henry on his arrival at Calais, to visit Francis the First, with a most magnificent retinue.

The friendship of these two young noblemen, was soon strengthened by a new tie; for Richmond married Lady Mary Howard, Surrey's sister.—Richmond, however, appears to have died in 1536, about the age of seventeen, having never cohabited with his wife.

It was long before he forgot the untimely loss of this amiable youth, the friend and associate of his childhood, and who nearly resembled himself in genius, refinement of manners, and liberal acquisitions.

It is not known at what period he began his travels. They have the air of a romance. He made the tour of Europe in the true spirit of chivalry; proclaiming the unparalleled charms of Geraldine his mistress, and prepared to defend the cause of her beauty with the weapons of knight errantry.

In his way to Italy, he passed a few days at the Emperor's court, where he became acquainted with Cornelius Agrippa. This celebrated adept in natural magic, shewed him, in a mirror of glass, a living image of Geraldine, reclining on a couch, sick, and reading one of his most tender sonnets by a waxen taper. His imagination was heated anew by this interesting and affecting spectacle. Inflamed with every enthusiasm of the most romantic passion, he hastened to Florence, the original seat of the ancestors of his Geraldine; and on his arrival, immediately published a defiance against any person who should presume to dispute the superiority of her beauty. The grand Duke of Tuscany permitted this important trial to be decided. The challenge was accepted, and Surrey victorious.

His heroic vanities did not, however, so totally engross the time which he spent in Italy, as to alienate his mind from literature : he studied, with the greatest success, a critical knowledge of the Italian language, and attained a just taste for the peculiar graces of the Italian poetry.

He was recalled to England, for some idle reason, by the King, and appeared at court the most polite lover, the most learned nobleman, and the most accomplished gentleman of his age.

He shone in the tournaments of the court ; and his name is renowned in the military achievements of that martial age.

In 1542, he marched into Scotland as a chief commander in his father's army, and was conspicuous for his conduct and bravery at the memorable battle of Flodden-field, where James the Fourth of Scotland was killed.

The year following, he was imprisoned in Windsor Castle, for eating flesh in Lent ; a circumstance worthy of notice, only as it marks his character, impatient of any controul, and regardless of petty formalities, and as it gave occasion to one of his most sentimental and pathetic sonnets.

In 1544, he was field-marshal of the English army in the expedition to Boulogne, which he took ; but being defeated, endeavouring to cut off a convoy of the enemy, a disgrace he repaired, he lost the King's favour, and was superseded by the Earl of Hertford.

Conscious of his high birth and capacity, he could not refrain, upon this occasion, from dropping some reproachful expressions against a measure which seemed to impeach his personal courage.

It was his misfortune to serve a monarch, whose resentments, which were easily provoked, could only be satisfied by the most severe revenge.

The brilliancy of his character was viewed by Henry with disgust and suspicion. His popularity was misconstrued into a dangerous ambition, and gave birth to accusations equally groundless and frivolous.

He was suspected of a design to marry the princess Mary ; and it was insinuated that he conversed with foreigners, and corresponded with Cardinal Pole.

The addition of the arms of Edward the Confessor to his own, though justified by the usage of his family, and the authority of the heralds, was made a foundation for an impeachment of high-treason.

He was arraigned at Guildhall ; and notwithstanding his eloquent and manly defence, he was condemned by the prepared suffrage of a servile and obsequious jury, and beheaded on Tower-hill, January 19th 1546-7.

The Duke of Norfolk, charged with allegations equally groundless, escaped the same unhappy fate, by the death of the tyrant, which happened nine days after the unmerited death of his son.

Surrey was buried in the church of All Hallows-Barking, Tower-street, but afterwards removed to Framlingham, Suffolk, where an honourable monument was erected to his memory, by his second son, Henry Earl of Northampton.

He married Frances, daughter of John Earl of Oxford ; by whom he left several children. One of his daughters, Jane, Countess of Westmoreland, was among the learned ladies of that age, and became famous for her knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages.

History is silent as to the name of the *fair Geraldine*, the general object of his passionate sonnets, and as to the reasons why the gallantries he performed for her, did not end in a marriage.

The notices concerning her in his sonnets are obscure and indirect ; but they have been illustrated with the most happy sagacity by the present Earl of Orford, and applied to Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, whose poetical name is almost her real one. She was second daughter of Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, second cousin to the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth, bred up with them, as it is conjectured, at Hunston-House, and afterwards the third wife of Edward Clinton, Earl of Lincoln.

His *Songes and Sonnettes*, as they have been styled, were first collected and printed at London, by Tottell, in 1557, together with the "Songes and Sonnettes" of his amiable and accomplished friend Sir Thomas Wyatt, the elder, and of uncertain authors. Another edition appeared 1565. Others in 1574, 1585, 1587. The last edition was printed in 1717. They are now, for the first time, received into a collection of classical English poetry.

They were in high reputation with his contemporaries, and for many years afterwards, though they are scarcely known at present. They have been praised by Leland, Sydney, Tuberville, Puttenham, Churchyard, and Drayton, and in more recent times by Dryden, Waller, Fenton, and Pope. They merit attention equally as compositions of real and intrinsic merit, and as objects of curiosity.

They are chiefly amatory and sentimental; but in elegance of sentiment, and in nature and sensibility, they are equal to the best love verses in our language; and in harmony of numbers, perspicuity of expression, and facility of phraseology, they approach so near the productions of the present age, that they will hardly be believed to have been produced in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

But Surrey was not merely the poet of idleness and gallantry. He was fitted, both from nature and study, for the more solid and laborious parts of literature. He translated the 2d and 4th books of the *Æneid* into blank verse, which are the first compositions extant, in that measure, in the English language. They were printed in 1557, 12mo; but the book is so extremely scarce, that a copy could not be procured for this edition of his works. He wrote many other poems, which were never published, and are now perhaps entirely lost. He translated the *Ecclesiastes* of Solomon into English verse. He also translated a few of the *Psalms* into metre. These versions of Scripture shew that he was a friend to the Reformation. Among his works are also mentioned a poem on the death of his friend the Duke of Richmond, an exhortation to the city of London, a translation of Boccace's epistle to Pinus, and several Latin epistles.

All his biographers, particularly the Earl of Orford and Mr. Warton, have been lavish, and very justly, in his praise; he merits the highest encomiums, as the first refiner of our language, and the unrivalled ornament of his age and country, and challenges the gratitude and esteem of every man of literature, for the generous assistance he afforded it in its infancy, and his ready and liberal assistance to all men of merit in his time.

His poetical character is so elegantly drawn by the happy pencil of Mr. Warton, as to render the bungling after-strokes of a casual hand unnecessary.

"In the sonnets of Surrey," says that judicious and classical critic, whose death is an irreparable loss to English literature, "we are surprised to find nothing of that metaphysical cast, which marks the Italian poets, his supposed masters, especially Petrarch. Surrey's sentiments are for the most part natural and unaffected; arising from his own feelings, and dictated by the present circumstances. His poetry is alike unembarrassed by learned allusions, or elaborate conceits. If he copies Petrarch, it is Petrarch's best manner, where he descends from his Platonic abstractions, his refinements of passion, his exaggerated compliments, and his play upon opposite sentiments, into a track of tenderness, simplicity, and nature.

"Surrey, for his justness of thought, correctness of style, and purity of expression, may justly be pronounced the first English classical poet. He unquestionably is the first polite writer of love verses in our language."

They were in high reputation with his contemporaries, and for many years afterwards, though they are scarcely known as poets. They have been praised by De Witt, Sydney, Tupper, Pope, Chaucer, and Dryden, and in more recent times by Dryden, Waller, Ligonier, and Pope. Their merits are generally ascribed to the excellence of their taste and manner, and as objects of curiosity.

They are chiefly known for their elegant and beautiful style, but for elegance of language, and in nature and form.

It is not to be wondered at that they have been so long in the possession of the public eye, and that they will continue to be so for many years to come.

THE ORIGINAL PREFACE.

It is not to be wondered at that they have been so long in the possession of the public eye, and that they will continue to be so for many years to come. The more I read and peruse the works of the poets, the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style, and the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style, and the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style.

That to have well written in verse, yea and in small parcelles, deserveth great prayse. The workes of dyvers Latines, Italians and other, doe prove sufficiently, that our tong is able in that kynde to dooe as prayse worthely as the rest, the Honorable Style of the Noble Earl of Surrey, and the weightinesse of the deep witted Syr Thomas Wyat the Elders verse, with severall graces in sundry good English writers, doe shooe abundantly. It resteth nowe (gentle reader) that thou thynke it not evil done, to publysh to the honour of the Englysh tong, and for the profit of the studious of Englysh Eloquence, those woorkes whiche the

ungentle horders up of such treasure, have heretofore envyed thee; and for this point (good reader) thine owne profite and pleasure in these presently, and in mo hereafter shall aunswere for my defence. If perhappes some myslyke the statelynesse of style removed from the rude skylle of common eares: I ask helpe of the learned to defende thyre learned frend the authore of this woork, and I exhorte the unlearned by reading to learne to be more skylfull, and to purge that swinelike grossenesse that maketh the sweet maseroine not to smell to their delight.

It is not to be wondered at that they have been so long in the possession of the public eye, and that they will continue to be so for many years to come. The more I read and peruse the works of the poets, the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style, and the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style, and the more I am struck with the beauty and elegance of their style.

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SONGES AND SONNETTES.

Description of the restless state of a Lover, with Sute to his Lady, to rue on his dieng hart.

THE Sunne hath twyse brought fourth his tender grene,

Twyse cladde the earth in lyvely lustinesse;
Ones have the wyndes the trees dyspoled clene,
And once agayne begynnes theyr cruelnesse,
Synce I have hyd under my brest the harme,
That never shall recover healthfulnesse.

The wynters hurt recovers with the warme,
The parched grene restored is with shade:
What warmth, alas! may serve for to dysarme
The frosen hart that myne inflame hath made?
What colde agayne is able to restore
My fresh grene yeares, that wither thus and fade.

Alas! I see nothing has hurt so sore
But tyme, in tyme reduceth a returne:
In tyme my harme encreaseth more and more
And seemes to have my cure allwayes in scorne,
Strange kindes of death, in lyfe that I doe trye
At hand to melt, farre of in flame to burne:
And lyke as tyme lyst to my cure applye,
So doth eche place my comfort cleane refuse.
All things alive, that seeth the heavens with eye,
With cloke of night may cover and excuse
Itself from travayle of the dayes unrest,
Save I, alas! against all others use

That then styrre up the tormentes of my breaste;
And curse eche starre as causer of my fate:
And when the sun hath eke the darke opprest,
And brought the day, it doth nothing abate
The travayles of myne endless smarte and payne:

For then as one as hath the light in hate,
I wish for night more covertly to playne
And me withdrawe from every haunted place,
Lest by my chere my chaunce appeare to playne,
To seeke the place where I my self had lost,
And in my mynde I measure pace by pace.

That day that I was tangled in the lace,
In semyng slacke that knitted ever most;
But never yet the travayll of my thought
Of better state, could catche a cause to host:
For if I founde sometime that I have sought,
Those steires by whom I trusted of the port,
My sayles do fall, and I advaunce right nought,
As ankred fast, my sprites do all resort

To stand agazed, and sink in more and more:

The deadly harme which he doth take in sport
Lo! if I seek, how I do find my fore!

And if I flee, I cary with me still

The venomd shaft which doth hys force restore

By hast of flight, and I may plague my fill

Unto my self, unless this carefull song

Print in your hart some parcell of my tene

For I alas! in silence all too long

Of myne olde hurt, yet feele the wound but grene:

Rue on my lyfe, or else your cruel wronge

Shall well appeare and by my death be sene.

*Description of Spring, wherein eche thing renews,
save only the Lover.*

THE soote season that bud, and bloome fourth
bringes,

With grene hath cladde the hyll, and eke the vale,

The nightingall with fethers new she singes;

The turtle too her mate hath told her tale;

Somer is come, for every spray now springes.

The hart hath hung hys olde head on the pale;

The bucke in brake his winter coate he flynges;

The fishes flete with newe repayred scale:

The adder all her slough away she flynges,

The swift swallow pursueth the flies smalle,

The busy bee her honey how she menynges;

Winter is worne that was the floures ball.

And thus I see among these pleasant thynges

Eche care decayes, and yet my sorrow springes.

Description of the restless state of a Lover.

WHEN youth had led me halfe the race,

That Cupides scourge had made me runne;

I looked back to meet the place,

From whence my weary course begunne:

And then I saw howe my desyre

Misguiding me had led the waye,

Myne eyne to greedy of theyre hyre,

Had made me lose a better prey.

For when in sighes I spent the day,

And could not cloake my grief with gayne;

The boyling smoke dyd still bewray,
 The present heate of secret flame :
 And when salt teares do bayne my breast,
 Where love his pleasant traynes hath sowne,
 Her beauty hath the fruytes opprest,
 Ere that the buddes were spronge and blowne.
 And when myne eyen dyd still pursue,
 The flying chafe of theyre request ;
 Theyre greedy looks dyd oft renew,
 The hydden wounde within my breste.
 When every loke these cheekes might stayne,
 From dedly pale to glowing red ;
 By outward signes appeared playne,
 To her for helpe my hart was fled.
 But all to late love learneth me,
 To paynt all kynd of colours new ;
 To blynd theyre eyes that else should see
 My speckled chekes with Cupids hew.
 And now the covert brest I clame,
 That worshipp Cupide secretely ;
 And nourished hys sacred flame,
 From whence no blairing sparkes do flye.

*Description of the fickle Affections, Pangs, and
 Sleights of Love.*

Such wayward wayes hath Love, that most part
 in discord
 Our willes do stand, whereby our hartes but sel-
 dom do accord :
 Decyte is hys delighte, and to begyle and mocke
 The simple hartes who he doth strike with froward
 divers stroke.
 He causeth th' one to rage with golden burning
 darte, [harte.
 And doth alay with leaden cold, again the others
 Whose gleames of burning fyre and easy sparkes
 of flame, [ame
 In balance of unequal weyght he pondereth by
 From easye ford where I myghte wade and pass
 full well,
 He me withdrawes and doth me drive, into a depe
 dark hell :
 And me withholdes where I am calde and offred
 place,
 And willes me that my mortal foe I do beseeke
 of grace ;
 He lettes me to pursue a conquest welnere wonne
 To followe where my paynes were lost, ere that
 my sute begunne. [turne
 So by this means I know how soon a hart may
 From warre to peace, from truce to stryfe, and so
 agayne returne.
 I know how to content my self in others lust,
 Of litle stufte unto my self to weave a webbe of
 trust :
 And how to hyde my harmes with sole dyssem-
 blyng chere
 Whan in my face the painted thoughtes wou'd
 outwardly appeare. [dred,
 I know how that the bloud forsakes the face for
 And how by shame it staynes agayne the chekes
 with flaming red :

I know under the grene, the serpent how he lurkes :
 The hammer of the restles forge I wote eke how
 it workes.

I know, and can by roate the tale that I woulde tell
 But ofte the woordes came fourth awrye of him
 that loveth well.

I know in heate and colde the lover how he shakes,
 In synging how he doth complayne, in sleeping
 how he wakes

To languish without ache, sickelisse for to consume,
 A thousand thynges for to devyse, resolvynge of
 his fume ; [fore

And though he lyste to see his ladyes grace full
 Such pleasures as delyght his eye, do not his helthe
 restore.

I know to seke the tracte of my desyred foe,
 And fere to fynde that I do seek, but chiefly this
 I know, [loved,

That lovers must tranfourme into the thyng be-
 And live (alas ! who would believe ?) with sprite
 from lyfe removed.

I knowe in harty sighes and laughters of the spleene,
 At once to chaunge my state, my will, and eke
 my colour clene.

I know how to deceyve my self wythe others helpe,
 And how the lyon chastised is, by beatynge of the
 whelpe.

In standynge nere the fyre, I know how that I frease ;
 Farre of I burne, in bothe I waste, and so my lyfe
 I leese. [mynde,

I know how Love doth rage upon a yeylding
 How smalle a nete may take and make a harte of
 gentle kynde :

Or else with seldom fwete to season hepes of gall,
 Revived with a glympse of grace old sorrows to
 let fall. [Love,

The hydden traynes I know, and secret snares of
 How soone a loke will prynte a thoughte that ne-
 ver may remove. [welthe

The flypper state I knowe, the sodein turnes from
 The doubtfull hope, the certaine wooc, and sure
 despaired hethe.

*The Complainte of a Lover that desied Love, and was
 by Love after the more tormented.*

WHEN somer tooke in hande the wynter to assaile,
 With force of myghte and vyrtue grete, his stormy
 blasts to quaille :

And when he clothed sayre the earthe about wythe
 grene,

And every tree new garmented, that pleasure was
 to sene :

Mine hart gan new revive, and changed blood did
 stir

Me to withdrawe my wynter woes, that kepte
 wythyn the dur.

Abrode, quod my desyre, assay to set thy fote.

Where thou shalt fynde the favour sweete, for
 sprong is every rote

And to thy helthe if thou were sycke in any case
 Nothing more good, than in the sprynge the ayre
 to sele a place :

There shalt thou heare and see al kynde of Byrdes,
ywrought

Wel tune theyre voyce, with warble smal, as na-
ture hath them tought. [leave,

Thus pricked me my lust the fluggish house to
And for my helthe I thoughte it best, such coun-
sel to receave :

So on a morrow furth, unwist of any wyghte,
I went to prove how well it woulde, my hevy
burden lyghte :

And when I felt the ayre, so pleasant round
about; [gotten out.

Lorde to my selfe how glad I was, that I had
There myght I see how Ver had every blossome
kent, [they went;

And eke the new betrothed byrdes y coupled how
And in thyre songes me thought, they thanked
nature much,

That by her lycence al that yere, to Love theyre
hope was such :

Right as they could devise to chose them trees
throughout,

Wyth much reyoing to theyr Lord, thus flew
they all about. [ceave,

Whyche when I gan resolve, and in my head con-
What pleasant lyfe, what heaps of joy, those little
birdes receave.

And saw in what estate I weary man was wroughte,
By want of that they had at will, and I resct at
nought :

Lord, how I gan in wrath! unwisely me demeane!
I cursed Love, and hym defied, I thoughte to turne
the streame :

But when I well behelde, he had me under awe,
I asked mercy for my faulte, that so transgreyst his
lawe,

Thou blinded God (quod I) forgive me this offence,
Unwittingly I went about to malice thy pretence :
Wherewith he gave a becke, and thus methoughte
he swore,

Thy sorrow ought suffice to purge thy faulte if it
were more :

The virtue of which sound, mine hart did so revive,
That I methought was made as whoale, as any
man alive,

But here I may perceve, myne error and all and
some, [still undone :

For that I thought that so it was, yet was it
And al that was no more but mine expressed mynde,
That fain wou'd have some good reliefe, of Cu-
pid well assigned.

I turned home forthwith, and might perceyve it
well, [rebel

That he agreved was right sore, with me for my
My harmes have ever since encreased more, and
more, [evermore.

And I remaind without his helpe, undone for
A mirror let me be unto ye lovers all; [befall.

Strive not with Love, for if ye do, it will ye thus

Complaint of a Lover Rebuked.

Love that liveth, and raigneth in my thought,
That built his scat within my native brest

Clad in the armes, wherein with me he fought,
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.

She that methought to love, and suffer pain,
My doubtfull hope, and eke my hot desire,
With shamfast cloke to shadowe and restrain,
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire,
And cowed Love then to the hart apace
Taketh his flight, whereas he lurkes and plaines,
His purpose lost, and dare not shewe his face,
For my Loves gilt thus faultless bide I paines,
Yet from my Love shall not my foote remove
Swete is his deth, that takes his end by Love.

Complaint of the Lover Disdained.

IN Ciprus springes whereas dame Venus dwelt,
A well so hote, that who so tastes the same;
Were he of stone, as chawed yse should melt,
And kindlede finde his brest with fired flame.
Whose moyst poison dissolved hath my hate,
This creping fire my cold limbe so opprest;
That in the hart that harborde fredome late,
Endlesse despayre long thraldome hath imprest.
An other so colde in frozen yse is founde,
Whose chilling venom of repugnant kinde;
The fervent heat doth quenche of Cupides wounde
And with the spotted change infectes the minde :
Whereof my dere hath tasted to my paine,
My service thus is grown into disdaine.

Description and Praise of his Love GERALDINE.

FROM Tuscan came my Ladies worthy race,
Faire Florence was sometime her auncient seate :
The Western Yle whose pleasant shore doth fate
Wild Cambers clifs, did geve her lyuely heate :
Fostered she was, with milke of Irishe brest :
Her fire, an erle, her dame, of princes blood ;
From tender yeres, in Britaine she doth rest,
With kinges childe, where she tasteth costly foode.
Honsdon did first present her to myne yien :
Bright is her hewe, and Geraldine she hight,
Hampton me taught, to wishe her first for mine,
And Windsor, alas, doth chase me from her sight.
Her beauty of kinde, her vertue from above,
Happy is he, that can obtain her Love.

The frailtye, and hurtfulnes of Beautie.

BRITTLE beautie that nature made so fraile,
Whereof the gift is small, and short the sealon;
Flowring to day, to morowe apt to faile,
Tickled treasure, abhorred of reason :
Dangerous to deale with, vaine of none availe,
Costly in keeping, past not worthe two pealon ;
Slipper in sliding, as is an eles taile;
Harde to attain, once gotten not geason.
Jewell of jeopardie, that peril doth assaile,
Falle and vntrewe, enticed oft to treason ;

Enemy to youth, that most may I bewaile;
 Ah bitter swete! infecting as the poyson,
 Thou farest as frute, that with the frost is taken,
 To day redy ripe, to morow al to shaken.

A Complaint by night of the Lover not Beloved.

ALAS! so al thinges now doe holde their peace,
 Heaven and earth disturbed in nothing;
 The beastes, the ayer, the birdes their songe doe
 leave,
 The nightes chare the stares aboute doth bringe:
 Calme is the sea, the waues worke lesse and lesse.
 So am not I, whome Love alas doth wring,
 Bringing before my face the great encrease
 Of my desires, whereas I wepe and sing,
 In joy and wo, as in a doubtful case,
 For my swete thoughts, some tyme doe pleasure
 bring;

But by and by, the cause of my disease,
 Geves me a pang, that inwardly doth sting;
 When that I thinke what grief it is againe,
 To live and lacke the thing should ridde my pain.

*How eche thing, save the Lover in Spring, Reinueth to
 pleasure.*

WHEN Windsor walles sustained my wearied arme,
 My hande, my chin, to ease my restless hed,
 The pleasant plot reuelted green with warme,
 The blossomed bowes with lusty Ver yspred:
 The floured meades, the wedded byrdes so late,
 Myne eyes discouer, and to my mynde resorte
 The ioly woes, the hatelesse short debate,
 The rakehell lyfe, that longes to loues disporte,
 Wherewith, alas, the heauy charge of care
 Heapt in my brest, breakes fourth agaynst my wyll,
 In smoky sightes that ouercast the ayre,
 My vapor'd eyes such drearily teares dystill.
 The tender spring whiche quicken, where they fall,
 And I halfe bent to throwe me downe withall.

A Vowe to love faithfully howsoever be be rewarded.

SET me whereas the sonne doth parch the grene,
 Or where his beams do not dissolve the yse,
 In temperate heat, where he is felt, and sene,
 In presence prest of people, madde, or wise;
 Set me in hye, or yet in lowe degree,
 In longest night, or in the shortest day;
 In clearest skye, or where cloudes thickest be,
 In lusty youth, or when my heare are grave:
 Set me in heaven, in earth, or else in hell,
 In hyll or dale, or in the foaming flood;
 Thrall, or at large, alyve where so I dwell,
 Helthe, in evyll sante or good;
 Sicke, or in e, and only with this thought,
 Hers will I b, if, althoug my chaunce be nought.
 Content my se

*Complaint that by: Lady after she knew of hys Love,
 kept her face always bydden from hym.*

I NEVER sawe my Lady laye apart,
 Her cornet blacke, in colde nor yet in heate,
 Sith fyrst she knew my griefe was growen so greate,
 Whyche other fancies dryveth from my harte
 That to my selfe I do the thought reserve.
 The whyche unwares dyd wound my woeful brest,
 But on her face myne eyes mought never rest:
 Yet synce she knew I dyd her love and serve,
 Her golden tresses cladde allway with blacke;
 Her smyleyng lookes that had thus evermore,
 And that restraynes which I desire so sore:
 So doth this cornet governe, the alacke!
 In summer sun, in winters breathe, a froste,
 Wherebye the lyghte of her sayre lookes I lost.

Request to hys Love to ioine Bountie with Beauty.

THE golden gyft that Nature dyd thee geve,
 To fasten frendes and feed them at thy will;
 With fourme and favour, taught me to believe,
 How thou arte made to shewe her greatest skylle;
 Whose hydden vertues are not so unknowen,
 But lyvely dames myghte gather at the fyrste;
 Where beauty se her perfecte seede hath sowne,
 Of all other graces follow nedes, there must.
 Now certes Ladie, synce all thys is true,
 That from above thy gyftes are thus elect;
 Do not deface them than wyth fancies newe.
 Nor change of myndes let not the mynde infect:
 But mercy hymc thy frende, that doth thee serve,
 Who seekes always thynne honour to preserve.

*Prisoner in Windsor, he recounteth his pleasure there
 passed.*

So cruell prison howe could betyde, alas!
 As proude Windsor: Where I in lust and joy,
 Wythe a kynges sonne, my chylde yeres dyd passe,
 In greater feast, than Priams sonnes of Troye:
 Where eche swete place retournes a tastfull sower:
 The large grene where we were wont to trove,
 Wyth eyes cast up into the Maydens tower,
 And easy fighes, such as folkes draw in Love:
 The stately seates, the ladies brighte of bewe;
 The daunces short, long tales of greate delight
 Wyth woordes and lookes, that tygers could but
 rewe,
 Where eche of us dyd pleade the others ryghte.
 The palme play, where despoyled for the game,
 With dared eyes oft we by gleames of love,
 Have myst the ball, and gote sighte of our dame
 To bayte her eyes, whyche kept the leads above
 The gravel ground, wythe sleeves tyde on the
 helme [hartes;
 On sonyng horse, with swordes and frendly
 Wythe chere as though one should another whelme
 Wherewe have sought, and chased oft wyth darter.

With silver droppes the meade yet spreade for
 ruthe,
 In actives games of nimbleness and strength,
 Where we did strayne trayned with swarmes of
 youthe
 Our tender limmes, that yet shot up in lengthe.
 The secrete groves which oft we made resounde,
 Of pleasant playnte, and of our Ladies prayse,
 Recording oft what grace eche one had founde,
 What hope of spede, what drede of long delays.
 The wylde Forrest, the clothed holes with grene,
 With raynes availed and swiftly breathed horse;
 Wyth cry of houndes and merry blastes betwene,
 Where we did chase the feareful harte of force.
 The wyde vales eke, that harborde us eche
 nyghte,
 Wherewith, (alas) reviveth in my breste;
 The swete accorde, such slepes as yet delyt,
 The pleasant dreames the quyet bed of rest;
 The secret thoughtes imparted with such trust,
 The wanton talke, the dyvers chaunge of playe;
 The friendship sworne, eche promise kept so fast,
 Wherewith we past the winter nyghte away.
 And wyth thys thoughte, the bloud forsakes the
 face,
 The teares berayne my chekes of deadly hewe,
 The whyche as soone as sobbyng sighes, (alas!)
 Upsupped have, thus, I my playnt renewe:
 O place of blisse! renewer of my woes!
 Give me accompt where is my noble fere,
 Whom in thy walles thou doest eche nyghte en-
 close,
 To other luse, but unto me most clere:
 Eccho (alas!) that doth my sorrow rewe,
 Returns thereto a hollowe sounde of playnt;
 Thus I alone, where all my freedome grewe,
 In pryson pyne, with bondage and reitraynt:
 And with remembrance of the greater grieve,
 To banish the lesse I fynd my chief reliefe.

*The Lover comforteth himselfe wythe the Worthynesse
 of his Love.*

WHEN rageyng love wyth extreme payne,
 Most cruelly distraynes my harte;
 When that my teares as floudes of rayne,
 Bear witness of my wofull smarte:
 When sighes have wasted so my breathe
 That I lye at the poynt of deathe.
 I call to mynde the navy greate,
 That the Greekes brought to Troy towne,
 And how the boysterous wyndes dyde beate
 Theyre shippes, and rent thayre sayles adowne;
 Tyll Agamemnons daughters bloode,
 Appeased the goddess that them withstood:
 And how that in those ten years warre,
 Full many a bloody dede was done;
 And many a Lorde that came full farre,
 There caughte his bane (alas!) too soone:
 And many a good knyghte overcome,
 Before the Grekes had Helene wonne.
 Then think I thus with such repayre,
 So long tyme warre of valiant menne,

Was all to wyne a lady fayre,
 Shall I not learne to suffer then?
 And think my tyme well spent to be;
 Serving a woorthier wyghte than she?
 Therefore I never will repent,
 But paynes contented styll endure;
 For like as when rough winter spent,
 The pleasant spryng straight draweth in ure,
 So after raging stormes of care,
 Joyfull at length may be my fare.

*Complaint of the absence of her Lover being upon
 the seas.*

O Happy dames that may embrace,
 The fruite of your delyghte;
 Help to bewaile the woefull case,
 And eke the heavy plyghte
 Of me that wanted to reioyce,
 The fortune of my pleasant choice:
 Good ladyes helpe to fill my mourning voice.
 In shippe freghte wythe remembraunce
 Of thoughtes and pleasures past,
 He sayles that hath governaunce;
 My life while it will last.
 With scalding sighes for lacke of gale,
 Furderyng hys hope that is his sayle,
 Toward me, the swete port of hys awayle.
 Alas! how oft in dreams I see
 Those eyes that were my foode,
 Whych sometime so delyted me
 That yet they do me goode:
 Wherewith I wak wythe his returne,
 Whose absent flame dyd make me burn,
 But when I fynde the lacke, Lord, how I mourne!
 When other lovers in armes acrosse,
 Reioyce their encchyfe delyght;
 Drowned in teares to mourne my losse
 I stand the bytter nyghte
 In my window where I may see
 Before the wyndes how the cloudes flee
 Lo! what a mariner love hath made me.
 And in grene waves when the salt floode
 Doth ryse by rage of wynde,
 A thousand fancies in that mood
 Assaile my restlesse mynde:
 Alas! how drencheth my swet so
 That wyth the spoyle of my hart did go,
 And left me, (but alas!) why did he so?
 And when the seas were calme agayne,
 To chace from me annoye,
 My doubtful hope doth cause my playne,
 So drede cuts of my loye.
 Thus in my wealth myngled with woe,
 And of eche thought a doubt doth growe
 Now he comes! will he come? alas! no!

*Complaint of a dying Lover refused upon his Ladyes
 Insult myslaking of his verying.*

IN wynters iust returne, when Boreas gan his
 raygne,
 And every tree unclothed fast, as nature taught
 them playne;

In mysty morning darke, as shepe are then in
holde,
I hyde me fast, it fat me on, my shepe for to un-
folde.
And as it is a thyng that lovers have by fyttes,
Under a palme I heard one cry, as he had lost hys
wittes.
Whose voice did ringe so shrill in utterynge of
hys playnt,
That I amazed was to heare, how love coulde hym
attaynt,
Ah! wretched man (quod he) come death and
ryd thys woe;
A iust reward, a happy end, if it may chaunce
thee foe.
Thy pleasures past, have wrought thy woe with-
out redresse;
If thou hadst never felt no ioy, thy smart had been
the lesse.
And rechlesse of hys lyfe, he gan both sigh and
grone,
A ruefull thyng methought it was to here hym
make such mone
Thou cursed pen sayd he, wo worthe the byrde
she bare,
The man, the knyfe, and all that made thee, wo
be to thyre share:
Wo worth the tyme and place, where I could so
endyte,
And wo be it yet once agayne, the pen that so
can wryte.
Unhappy hand! it had been happy tyme for me,
If when to wryte thou learned fyrste, unjoynted
hadst thou be.
Thus cursed he himself, and every other wyghte,
Save her alone whom love him bound to serve
both day and nyght.
Whyche when I heard and saw, how he hymself
foredyd
Against the ground with bloody strokes, hymself
even thereto rid;
Had been my hart of flynt it must have melted
though,
For in my lyfe I never saw a man so full of wo,
Wyth teares for hys redresse, I rashely to him
ran,
And in my armes I caught hym fast, and thus I
spake hym than:
What wofull wyght art thou that in such heavy
case,
Tormentes thy selfe wyth such despyte here in
thys desert place?
Wherewith as all agayste, fulfylde with ire and
dread,
He cast on me a staring loke with colour pale
and dead; [plyght,
Nay what art thou (quod he) that in thys heavy
Doest fynde me here, most wofull wretch, that
lyfe hath in despyght?
I am (quod I) but poore and symple in degree,
A shepheardes charge I have in hande, unworthy
though I be:
Wyth that he gave a sighe as though the skye
should fall, [he call:
And loud alas he shryked oft, and shepheard gan

Come hie thee fast at ones, and prynt it in thy
hart,
So thou shall know, and I shall tell, thy gyltlesse
how I smart.
Hys backe agaynste the tree fore feebled all wythe
faynte
Wyth weary sprite, he stretcht hym up, and thus
he told hys plaint:
Once in my harte (quod he) it chaunced me to
love
Such one in whome hath nature wrought her
cunning for to prove:
And sure I cannot say but many yeres were spent,
With such good will so recompent, as both we
were content.
Where to shew I'me bounde, and she lykewise also,
The sunne should rune hys course awry ere we
thys fayth foregoe.
Who joyed then but I? who hadde thys worldes
blyffe?
Who myghte compare a lyfe to myne that never
thought on this?
But dwellyng in thys truth, amid my greatest joy,
It me befalled a greater losse then Priam had of
Troy;
She is reversed cleane and beareth me in hand,
That my desertes have geven cause to breke thys
faythful band.
And for my iust excuse awayleth no defence:
Now knowest thou all, I can no more, but shep-
heard hie thee hence; [lyve,
And gave him leave to dye, that may no longer
Whose record to I claime to have, my death I do
forgeve;
And eke when I am gone, be bold to speake it
playne,
Thou hast seen dye the truest man that ever love
dyd payne.
Wherewith he turnde hym rounde, and gasping
oft for breath,
Into his armes a tree he caught, and sayd welcome
my death
Welcome a thousand fold, now dearer unto me
Than should without her love to live, an empe-
rour to be.
Thus in this wofull state he yelded up the gost,
And little knoweth his ladye, what a lover she
hath lost. [right
Whose death when I beheld, no marvel was it
For pitie though my heart dyd blede, to see so
piteous sight.
My bloud from heate to cold oft chaunged won-
ders fore, [before:
A thousand troubles there I found I never knew.
Twene drede and dolour, so my spretes were
brought in feare,
That long it was ere I could call to minde, what
I dyd there.
But as eche thing hath ende, so had these paynes
of myne,
The furies past, and I my wittes restorde by
length of tyme:
Then as I could devyse, to seek I thought it best,
Where I might finde some worthy place for such
a corps to rest;

And in my mynde it came, from thence not farre
away
Where Cresfelds love, king Priams sone the wor-
thy Trolus lay :
By him I made his tombe, in token he was true.
And as to him belongeth well, I covered it with
blewe; [soone,
Whose soule by aungels power, departed not so
But to the heavens, so it fled, for to receive his
dome.

Complaint of the absence of her lover beyng upon the sea.

Good ladies, ye that have your pleasures in exile,
Step in your foote, come take a place, and morne
with me a while :
And such as by theyr lordes do set but little pryce,
Let them sit still, it skilles them not what chaunce
come on the dice :
But ye whom love hath bound by order of desyre,
To love your lords, whose good deserts none
other would require : [myne,
Come ye yet once agayne, and set your foote by
Whose wofull plight, and sorrowes great, no tong
can well define.
My love and lord, alas! in whom consistes my
welth,
Hath fortune sent to passe the seas in hazard of
his helth : [mynde,
Whom I was wont tembrace with well contented
Is now amyd the fomyng floods at pleasure of the
wynde :
Where God will him preserve, and soone him
home me send,
Without which hope my lyfe (alas) were shortly
at an ende :
Whose absence yet although my hope doth tell
me playne
With short returne he comes anone, yet ceaseth
not my payne :
The fearefull dreames I have, oft tymes doe grieve
me so,
That when I wake, I lye in doubte, where they
be true or no :
Sometimes the roaring seas, me semes do grow
so hye,
That my deare Lord, ay me, alas! methinkes I
see him dye.
An other time the same doth tell me he is come,
And playing, where I shall hym finde with his
faire little sonne.
So fourth I goe apace to see that lefesome sight,
And with a kyffe, methinke I say welcome my
lord my knight,
Welcome my swete, alas, the stay of my welfare,
Thy presence bringeth forth a truce atwixt me
and my care :
Then lively doth he look, and salveth me agayne,
And sayth my dere how is it now that you have
all this payne? [brest,
Wherewith the heavy cares that heapt are in my
Breake fourth and me dischargen clene of all my
huge unrest.

But when I me awake, and find it but a dreame
The anguish of my former wo beginneth more
extreme
And me tormenteth so that uneath may I fynde,
Some hidden peace wherein to flake the gnawing
of my mynde. [burne,
Thus every way you see wythe absence how I
And for my wound no cure I fynde but hoape
of good returne ;
Save when I thinke by sowre how swete is felt
the more [fore :
It doth abate some of my paynes, that I abode be-
And then unto myself I say, when we shall mete,
But little whyle shall seme thys payne, the joy
shall be so swete.
Ye wyndes I you conjure in cheifest of your rage,
That ye my lord safely send my sorrowes to af-
swage.
And that I may not long abyde in thys excesse,
Do your good will to cure a wyght that liveth in
distresse.

*A praise of bys Love, wherein he reproveth them that
compare their ladies with bis.*

GIVE place ye lovers here before,
That spent your boastes and bragges in vain,
My ladies beuty passeth more,
The best of yours I dare well sayne,
Then doth the sunne the caundle lyght,
Or bryghtest day the darkest nyght,
And thereto hath a troth as just,
As had Penelope the fayre,
For what she sayeth ye may it trust,
As it by wrytyng sealed were :
And virtues hath she many moe,
Than I wyth pen have skill to shoe.
I could reherse if that I would,
The whole effecte of natures playnt,
When she had lost the perfecte moulde,
The like to whome she could not paynte :
With wringeing hands, how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I.
I knowe she swore with rageing mynde,
Her kyngdome only set apart ;
There was no losse by law of kynde.
That could have gone so nere her hearte ;
And this was chiefly all her payne.
She could not make the lyke agayne.
Syth nature thus gave her the prayse,
To be the chiefest worke she wroughte ;
In fayth me thinke some better ways,
On your behalfe myghte well be soughte.
Then to compare (as you have done)
To matche the candle withe the sunne.

To a Ladie that skorned her Lover.

ALTHOUGH I have a checke,
To geve the mate is harde ;
For I have found a necke,
To keep my men in garde.

And you that hardy are,
 To geve so great assaye
 Unto a man of warre
 To dryve hys men away:
 I nede you take good hede,
 And marke this foolyshe verse;
 For I wyll so provyde,
 That I wyll have you ferce.
 And when your ferce is had,
 And all your warre is done,
 Then shall yourself be glad,
 To end that you begonne.
 For if by chaunce I winne,
 Your personne in the feilde,
 To late then you come in
 Your selfe to me to yelde.
 For I will use my power,
 As captayne full of myghte;
 And such I will devoure,
 As use to shew my spyghte.
 And for because you gave
 Me cheke in your degree;
 This vantage lo I have,
 Now check and garde to thee:
 Defend it if thou may,
 Stand styffe in thyne estate;
 For sure I will assay,
 If I can geve the mate.

A warning to the Lover, how he is abused by his Love.

To dearly had I boughte my grene and youthful
 yeres,
 If in myne age I coulde not fynde, when craft for
 love apperes. [rest,
 And seldome though I come in Court among the
 Yet can I iudge in colours dymme, as deep as can
 the best.
 Where grief tormentes the man that suffereth se-
 cret smart,
 To breake it fourth unto some frende, it easeth
 well the heart:
 So stand it now with me, (for my beloved frend)
 This case is thine, for whom I feel such torments
 of my mynde;
 And for thy sake, I burne so in my secret breste,
 That tyll thou know my whole disease, my heart
 can have no rest.
 I see how thyne abuse hath wrested so thy wittes,
 That all it yeldes to thy desire, and followes thee
 by fittes.
 Where thou hast loved so long, with heart and
 all thy power, [devour;
 I see thee fed with fayned wordes, thy freedom to
 I know, (though she say nay, and would it well
 withstande,
 When in her grace, thou yeldest thee most, she
 bare thee but in hand;
 I see her pleasant chere, in chiefest of thy suite,
 When thou art gone, I see him come, that ga-
 thers up the fruite;
 And eke in thy respect, I see the base degree,
 Of him to whom she gave the hart, that promised
 was to thee.

I see (what woulde you more) stode never man so
 sure,
 On womans woord, but wisdom would instruct
 it to endure.

The forsaken Lover describeth, and forsaketh Love.

O Lothsome place where I,
 Have seene and heard my dere;
 When in my hart her eye,
 Hath made her thought appere.
 By glinsing with such grace,
 As fortune it ne woulde
 That lasten any space,
 Between us longer shoulde.
 As fortune did advance,
 To further my desire,
 Even so hath fortunes chaunce,
 Thrownen all ammiddes the myre.
 And that I have deserved,
 With true and faithfull hart;
 As to his handes reserved,
 That never felt the smart.
 But happy is that man,
 That scapeth hath the grieve,
 That love will seek him can,
 By wanting his reliefe.
 A scourge to quiet myndes,
 It is who taketh hede;
 A common plague that byndes,
 A travell without mede.
 This gift it hath also,
 Who so enjoyes it most,
 A thousand troubles grow,
 Yo vex his wearied ghost.
 And last it may not long,
 The truest thyng of all;
 And sure the greatest wronge,
 That is within thys thrall.
 But since thou desert place,
 Canst give me no accompte;
 Of my desyred grace,
 That I to have was wont:
 Farewell! thou hast me taughte,
 To thinke me not the fyrste,
 That love hath set a loft,
 And casten in the dust.

The Lover describes his restless Estate.

As ofte as I beholde and se,
 The soveraigne beautie that me bounde,
 The nier my comforte is to me,
 Alas! the fresher is my wound.
 As flame doth quench by rage of fire,
 And running stremes confunes by raine;
 So doth the sight that I desire,
 Appease my grieve and deadly paine.
 First when I saw those chrystal stremes,
 Whose beauty made my mortall woundes,
 I little thoughte within her beames,
 So swete a venom to be founde,

But wilfull Will did pricke me forth,
 And blinde Cupid did whippe and guyde;
 Force made me take my grief in worth
 My fruitlesse hope my harme did hide.
 As cruel waves full oft be founde,
 Against the rockes do rore and cry,
 So doth my hart full oft rebound,
 Against my brest ful bitterly.
 I fall and se mine own decay,
 As one that beares flame in his brest;
 Forgets in paine to put away,
 The thinge that bredeth mine unrest.

The Lover excuseth himself of suspected change.

THOUGH I regarded not
 The promise made by me,
 Or passed not to spot
 My faith and honestie;
 Yet were my fanisie strange,
 And wilful will to wite;
 If I soughte now to change
 A falkon for a kite.
 All men might well dispraise
 My wit and enterprise,
 If I esteemed a pefe
 Above a pearle in price;
 Or judged the owle in sight,
 The sparhauke to excell;
 Which flyeth but in the night
 As all men know righte well,
 Or if I soughte to faile,
 Into the brittle porte;
 Where anker hold doth faile,
 To such as do resort;
 And leave the haven sure,
 Where blowes no blustering winde;
 Nor sickeenesse in ure
 So farforth as I finde.
 No, think me not so lighte,
 Nor of so churlish kinde,
 Though it lay in my wighte,
 My boundage to unbinde:
 That I woulde leave the kinde
 To hunt the ganders so.
 No, no, I have no minde
 To make exchanges so;
 Nor yet to change at all,
 For thinke it may not be,
 That I shoulde seke to fall
 From my felicitie.
 Desirous for to win,
 And loth for to forgo,
 Or new change to begin,
 How may all this be so?
 The fire it cannot frese,
 For it is not his kinde;
 Nor true love cannot lese
 The constancie of minde:
 Yet as sone shall the fire,
 Want heate to blase and burne,
 As I in such desire
 Have once a thought to turne.

*A Carelesse Man scorning and describing the futtle usage
 of Women towards their Lovers.*

WRAPT in me carelesse cloke, as I walk to and
 fro,
 I see how love can shew what force there reign-
 eth in his bow,
 And how he shoteth eke a harty hart to wound;
 And where he glaunceth by again, that little hurt
 is found.
 For feldme is it sene he wounde the harts alike;
 The tone may rage, when tothers love is often
 farre to seke:
 All this I see with more, and wonder thinketh me,
 How he can strike the one so fore, and leave the
 other free;
 I see that wounded wight, that suffereth all this
 wrong,
 How he is fed with yeas and nays, and liveth al
 to long
 In silence, though I kepe such secretes to my self;
 Yet do I see how she sometime doth yelde a looke
 by stelth,
 As though it semde, ywis y will not lose the so.
 When in her hart so swete a thought did never
 truly grow;
 Then say I thus, alas, that man is farre from blisse
 That doth receive for his relief none other game
 but this;
 And she that fedes him so, I fele and find it plain,
 Is but to glory in her power, that over such can
 raigne;
 Nor are such graces spent, but when she thinks
 that he
 A wery man is fully bent such fancies to let flee,
 Then to retaine him still, she wresteth new her
 grace;
 And smileth so as though she woulde forthewith
 the man embrace:
 But when the prooffe is made to try such lokes
 withall,
 He findeth then the place alvoided, and frighted
 full of Gall:
 Lord what abuse is this! who can such women
 praise?
 That for their glory do devise to use such craf-
 ty ways:
 I that amonge the rest, do sit and marke the
 Find that in her is greater crafte then is in
 twenty moe,
 Whose tender years, alas! with wiles so wel are
 sped,
 What will she do, when hory heares, are pow-
 dered in her hed?

*An Answer in the behalf of a Woman of an uncer-
 tain Author.*

GIRL in my gittles gowne, as I sit here and sow
 I see that thinges are not in dede as to the out-
 warde show. [what nere,
 And who so list to loke, and note thinges some,

Shal find wher plainesse semes to haunt, nothing
 but craft appear:
 For with indifferent eyes my self can well discern,
 How som to guide a ship in stormes seke for to
 take the sterne;
 Whose practise it were proued in calme to stere a
 barge,
 Assuredly believ it well it were to great a charge:
 And some I se again sit still and say but small,
 That coule do ten times more then they that say
 they can do all;
 Whose goodly giftes are such, the more they
 understand,
 The more they seke to learne and know, and
 take lese charge in hand.
 And to declare more plain the time fleets not so
 fast,
 But I can bear full well in mind the song now
 song and past,
 The auctor whercof come wrapt in a crafty cloke,
 With will to force a flaming fire, where he could
 raise no smoke;
 If power and will had joined, as it appereth plaine,
 The truth no right had tane no place their ver-
 tues had been vain,
 So that you may perceive, and I may falsly se
 The innocent that gilleesse is, condemned should
 have be.

The Constant Lover Lamentb.

Sins fortunes wrath envieth the welth
 Wherein I raigned by the sight
 Of that, that fed mine eyes by stelh,
 With sowre, swete, dread and delight.
 Let not my grieve move you to mone,
 For I will wepe and waile alone.
 Spite drave me into Boreas raigne,
 Where hoary frostes the frutes do bite,
 When hills were spread, and every plaine
 With stormy winters mantle white,
 And yet my dere such was my heate,
 When others freaze then did I sweate.
 And now, though on the sunne I drive,
 Whose fervent flame all thinges decaies,
 His beames in brightnesse may not strive,
 With light of your swete golden rayes;
 Nor from my breste this heate remove,
 The frozen thoughtes graven by love.
 He may the waves of the salt floode
 Quench that your beautie set on fyre,
 For though myne eyes forbear the foode,
 That dyd relieve the hot desire:
 Such as I was, such will I be,
 Your owne, what woulde you more of me?

*A Song written by the Earle of SURREY, by a Lady
 that refused to Daunce with him.*

Eche beast can choose his fere according to his
 mynde,
 And eke can shewe a friendly chere lyke to their
 beastly kynde;

A lyon saw I late as whyte as any snowe,
 Which semed well to leade the race, his port the
 same did shewe:
 Upon the gentle beast to gaze it pleased me,
 For still me thoughte he seemed well of noble
 bloud to be.
 And as he prauuced before, still seeking for a make,
 As who would say, there is none here, I trowe
 will me forsake;
 I might perceive a wolfe as white as whales bone,
 A fairer beaste, of fresher hue beheld I never none,
 Save that her lookes were coy, and froward eke
 her grace,
 Unto the whiche this gentle beast gan him avaunce
 apace.
 And with a becke full lowe he bowed at her feete,
 In humble wise, as who woulde say, I am too
 farre unmeete.
 But such a scornfull chere wherewith she him
 rewarded,
 Was never seene I trowe the like to such as well
 deserved.
 With that she start asydewell neere a foot or twaine,
 And unto him thus gan she say with spyte and
 great disdaine,
 Lyon she saide, if thou hadest known my mind
 before,
 Thou hadst not spent thy travaile thus, nor all
 thy paine for lore. [me,
 Do way I lete thee, wete thou shalt not play with
 Go range about, where thou maist finde some
 meter fere for thee.
 With that he bet his tayle, his eyes began to flame,
 I might perceive his noble heart, much moved by
 the fame.
 Yet saw I him refrayne, and eke his wrath asswage,
 And unto her thus gan he say, when he was past
 his rage.
 Cruel you do me wronge, to set me thus so lighte,
 Without desert for my good will, to shew me
 thus despyte;
 How can ye thus entreate a lyon of the race,
 That with his pawes, a crowned kynge devoured
 in the place.
 Whose nature is to prey upon no simple foode,
 As long as he may sucke the flesh, and drink of
 noble bloud.
 If you be fayre and fresh, am I not of your hue,
 And for my vaunt I dare well say, my bloud is
 not untrue.
 For you yourself have heard, it is not long agoe,
 Sith that for love, one of the race dyd end his
 life in wo.
 In tower strong, and hye for his assured truth,
 Whereas in tears he spent his breath, alas the
 more the ruth.
 Thys gentle beaste so dyed, whom nothing could
 remove, [love.
 But willingly to leese hys life for los of his true
 Other there be, whose lives do linger still in payne,
 Against their wills preserved are, that woulde
 have dyed fayne.
 But now I do perceive, that nought it moveth you,
 My good entent my gentle heart, nor yet my
 kinde so true.

But that your will is such, to lure me to the trade,
And other some full many yeres to trace by craft
ye made.

And thus behold our kyndes how that we differ
farre,

I seek my foes, and you your frendes do threaten
still with warre.

I faune where I am fed, you slay, that sekcs to you,
I can devour no yelding prey, you kill where you
subdue.

My kind is to desire the honour of the feild,
And you with bloud do flake your thyrste on such
as to you yelde :

Wherefore I woulde you wiste, that for your coy-
ed lookes,

I am no man that will be trapt, nor tangled with
such hookes.

And though some lust to love, where blamefull well
they might,

And to such beastes of current sort, that would
have travail bright ;

I will observe the lawe, that nature gave to me,
To conquer such as will resist, and let the rest go
free :

And as a faulcon free, that soareth in the ayre,
Which never fed on hand nor lure, nor for no stale
doth care.

While that I live and breathe, such shall my cus-
tome be,

In wildnes of the woodes, to seek my prey where
pleaseth me :

Where many one shall rue, that never made offence,
Thus your refuse against my power, shall bote
them no defence.

And for revenge thereof, I vow and swear thereto,
A thousand spoyles I shall commyt, I never thought
to doe.

And if to lyght on you my luck so good shall be,
I shall be glad to feed on that, that would have
fed on me.

And thus farewell unkynd, to whom I bent and
bowe,

I would you wist, the ship is safe, that bare his
sayles so lowe.

Sith that a lyons hart, is for a wolfe no preye,
With bloody mouthe go flake your thirst on simple
shepe I say.

With more despyte and ire, than I can now ex-
presse,

Which to my payne, though I refrayn, the cause
you may well gues.

As for because my self was auctour of the same,
It bootes me not that for my wrath, I shoulde
disturbe the same.

*The faithfull Lover declareth his Paynes and his un-
certaine Joys, and with onely hope recomfort some-
what his wofull heart.*

If care do cause men crye, why do not I com-
playne ?

If eche man do bewaile his wo, why shew I not
my payne ?

Synce that amongst them all, I dare well say is none,
So farre from weal, so full of woe, or hath more
cause to mone.

For all thinges haveing life, sometime hath quiet
rest, [beast :

The bearing asse, the drawing oxe, and every other
The peasant, and the post, that serves at all assayes,
The ship boy, and the galley slave, have time to
take their ease.

Save I, alas ! whom care of force doth so constrainc,
To wale the day, and wake the night, continually
in payne.

From pensiveness to plaint, from plaint to bitter
teares,

From teares, to paynfull playnt againe, and thus
my life it weares.

Nothing under the sun, that I can heare or see,
But moveth me for to bewayle my cruel destiny.
For where men do rejoyce (since that I cannot so)
I take no pleasure in that place, it doubleth but
my woe.

And when I hear the sound of song or instrument
Methinke eche tune there dolefull is, and helps,
me to lament ;

And if I see some have theyre most desired syghte,
Alas ! thynke I, eche man hath weale save I most
wofull wyghte.

Then as the stricken deere, withdrawes himself
alone,

So do I seeke some secret place, where I may make
my moane.

There do my flowing eyes shew fourthe my melt-
ting hart,

So the streames of those two welles, right well de-
clare my smart.

And in those cares so could I force my self a heate,
As sicke men in theyr shaking fittes procure them-
selfe to sweate.

With thoughtes that for the tyme do much ap-
pease my payne,

But yet they cause a farther feare, and brede my
wo agayne. [appere

Methinke within my thought I see right playne
My hartes delight, my sorowes lethe, myne earthly
goddesse here,

With every sundry grace that I have seene her have,
Thus I within my wofull brest her picture paynt
and grave ;

And in my thought I role her beauties too and fro,
Her laughing chere, her lively looke, my heart
that perced so.

Her strangenes when I sued her servaunt for to be,
And what she sayde, and how she smylde, when
that she pitied me.

Then comes a sodyaue feare that rueth all my rest,
Lest absence cause forgetfulness to sinke within
her brest. [divyde,

For when I thinke how farre this earth doth us
Alas, me semes love throws me downe, I fele how
that I slide :

But when I thinke agayne, why should I thus mis-
trust, [just.

So swete a wight, so sad and wise, that is so true and
For loth she was to love, and wavering is she not,
The farther off the more desired, thus lovers tye
theyr knot ;

So in dispayre and hoape plunged am I both up
and downe,
As is the ship with wind and wave, when Nep-
tune list to frowne.
But as the watery showers delay the raging wind,
So doth good hoape cleane put away dispayre out
of my mynde;
And byddes for to serve and suffer patiently,
For what wot I the after weale that fortune wiles
to me.
For those that care do knowe, and tasted have of
trouble,
When passed is theyr wofull payne, eche joy shall
seme them double:
And bytter sendes, she now to make me taste the
better,
The pleasant swete when that it comes to make it
seem the sweter.
And so determine I to serve until my breath,
Yea rather dye a thousand times than once to false
my fayth.
And if my coole corps through weight of wofull
smart,
Do fayle or faint, my will it is that still she kepe my
And when this carcas here to earth shall be refard,
I do bequeath my weried ghost to serve her after-
ward.

The meanes to attayne happy Life.

MARTIALl the thinges that doe attayne
The happy lyfe, be these I fynde,
The riches left, not got with payne,
The fruitfull grounde, the quiet mynde,
The egall frend no grudge no strife,
No charge of rule nor governaunce;
Without disease the healthful lyfe,
The household of continuance.
The meane dyet no delicate fare,
True wisdoms joynde with simplenesse;
The night discharged of all care,
Where wine the witte may not oppresse.
The faithfull wyfe without debate,
Such slepe as may beguile the night,
Contented with thine owne estate,
Ne wish for death, ne feare his might.

Prayse of meane and constant estate.

Or thy lyfe Thomas, this compasse well marke
Not aye with full sailes the hye seas to beate,
Ne by coward dred, in shonning stormes darke,
On shallowe shores thy keel in perill fret.
Who so gladly halfeth the golden meane,
Voide of daungers advisedly hath his home,
Not with lothsome mucke as a den uncleane,
Nor palace like, whereat disdayne may glome.
The lofty pyne the great wind often rives,
With violenter swey false turrets stepe,
Lightnings assaure the high mountaines and clives,
A hart well stayde, in overthwartes depe,

Hoapeth amendes, in swete, doth feare the sower,
God that sendeth, withdraweth winter sharpe,
No will not aye thus, once Phebus to lowre,
With bowe unbent, shall cesse and frame to harp,
His voyce in strayte estate appeare thou stoute
And so wisely, when lucky gale of winde
All thy pult sayles shall fill, looke well about,
Take in a rift, hast is wast, proove dothe finde.

*Praises of certain Psalmes of David translated by Sir
T. W. the elder.*

THE great Macedon, that out of Persia chased
Darius, of whose huge powers all Asie rong,
In the riche arke Dan Homers rimes he placed,
Wo feigned gesses of heathen princes song,
What holy grave, what worthy sepulchre
To Wyates psalms should Christians then purchase;
Where he doth paint the lyvely faith and pure,
The stedfast hope the sweete returne to grace.
Of just David by persite penitence,
Where rulers may see in a myrrour clear,
The bytter fruite of false concupiscence,
How Jewry bought Urias death ful deare.
In princes hartes Gods scourge emprinted depe,
Ought them awake out of their sinfull slepe.

Of the Death of the same Sir T. W.

DIVERS thy death do dyversly bemone,
Some that in presence of thy livelighed
Lurked, whose brestes envy with hate had swolne,
Yield Ccasars feares upon Pompeus hed,
Some that watched with the murderers knife,
With eager thyrst to drinke thy gilltesse blood,
Whose practise brake by happy end of lyfe,
With envious teares to heare thy fame so good,
But I, that knew what harbred in that hed
What vertues rare were tempred in that brest,
Honour the place that such a jewel tred,
And kisse the ground wheras the corps doth rest,
With vapourd eyes, from whence such streames
avayle,
As Pyramus did on Thisbes brest bewayle.

Of the same.

WYAT resteth here, that quicke could never rest,
Whose heavenly gyftes encreaseth by disdayne,
And vertue sanke the deper in his brest.
Such profit he by envy could obtayn.

A hed, where wisdoms misteries did frame,
Whose hammers bet styll in that lively braine,
As on a stythe, where that some worke of fame
Was dayly wrought, to turne to Britaines gayne.

A vilage sterne, and milde, where both did
growe,
Vyce to contemne, in virtue to rejoyce:
Amyd great stormes, whom grace assured so,
To live upright, and smile at fortunes choyce.

A hand, that taught what might be sayd in ryme
That rest Chaucer the glory of his wit.

A marke, the which (unparfited, for time)
Some may approche, but never none shall hit.

A tong, that served in forein realmes his king,
Whose courteous talke to vertue did inflame,
Eche noble hart, a woorthy guyde to bring
Our English youth, by travayle unto fame.

An eye whose judgment none affect could blind,
Friendes to allure and foes to reconcyle;
Whose piercing looke did represent a mynde
With vertue fraught, reposed voyde of guyle.

A hart, where dreade was never so imprest,
To hyde the thought, that might the trouth avauce
In neyther fortune lost, nor yet repress,
To swell in welth, or yield unto mischaunce,

A valiant corps, where force and beauty met,
Happy, alas! too happy, but for foes,
Lived, and ran the race, that nature set,
Of manhodes shape, where she the mold did lose.

But when to the heavens that simple soule is fled
Which left with such, as covet Christ to knowe,
Witness of faith, that never shal be dead;
Sent for our health, but not received so.

Thus for our gilt, this jewel have we lost,
The earth his bones, the heavens possesse his ghost.

Of the same.

In the rude age when knowledge was not ryse,
If Jove in Crete and other were that taught,
Arts to convert to profite of our lyfe,
Wend after death to have theyr temples sought,
If vertue yet no voyde unthankfull tymes,
Fayled of some to blast her endless fame,
A goodly meane both to deterre from crime,
And to our steppes our sequele to enflame:
In dayes of truth if Wyates frendes them wayle,
The only det that dead or quick may clayme,
That rare wit spent, employed to our avayle,
Where Christ is taught we led to vertues trayne.
His lively face their breastes how did it treat,
Whose cyndres yet, with envy they do eate.

Of Sardanapalus dishonorable life, and miserable death.

THASSIRIAN king in peace, with foule desyre,
And filthy lustes, that staynde his regall hart.
In warre that should set princely heartes on fyre,
Did yeld, vanquisht for want of marcial arte,
The dynt of swordes from kisses semed strange,
And harder, than his ladies syde, his targe,
From glutton feastes, to souldiers fare, a change,
His helmet, farre above a garlandes charge,
Who scape the name of manhood did retaine,
Drenched in slouth, and womannish delight,
Feble of sprite, impatient of payne,
When he had lost his honour, and his right
Proud time of wealth, in stormes appalled with
dread,
Murthered himselfe, to shewe some manfull dede.

*How no age is content with his owne estate, and how the
age of Children is the happiest if they had skill to
understand it.*

LAYD in my quiet bed, in study as I were
I saw within my troubled head, a heap of thoughts
appear,
And every thought did shew so lyvely in myne
eyes,

That now I sight, and then I smilde, as cause of
thoughts did ryse.

I sawe the little boy, in thought how oft that he
Did wishe of God, to scape the rod, a tall young
man to be,

The young man eake that feles his bones with
paines opprest

How he would be a riche old man, to live and
lye at rest?

The riche olde man that sees his end draw on so
How he would be a boy againe to live so much
the more.

Whereat full oft I smylde, to see how all those
From boy to man, from man to boy, would chop
and change degree.

And musing thus, I think, the case is very strange,
That man from wealth, to live in wo, doth ever
seke to change,

Thus thoughtfull as I lay, I sawe my withered skyn,
How it doth shew my dented chewes, the flesh
was worn so thin,

And eke my totheless chaps, the gates of my right
way,

That opes and shuttes, as I do speak, do thus unto
me say;

The white and horish heres, the messengers of age,
That shew like lines of true belief, that this life
doth assuage,

Biddes the lay hand, and feele them hanging on
thy chin.

The whiche doth write to ages past, the third now
coming in,

Hang up therefore the bitte, of thy yong wanton
And thou that therein beaten art, the happiest life
desyne:

Whereat I sighed, and sayde, farewell my wonted
Trusse up thy packe, and trudge from me to every
little boy,

And tell them thus from me, their time most hap-
py is,

If to theyr time they reason had, to know the
truth of this.

Bonum est mihi quod humiliasti me.

THE stormes are past, these clouds are over blowne,
And humble chere, great vigour hath repress,
For the defaulte is set apayne for knowne,
And patience graft in a determed brest.
And in the heart where heapes of griefes were
growne

The swete revenge has planted mirth and rest,
No company so pleasant as mine owne,

Thralldom at large, hath made this prison free,
 Danger well past remembred workes delight,
 Of lingering doubles such hope is sprong pardie,
 That nought I finde displeasent in my sight,
 But when my glasse presented unto me,
 'The cureless wound that bledith day and night,
 To think (alas) such hap should graunted be;
 Unto a wretch that hath so oft been shed,
 For Britannes sake (alas) and now is ded.

Exhortation to learne by others trouble.

My Ratclif, when thy rechelesse youth offendes,
 Receive thy scourge by others chastisement,
 For such calling, when it woorkes none amendes
 Then plagues are sent without advertisement;
 Yet Salomon sayd, the wronged shall recure,
 But Wyat said true, the scarre doth aye endure.

The fansie of a wearied Lover.

The fansy, which that I have served long,
 That hath alway been enemy to myne case,
 Semed of late to rue upon my wrong,
 And badde me flye the cause of my miscase.
 And I furthwith did prease out of the throng,
 That thought by flight my painfull heart to please
 Some other way, till I saw faith more strong,
 And to my self I said, alas, those dayes
 In vain were spent, to runne the race so long.
 And with that thought, I met my guyde, that
 plaine,
 Out of the way wherein I wandered wrong,
 Brought me amiddes the hilles in base Bullayne,
 Wherein I am now, as restless to remayn,
 Against my will, full pleased with my payn.

DIDO AND AENEAS GOING TO THE FIELD *;

TRANSLATED FROM THE FOURTH BOOK OF VIRGIL'S ENEIDE.

—AT the threshold of her chamber dore
 The Carthage lords did on the quene attend;
 The trampling steed, with gold and purple
 trapt,
 Chawing the foaming bit ther fiercely flood.
 Then issued she, awayted with great train,
 Clad in a cloke of Tyre embroider'd rich.
 Her quiver hung behind her back, her tresse
 Knotted in gold, her purple vesture eke
 Buttred with gold. The Trojans of her train
 Before her go, with gladsome lulus,
 Æneas eke, the goodliest of the route,
 Makes one of them, and joyneth close the throng.
 Like when Apollo leaveth Lycia,
 His wintring place, and Xanthus' flood likewise
 To visit Delos, his mother's mansion,
 Repairing eft and furnishing her quire:
 The Candians and the folke of Driopes
 With painted Agathyrsies, shoute and crye,

Environing the altars round about;
 When that he walkes upon Mount Cynthus' top
 His sparkled tresse repress with garlandes softe,
 Of tender leaves, and trussed up in golde;
 His quivering darts clattering behind his backe.
 So fresh and lustie did Æneas seme—
 But to the hills and wild holtes when they came,
 From the rockes top the driver savage rose.
 Loe from the hills above, on thother side,
 Through the wide lawns thy gan to take their
 course.
 The hartes likewise, in troops taking their flight,
 Rayning the dust, the mountain fast forsake.
 The childe Iulus, blithe of his swift steede
 Amids the plain, now pricks by them, now
 these;
 And to encounter, wisheth oft in minde,
 The foming boar insteede of fearful beasts,
 Or lion browne, might from the hill descend.

DIDO'S PASSION, AND ITS EFFECTES ON THE RYSINGE CITIE,

FROM THE SAME BOOK.

—AND when they all were gone,
 And the dimme moon doth este withhold her light;
 And sliding starres provoked unto slepe,
 Alone she mourns within her palace voide,
 And sits her downe on her forsaken bed:
 And absent him she heares, when he is gone,
 And seeth eke. Oft in her cuppe she holdes

Ascanius, trapped by his father's forme.
 So to begile the love cannot be told!
 The turrets now arise not, erst begonne:
 Neither the youth welde arms, nor they avance
 The portes, nor other mete defence for warr.
 Broken there hang the workes, and myhty frame
 Of walles high raised, threatening the skie.

* This and the two following pieces, are now printed, for the first time, among Surrey's Poems.

Over the tomb of Thomas Clere, Esq., in Lambeth Church, was formerly a tablet with the following epitaph, written by the Earl of Surrey.

EPITAPHIUM THOMÆ CLERE, qui fato functus est 1545, auctore Henrico Howard comite Surriensi, in cujus felici ingenii specimen & singularis facundiae argumentum appensa fuit, hæc tabula per W. Howard, filium Thomæ nuper Ducis Norf. filii ejusdem Henrici comitis Surriensis.

Norfolke sprung thee, Lambeth holds thee dead,
Clere of the Count of Cleremont thou bight,
Within the womb of Ormond's race thou bred,
And sawest thy coffin crowned in thy sight;

Shelton for love, Surrey for Lord thou chase,
Aye me while life did last that league was tender
Tracing whose steps thou sawest Kelfall blaze,
Laudersey burnt and batter'd Bulleyn's render,
At Muttrell gates hopeless of all recure
Thine Earl half dead, gave in thy hand his will,
Which cause did thee this pining death procure
Ere summers four times seven thou couldst fulfill
Aye Clere, if love had bootéd care or cost
Heaven had not wonne, nor earth so timely lost.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
SIR THOMAS WYAT.

Containing his

SONNETS,
EPISTLES,

|

IMITATIONS,
TRANSLATIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

To which is prefixed

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

They with the Muses who conversed, were
That princely SURREY, early in the time
Of the Eight Henry, who was then the prime
Of England's noble youth. With him there came
WYAT, with reverence whom we still do name
Amongst our poets: BRYAN had a share
With the two former, which accounted are
The time's best makers, and the authors were
Of those small poems which the title bear
Of *Songes and Sonnettes*, wherein oft they hit
On many dainty passages of wit.

DRAYTON'S ELEGY TO REYNOLDS.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MUNDELL AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

Anno 1793.

THE LIFE OF WYAT.

SIR THOMAS WYAT was the son of Henry Wyat, Esq. of Allington Castle, in Kent, where he was born, in the year 1503. He is commonly called the elder, to distinguish him from his son, of the same name, who raised a rebellion in the reign of Queen Mary.

He received the rudiments of his education at Cambridge, and afterwards went to Oxford, where he completed his studies : But his chief and most splendid accomplishments were derived from his travels into various parts of Europe, which he frequently visited in the quality of an envoy.

He was the contemporary and friend of the accomplished and high-spirited Earl of Surrey. A similarity, or rather sameness of taste and of pursuits, as it is a proof, so perhaps it was the chief cement of that inviolable friendship which subsisted between them.

His wit and popular accomplishments rendered him one of the brilliant ornaments of the court of King Henry the Eighth, which at least affected to be polite ; and as Henry did not always act from cruelty and caprice, he was endeared to him, for his fidelity and success in the execution of public business, his skill in arms, literature, familiarity with languages, and lively conversation.

Wood, who degrades every thing by poverty of style, says, that " the king was in a high manner delighted with his *witty jests*." He is reported to have occasioned the Reformation by a joke, and to have planned the fall of Cardinal Wolsey by a seasonable story.

But he had almost lost his popularity, either from an intimacy with Queen Anne Boleyn, which was called a connection, or the gloomy cabals of Bishop Bonner, who could not bear his political superiority.

Yet his prudence and integrity, no less than the powers of his oratory, justified his innocence. He laments his severe and unjust imprisonment, on that occasion, in a sonnet addressed to the brave and accomplished Sir Francis Bryan ; insinuating his solicitude, that although the wound would be healed, the scar would remain ; and that to be acquitted of the accusation, would avail but little, while the thoughts of having been accused were still fresh in his remembrance.

He recovered his liberty and the king's favour, and was wise enough not to interrupt his pleasures, his convenience, or his ambition ; but spent much of his time at Allington Castle, which he magnificently repaired " for the reception," says Jacob, " of one of his noble spirit and refined taste of life ; which were more superior to his ancestors than his stately mansion, by the costly reparations, exceeded the ancient structure."

In one of his *epistles to Paines*, on the life of a courtier, his execration of flatterers and courtiers is contrasted with an entertaining picture of his own private life and rural enjoyments at Allington Castle.

This is the cause that I could never yet
Hang on their sleeves, that weigh, as thou maist see,
A chip of chaunce more than a pound of wit ;
This maketh me at home to hunt and hawke,
And in fowle wether at my booke to sit ;
In frost and snowe then with my bow to stalke ;
No man doth marke whereso I ride or go ;
In lusty leas at liberty I walke :
And of these newes I sele no weale nor wo,
Save that a clogge doth hang yet at my heele ;
No forse for that, for it is ordered so,
That I may leape both hedge and dike ful wele.

I am not now in Fraunce, to judge the wine, &c.
 But I am here in Kent and Christendome,
 Among the mufes, where I reade and rime.

The "clogge" he complains of, probably alludes to some office which he still held at court, and which sometimes recalled him, but not too frequently, from the country.

It is a common mistake of his biographers, that he died abroad of the plague, in an embassy to Charles the Fifth. Being sent to conduct that emperor's ambassador from Falmouth to London, from too eager and a needless desire of executing his commission with dispatch and punctuality, he caught a fever, by riding in a hot day; and in his return, died on the road at Sherborn, in the year 1541, in the 38th year of his age; and was buried in the great abbey church of that place.

The next year, Leland published a book of Latin verses on his death, intitled, *Nenia in mortem T. Viati*, with a wooden print of his head, after a painting of Holbein, and the following elegant inscription under the head:

Holbenus nitida pingendi maximus arte,
 Effigiem expressit graphice, sed nullus Apelles
 Exprimet ingenium felix, animumque *Viati*.

His poems were printed by Tottell, in his editions of Surrey's poems, of 1559 and 1565, under the title of *the Songes and Sonnettes of Sir Thomas Wyat the elder*, and reprinted, with the poems of Surrey, by Dr. Sewel, in 1717; and are now admitted, for the first time, into a collection of classical English poetry.

The poetical pieces of Wyat, and his friend Surrey, were in high reputation with their contemporaries, and for many years afterwards. They are thus characterised by Puttenham, the author of the old "Art of English Poetrie," whose opinion remained long as a rule of criticism: "In the latter end of the same kinge's (Henry's) raigne, spronge up a new company of wit makers, of whom Sir Thomas Wyat the elder, and Henry Earle of Surrey, were the two *chieftaines*; who having tra-vailed into Italie, and there tasted the sweete and stately measures and style of the Italian poe-*sie*, as novises newly crept out of the schooles of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poe-*sie* from that it had been before, and for that cause may justly be sayd the first reformers of our English meetre and style." And again, "Henry Earl of Surrey, and Sir Thomas Wyat, between whom I find very little difference, I repute them (as before) for the two chief lanternes of light to all others that have since employed their pennes upon English poe-*sie*: Their conceits were lofty, their styles stately, their conveyance cleanly, their terms proper, their mee-*tre* sweet, and well proportioned; in all, imitating very naturally and studiously their maister, Francis Petrarch." P. 48—50. Edit. 1589.

Leland is lavish in his praise, and scruples not to compare him to Dante and Petrarch:

Let Florence fair her *Dante* justly boast,
 And royal Rome her *Petrarch's* number'd feet;
 In *English Wyat*, both of them doth coast,
 In whom all graceful eloquence doth meet.

In Surrey's elegy on the death of Wyat, his character is delineated in the following nervous and manly quatrains:

A visage sterne and mild, where both did growe;
 Vice to contemne, in vertue to rejoyce;
 Amid great stormes, whom grace assured so
 To live upright, and smile at fortune's choyce.

A young that served in forein realmes his king;
 Whose courteous talk to vertue did enflame
 Eche noble heart; a worthy guide to bring
 Our English youth by travail unto fame;

An eye, whose judgment none affect could blind;
 Friend to allure, and foes to reconcile;
 Whose persing look did represent a minde
 With virtue fraught, reposed, void of gile.

A hart, where dreade was never so imprest
 To hide the thought that might the truth advance;
 In neither fortune lost, nor yet repress,
 To swell in welch, or yeld unto mischance —

Thy fame, great Wyat, shall by all be read;
 What vertues rare were temper'd in thy breast!
 Honour that England such a jewel bred,
 And kiss the ground whereon thy corpse did rest.

It will be superfluous to transcribe the panegyrics of his contemporaries, after this encomium of Surrey, in which his amiable character owes more to truth than to the graces of poetry, or to the flattery of friendship.

It is mentioned, to his honour, by Puttenham, that he co-operated with Surrey in correcting the roughness of our poetic style. He certainly deserves equally of posterity with Surrey for the diligence with which he cultivated elegant literature. But in his poetical capacity, he seems to have wanted the judgment of his friend Surrey, who, in imitating Petrarch, resisted the contagion of his conceits. He has more imitations, and even translations from the Italian poets, than Surrey; and he seems to have been more fond of their conceits. He is confessedly inferior to him in harmony of numbers, perspicuity of expression, and facility of phraseology. Nor is he equal to him in elegance of sentiment, in nature and sensibility. His feelings are disguised by affectation, and obscured by fantastic incongruities. His declarations of passion are embarrassed by wit and fancy; and his style is not intelligible, in proportion as it is careless and unadorned.

His chief merit is of the moral and didactic kind. His poems abound more in good sense, satire, and observations on life, than in pathos and imagination. Yet there is a degree of lyric sweetness in the lines to his lute, in which *the lover complaineth the unkindness of his love*; and in the little ode, or rather epigram on his return from Spain into England, there is great simplicity and propriety, together with a strain of poetic allusion. In the satiric vein of his *epistles to Paines and Bryan*, there is much of the familiar elegance of Horace; a style of writing which Cowper has caught with great success, in his "Table Talk," &c. &c.

Among Wyat's poems, is an unfinished translation, in Alexandrian verse, of the song of Jopas, in the first book of Virgil's *Æneid*. Wyat's and Surrey's versions from Virgil, are the first regular translations in English of an ancient classical poet. A version of David's Psalms, by Wyat, is highly extolled by Surrey and Leland. But Wyat's version of the *Penitential Psalms*, seems to be a separate work from his translation of the whole psalter; and probably that which is praised by Surrey, in the ode, intituled, *Praise of certaine Psalmes of David, translated by Sir Thomas Wyat the elder*. They were printed in 1549. But this version, with that of Surrey, mentioned in his life, is now lost. The character of Wyat has received every possible illustration from Lord Orford and Mr. Warton; after whose discriminating touches, every stroke from a casual hand must serve rather to injure than improve the likenesses.

"It was from the capricious and over-strained invention of the Italian poets," says Mr. Warton, "that Wyat was taught to torture the passion of love, by prolix and intricate comparisons, and unnatural allusions. I am of opinion, that he mistook his talents, when in compliance with the mode, he be-

came a sonneteer; and, if we may judge from a few instances, that he was likely to treat any other subject with more success than that of love. His abilities were seduced and misapplied, in fabricating fine speeches to an obdurate mistress. He appears a much more pleasing writer, when he moralises on the felicities of retirement, and attacks the vanities and vices of a court, with the honest indignation of an independent philosopher, and the freedom and pleasantry of Horace. Three of his epistles are professedly written in this strain; and we must regret, that he has not left more pieces in a style of composition for which he seems to have been eminently qualified."

To the poems of Surrey and Wyatt, are annexed, in Tottell's edition, those of *Uncertain Authors*. Many of these pieces are much in the manner of Surrey and Wyatt, which was the fashion of the times. They are all anonymous; but probably Sir Francis Bryan, George Boleyn Earl of Rochford, and Lord Vaux, contemporary rhymers and sonnetteers, were large contributors. Two of them, intituled, *The Aged Lover renounceth Love*, in which are three stanzas of the grave-digger's song in Shakespear's Hamlet, and *The Assaulte of Cupide*, &c. are the undoubted production of Lord Vaux; "a man of marvellous facility in vulgar making."

The merit of some of those pieces is so considerable, as to justify a selection; and the reader owes to the compiler of these narratives, whatever pleasure or disgust he may have in finding a specimen of the first printed poetical miscellany in the English language in this collection.

What has pleased himself, he has undertaken to recommend to others; and as sense and genius are not wanting in the pieces he has endeavoured to preserve, it will not be so much the fault of the writers, as of the the language, if they are not read with pleasure.

The stanzas, intituled, *A Praise of his Ladie*, have that elegance which results from simplicity. The thoughts support themselves, without the affectations of language; and the compliments are such as would not disgrace the gallantry or the poetry of a polished age. Puttenham speaks highly of the "counterfait action" in Lord Vaux's *Assaulte of Cupide*; but there is more poetry in some of the old pageants, than in the contrivance of the allegory of this piece. In the little ode intituled *of his mistress M. B.* much pretty description and imagination is built on the circumstance of a lady being named Bayes. *Harpalus's complaint of Philtidae's love bestowed on Corin*, is perhaps the first example in our language now remaining of the pure unmixed pastoral; and for ease of numbers, elegance of rural allusion, and simplicity of imagery, excels every thing of the kind in Spenser, who is erroneously ranked as our earliest English bucolic. In the poem, intituled, *That all things sometime finde ease of their paine, save only the lover*, some of the stanzas deserve attention for their simple beauty and native force of expression. In the ode, in which *The lover in despair lamenteth his case*, there is more pathos and feeling than in any other piece of the whole collection. The epigram, *Of a new married student*, who was pursuing his studies successfully, but in the midst of his literary career, married unfortunately, contains a general joke on an unhappy match. It is, perhaps, the first pointed epigram in the English language; and may have fallen from the pen of Sir Thomas More, one of the best jesters of that age. In the elegant little ode, intituled, *The Lover that once disdained love*, &c. are the two lines said to be written by Mary Queen of Scots, in a window, at Fotheringay castle.

From the toppe of all my trust,
Mishap hath throwen me in the dust.

The unfortunate queen only quoted a distich applicable to her situation, which she remembered in a fashionable collection of poems, perhaps the amusement of her youth. With the *Songes and Sonnettes of Uncertain Authors*, the original editor has printed *Songes written by N. G.*, the initials of Nicholas Grimoald, who is the second English poet after Surrey that wrote in blank verse; to which he added new strength, elegance, and modulation. As a writer of verse in rhyme he yields to none of his contemporaries, for a masterly choice of chaste expression, and the concise elegancies of didactic versification. His poem in *Praise of Measure keeping* has all the smartness which belongs to the modern style of sententious poetry. The stanzas *on the Nine Muses* are more poetical, and not less correct. His poems *on the Death of Cicero*, and *the Death of Zoroas*, are impregnated almost throughout by a warmth of imagination, and the spirit of pathetic poetry.

It would be unpardonable to dismiss the poetical works of Wyatt unaccompanied by those admirable specimens of ancient genius, for which English literature is highly indebted to Richard Tottell, who, at a critical period, collected and preserved them from the general depredations of time, in a printed volume.

SONGES AND SONETTES.

The lover for shamefastnesse hideth his desire within his faithful heart.

THE long love, that in my thought I harbor
And in my heart doth kepe his residence,
Into my face preaseth with bold pretence,
And there campeth, displaying his banner;
She that me learnes to love, and to suffer,
And willes that my trust and lustes negligence
Be reyned by reason, shame, and reverence
With his hardinesse takes displeasure,
Wherewith love to the hartes forest he fleeth,
Leaving his enterprise with paine and crye,
And there him hideth and not appeareth,
What may I do? when my maister feareth,
But in the field with him to live and dye,
For good is the lyfe, ending faithfully.

The lover waxeth wyser, and will not dye for affection.

YET was I never of your love agreved,
Nor never shall, whyle that my life doth last;
But of hating my self, that date is past,
And tears continual fore hath me weries:
I will not yet in my greave be buried,
Nor on my tombe your name have fixed fast,
As cruel cause, that did my sprite soon hast,
From th' unhappie bones by great syghes styred;
Then if an heart of amorous faith and will
Content your mind withouten doing grief,
Please it you so to this to do relief,
If otherwyse you seke for to fulfyll
Your wrath, you erre, and shal not as you wene,
And you your self the cause thereof have bene.

The abused lover seeth his folly, and intendeth to trust no more.

WAS never fyle yet half so well yfyled,
To fyle a fyle for any smithes entent,
As I was made a fying instrument,
To frame other, while that I was begyled,
But reason loe, hath at my folly smyled,

And pardoned me, sins that I me repent,
Of my last yeres, and of my tyme mispent.

For youth led me, and falshod me misguyded,
Yet, this trust I have of great appearance,
Sins that deceyt is aye returnable,
Of very force it is agreable,
That therewithall be done the recompence,
Then gyle begiled, plain'd should be never
And the reward is little trust for ever.

The lover describeth his being stricken with sight of his love.

THE lively sparkes, that issue from those eyes,
Against the which there vaileth no defence,
Have perst my hart, and done it none offence,
With quaking pleasure, more than once or twise
Was never man could any thing devyse,
Sunne beames to turne with so great vehemence
To dase mans sight, as by their bright presence
Dased am I, much lyke unto the gyse,
Of one stricken with dint of lightening,
Blind with the stroke, and crying here and there;
So call I for help, I not when or where,
The payn of my fall patiently bearing;
For streight after the blase (as is no wonder)
Of deadly noyse heare I the fearfull thunder.

The wavering lover willetth and dreadeth to move his desire.

SUCH vayn thought, as wonted to mislead me
In desert hope by well assured mone,
Makes me from company to live alone,
In following her, whom reason biddes me flee,
And after her my heart would fain be gone,
But armed sighes my way do stop anone,
Twixt hope and dreade locking my libertie,
So fleeth she by gentle crueltie,
Yet as I geasse under disdainfull brow,
One beam of truthe is in her cloudy looke,
Which comforts the mind, that earst for fear shooke
That boldest strayght, the way then seeke I how
To utter forth the smart I hyde within,
But such it is, I not how to begin.

The lover having dreamed enjoying of his love, complaineth that the dreame is not either longer or truer.

UNSTABLE dreame according to the place,
Be stedfast ones, or els at least be true,
By tasted sweetnesse, make me not to rew,
By good respect in such a dangerous case.
Thou broughtest not her into these tossing seas,
But madest my spirit to live, my care tencrease,
My body in tempest her delight tembrace,
The body dead, the spryte had his desire,
Painlesse was th' one, the other in delight,
Why then, alas! did it not kepe it right,
But thus returne to leape into the fyre.
And where it was at wish, could not remaine,
Such mockes of dreames do turn to deadly payne,

The lover unhappy, biddeth happy lovers reioice in May, while he wayleth that month to him most unluckely.

Ye that in love find lucke and swete abundance,
And live in lust of joyful jolitie,
Aryse for shame, do way your sluggardy,
Arise, I say, do May some observance,
Let me in beds lye dreaming of mischaunce,
Let me remember my mishappes unhappy,
That me betide in May most commonly.
As one whome love list little to advance.
Stephan said true, that my nativitie
Mischaunced was with the ruler of May:
He gest (I prove) of that the veritie
In May welth, and eke my wittes, I say,
Have stand so oft in such perplexitie,
Joy, let me dreame of your felicitie.

The lover confesseth himself in love with Phillis.

If waker care, if sodayne pale colour,
If many sighes with little speeche to plaine,
Now joy, now wo, if they my chere dislaine,
For hope of smal, if much to fear therefore,
To hast or slacke, my pace to lesse or more
Be sygne do love, then to I love againe:
If thou aske whome, sure syns I did refraine,
Brunet that set my welth in such a rore;
Th' unfained chere of Phyllis hath the place
That Brunet had, she hath and ever shall,
She from my self now hath me in her grace,
She hath in hand my wit, my will and all.
My heart alone wel woorthy she doth stay,
Without whose helpe skant do I live a day.

Of others fained sorrow, and the lovers fained mirth.

CESAR when that the traitour of Egypt
With t' honourable head did him present
Covering his heartes gladnesse, did represent
Playne with his teares outward, as it is writ,

Eke Hanniball, when fortune him out thit
Clene from his reigne, and all his entent,
Laught to his folke, whom sorow did torment,
His cruel dispite for to disgorge and quit,
So chaunced me, that every passion
The mynd hydeth by colour contrary,
With fained visage, now sad, now wery,
Whereby if that I laugh at any season,
It is because I have none other way
To cloake my care, but under sporte and play.

Of change in minde.

Eche man me tel'th, I change most my devise,
And on my faith, methinke it good reason;
To chaunge purpose, like after the season,
For in eche case to kepe still one guise,
Is mete for them, that would be taken wyse,
And I am not of such maner condicion,
But treated after a divers fashion,
And thereupon my diversenesse doth ryse,
But you this diversenesse that blamen most,
Change you no more, but still after one rate,
Treate you me welle, and kepe you in that state,
And while with me doth dwell this weried
ghost,
My woord nor I shall not be variable,
But always one, your own both firm and stable.

How the lover perisbeth in his delight, as the flye in the fier.

SOME fowles there be that have no perfite sight,
Against the sunne their eyes for to defend,
And some because the light doth them offend,
Never appere, but in the darke or night:
Others rejoyce, to see the fire so bright,
And wene to play in it, as they pretend,
But synd contrary of it, as they entende,
Alas of that sort, may I be by right.
For to withstand her looke I am not able,
Yet can I not hyde me in no darke place,
So followeth me remembrance of that face;
That with my teary eyen, swolne, and unstable,
My destiny to behold her doth me leade,
And yet I know I runne into the glead.

Against his tong that failed to utter his suites.

BECAUSE I still kept thee fro lyes and blame,
And to my power alwayes the honowred,
Unkind tongue, to yll hast thou me rendred,
For such desert to do me wreke and shame.
In nede of succour most when that I am
To ask he rewarde, thou standes lyke one afrayde,
Alway most cold; and if one word be sayd,
As in a dreame, unperfit is the same;
And ye salt teares, against my will each night,
That are with me when I would be alone,

Then are ye gone, when I should make my mone,
And ye so ready sighes, to make me shright,
Then are ye slacke, when that ye shoulde outstart,
And only doth my loke declare my hart.

Description of the contrarious passions in a lover.

I FINDE no peace, and all my warre is done,
I feare and hope, I burne, and frese lyke yse,
I flye aloft, yet can I not aryse,
And nought I have, and all the world I season,
That lockes nor loseth, holdeth me in prision,
And holdes me not, yet can I scape no wyse,
Nor lettes me live, nor dye, at my devyle,
And yet of death it geveth me occasion,
Without eye I see, without tongue I playne,
I wish to perishe, yet I ask for health,
I love another, and I hate my selfe,
I fede me in sorow, and laugh in all my payne.
Lo, thus displeaseth me, both death and life,
And my delight is causer of this strife.

*The lover compareth his state to a shippe in perilous
storme tossed on the sea.*

My gally charged with forgetfulnesse,
Through sharpe seas, in winter nightes doth passe,
Twene rocke, and rocke, and eke my foe (alas)
That is my lord, stereth with cruelnesse.
And every houre, a thought in readinesse,
As though that death wer light in such a case,
And endlesse wynde doth teare the sayle apace
Of forced sighes and trusty fearfulnessse:
A rayne of teares, a cloude of dark disdayne,
Have done the wried coardes great hinderance;
Wretched with errour, and with ignorance,
The starres be hidde, that lead me to this payne.
Drounde is reason that shoulde be my comforte,
And I remayne, disparing of the porte.

Of doubtful love.

AVYSING the bright beames of those fayre eyes,
Where he abides that mine oft moystes and
washeth
The wearied mynde streight from the heart de-
parteth,
To rest within his worldly paradyse;
And bitter findes the swete, under his gyse,
What webbes there he hath wrought, well he
perceiveth,
Wherby then with hymselfe on love he playneth,
That spurs with fyre, and brydleth eke with yse:
In such extremitie thus is he brought,
Frozen now cold, and now he standes in flame,
Twixt wo and wealth, betwixt earnest and gaine,
With feldome glad, and many a divers thought;
In fore repentance of his hardinesse,
Of such a roote loe commeth frute frutelesse.

*The lover sheweth how he is forsaken of such as he
sometime enjoyed.*

THEY flee from me, that sometime did me seke,
With naked fote stalking within my chamber,
Once have I sene them gentle, tame, and meke,
That now are wyld, and do not once remember.
That sometime they have put themselves in dan-
ger,
To take bread at my hand, and now they range,
Busely seeking in continual change.
Thanked be fortune, it hath been otherwyse,
Twenty tymes better, but once especiall,
In thine aray, after a pleasaunt gyse,
When her loose gowne did from her shoulders
fall,
And she me caught in her armes long and small;
And therewithall, so swetely did me kyss,
And softly sayd, dear hearte, how like you this?
It was no dreame, for I lay brode awaking.
But all is turned now through my gentlenesse,
Into a bitter fashion of forsaking,
And I have leave to goe of her goodnesse;
And she also to use new fanglenesse.
But, fynes that I unkendly so am served,
How like you this, what hath she now deserved:

The Lady to aunswere directly with yea or nay.

MADAME, withouten many woordes,
Once I am sure, you will, or no:
And if you will, then leave your boordes,
And use your wit, and shew it so.
For with a beck you shall me call,
And if of one, that burnes alwaye,
Ye have pitie, or ruth at all,
Aunswere him faire with ye or nay,
If it be nay, frendes as before,
You shall an other man obtayne,
And I myne own, and yours no more.

To his love whom he had kissed against her will.

ALAS, madame, for stealing of a kisse,
Have I so much your mind therein offended?
Or have I done so grievously amisse,
That by no meenes it may not be amended?
Revenge you then, the readiest way is this,
Another kisse my life it shall have ended,
For, to my mouth the first my hart did sucke,
The next shall cleane out of my brest it plucke.

*Of the jealous man that loved the same woman, and
espied this ether sitting with her.*

THE wandering gadling in the sommer tyde,
That findes the adder with his rechles foote,
Startes not dismayde so sodenly asyde,
As jealous despite did, though ther wer no boote

When that he saw me sitting by her syde,
That of my health is very crop and roote.
It pleased me then to have so faire a grace,
To sting the hart, that would have had my place.

To his love from whom he had his gloves.

WHAT nedes these threatning wordes, and wasted
winde :

Al this cannot make me restore my pray,
To robbe your good, ywis is not my mynde,
Nor causelesse your fair hand did I display,
Let love be judge, or els whom next we finde,
That may both heare what you and I can say,
She rest my hart, and I a glove from her,
Let us see then, if one be worth the other.

Of the fayned frend.

RIGHT true it is, and sayd full yore ago,
Take hede of him that by the back thee claweth :
For none is worse than is a frendly so,
Though thee seme good, all thing that the de-
liteth,

Yet know it well, that in thy bosome crepeth,
For many a man such fire oft times he kindleth,
That with the blase his beard himself he singeth.

The lover taught, mistrusteth allurements.

It may be good, lyke it who list,
But I do doubt who can me blame ?
For oft assured, yer have I mist,
And now again I fear the same :
The woordes, that from your mouth last came,
Of fodeyn change make me agast,
For dread to fall, I stand not fast.

Alas ! I tread an endless mase,
That seke t' accord two contraries,
And hope thus still, and nothing hase,
Imprisoned in liberties,
As one unheard, and still that cries,
Always thirsty, and nought doth taste,
For dread to fall I stand not fast.

Assured I doubt I be not sure,
Should I then trust unto such surety,
That oft hath put the prose in ure
And never yet have found it trustie.
Nay, for in fayth, it were great folly,
And yet my life thus do I wast,
For dread to fall I stand not fast.

The lover complaineth that his love doth not pitie him.

RESOUND my voyce ye woods, me heare me plain,
Both hills and vales causing reflection,
And rivers eke, record ye of my payne,
Which have oft forced ye by compassion,

As judges lo to hear my exclamacion,
Among whom ruth (I finde) ye doth remayne,
Where I it seke, alas ! there is disdayne.

Oft ye rivers, to heare my wofull sound,
Have stopt your cours, and playnly to expresse,
Many a teare by moysture of the ground,
The earth hath wept to hear my heavinesse,
Which causelesse I endure without redresses,
The hugy okes have roared in the wynde,
Eche thing me thought, complayning in their
kind.

Why then alas ! doth not she on me rue,
Or is her heart so hard, that no pittie
May in it sinke, my joy for to renew ;
O stony hart, who hath thus framed thee
So cruel, that art cloked with beauty,
That from thee may no grace to me proceede,
But as reward, death for to be my mede.

*The lover rejoyseth against fortune, that by hindering
his suite had happely made him forsake his folly.*

In faith I wote not what to say,
Thy chaunces been so wonderous,
Thou fortune with thy divers play,
That makest the joyfull dolorous.
Yet though thy chaine hath me enwrapt,
Spyte of thy hap, hap hath well hapt,

Though thou hast set me for a wonder,
And sekest by change to do me payne,
Mens myndes yet mayst thou not so order,
For honestie if it remayne,
Shall shine for al thy cloudy rayne ;
In vayne thou sekest to have me trapt,
Spyte of thy hap, hap hath well hapt.

In hindering me, me didst thou furthur,
And made a gap, where was a stile,
Cruel wiles been oft put under,
Wening to lower, then didst thou smyle.
Lord, how thy self thou didst begyle,
That in thy cares would have me wrapt,
But spyte of hap, hap hath well hapt.

A renouncing of bardelic escaped loves.

FAREWELL the hard of cruelty,
Though that with pain my liberty,
Dear have I bought, and wofully,
Finisht my fearefull tragedy.
Of force I must forsake such pleasure,
A good cause just, sins I endure,
Therby my wo, which be ye sure,
Shall therwith go me to recure.

I fare as one escapt that fleeth,
Glad he is gone, and yet styll feareth,
Spied to be caught and so dredeth
That he for nought his pain leseth
In joyfull payn, rejoyce my hart,
Thus to sustayn of eche a part.
Let not this song from thee astart,
Welcome among my pleasant smart.

The lover to his bed, with describing of his unquiet state.

THE restfull place, renuer of my smart,
The labours salve encreasing my sorow,
The bodies ease, and troubler of my hart,
Quieter of minde, myne unquiet foe,
Forgearter of payne, rememberer of my woe,
The place of slepe, wherein I do but wake,
Besprent with teares, my bed, I the forsake,
The frosty snowes may not redrefs my heate,
Nor, theate of sunne abate my fervent cold,
I know nothing to ease my paine so great
Eche cure causeth encrease by twenty fold,
Renewing cares upon my sorrows old,
Such overthwart effectes in me they make,
Besprent with teares, my bed for to forsake.
But all for nought, I find no better ease,
In bed or out, this most causeth my paine,
Where do I seek how best that I may please,
My lost labour (alas) is all in vayn,
My heart once set, I cannot it refrayne,
No place from me my grief away can take,
Wherefore with teares, my bed I thee forsake.

Comparison of love, to a streame falling from the Alps.

FROM these hye hilles as when a spring doth fall,
It trilleth downe with still and suttile course,
Of this and that, it gathers aye and shall,
Till it have just downe flowed to streame and
force,
Then at the foote it rageth over all:
So fareth love, when he hath tane a course,
Rage is his rayne, resistance vayleth none,
The first eschue is remedy alone.

*Wyates complaint upon love to reason, with loves
answere.*

MYNE old dere enemy, my froward maister,
A fore that quene, I causde to be acyted,
Which holdeth the divine part of our nature,
That like as golde, in fyre he mought be tryed.
Charged with a dolour, there I me presented
With horrible feare, as one that greatly dreadeth
A wrongfull death, and justice alway seketh.
And thus I say'd: Once my left foote, madame,
When I was yong, I set within his raigne;
Whereby other then syrely burning flame,
I never felt, but many a grievous payne,
Torment I suffred anger and disdayne:
That mine oppressed patience was past,
And I mine owne life hated at the last.
Thus hitherto have I my tyme passed
In paine and smart, what wayes is profitable,
How many pleasant dayes have me escaped,
In serving this false lyer so deceivable?
What wit have wordes so prest and forceable,
That may containe my great mishappinesse,
And just complaintes of his ungentlenesse?

So small hony, much aloes, and gall,
In bitternesse, my blinde life hath yasted
His false semblance, that turneth as a ball,
With fair and amorous daunce, made me be traced,
And where I had my thought and minde araced,
From earthly fraylnesse, and from vaine pleasure.
Me from my rest he tooke and set in errour.

God made he me regardlesse, than I ought,
And to my selfe to take right little hede:
And for a woman have I set at nought,
Al other thoughtes, in this only to spede,
And he was onely counseler of this dede.
Whetting alwayes my youthly fraile desyre,
On cruel whetstone, tempered with fire.

But (oh alas!) where had I ever wit?
Or other gift geven to me of nature?
That sooner shal be changed my weried sprite,
Then the obstinate will, that is my ruler,
So robbeth he my fredome with displeasure,
This wicked traytour, whom I thus accuse,
That bitter life hath turned in pleasant use.

He hath me hasted, through divers regions,
Through desert woodes, and sharpe by mountainer,
Through froward people, and through bitter
passions,
Through rocky seas, and over hilles and plaines:
With wery travel, and with laborous paynes,
Alwayes in trouble and in tediousnesse,
All in errour, and daungerous distresse.

But nother he, nor she, my tother foe,
For all my flight did ever me forsake;
That though my timely death hath been to slowe
That me as yet, it hath not overtake:
The heavenly gods of pitie doe it flake,
And note they this his cruell tyranny,
That feedes him, with my care, and misery.

Sins I was his, hower rested I never,
Nor looke to doe, and eke the waky nightes,
The banished slepe may in no wise recover.
By guyle and force, over my thralled spites
He is ruler, sins which bell never strikes,
That I hear not as founding to renue
My plaintes. Himself he knoweth that I say
true.

For never woormes old rotten stocke have eaten,
As he my hart, where he is resident,
And doth the same with death daily threaten.
Thence come the teares, and thence the bitter
torment, [ment,
The sighes, the woordes and eke the languish-
That noy both me, and paraventure other,
Judge thou that knowest the one and eke the other.

Mine adversarie with such grevous reproofe,
Thus he began, Hear lady the other part:
That the plain trouth, from which he draweth
aloofe,

This unkind man may shew, ere that I part,
In his yong age, I tooke him from that art,
That selleth woordes, and make clattering knight,
And of my wealth I gave him the delight.

Now shames he not on me for to complaine,
That held him evermore in pleasant gayne,
From his desire that might have been his payne,
Yet therby alone I brought him to some frame,
Which now as wretchednes, he doth so blame,

And toward honour quickned I his wit,
Whereas a dastard els he mought have sit.

He knewed how great Atride that made Troy
freat,

And Hannibal to Rome so troubelous,
Whom Homer honoured Achilles that great,
And th' Affricane Scipion the famous,
And many other, by much honour glorious,
Whose fame and actes did lift them up above,
I did let fall in base dishonest love.

And unto him, though he unworthy were,
I chose the best of many a million,
That under sunne yet never was her pere,
Of wisdom womanhod, and of discrecion,
And of my grace I gave her such a facion,
And eke futh way I taught her for to teache
That never base thought his hart so hie might
reache.

Ever more thus to content his maistresse
That was his only frame of honestie,
I stirred him still toward gentlenesse,
And caused him to regard fidelitie;
Pacience I taught him in adversitie,
Such vertues learned he in my great schoole,
Whereof repenteth now the ignorant foole.

These were the same deceites, and bitter gall,
That I have used, the torment and the anger,
Sweter than ever did to other fall,
Of right good feed, ill fruite lo thus I gather,
And so shall he that the unkinde doth further;
A serpent nourish I under my wing,
And now of nature ginneth he to sting.

And for to tell at last, my great service,
From thousandes dishonesties have I him drawn,
That, by my meanes, him in no manner wyse,
Never vyle pleasure once hath overthrowen,
Wherin his dede, shame hath him alwayes gnawen,
Doubting report that should come to her eare,
Whom now he blames, her wonted he to feare;

What ever he hath of any honest custome,
Of her, and me, that holds he every whit,
But lo, yet never was there nightly fantome,
So farre in errour, as he is from his wit,
To plain on us, he striveth with the bit;
Which may rule him, and do him ease, and paine,
And in one hower, make all his grieve his gaine.

But one thing yet there is above all other,
I gave him winges, wherewith he might up flye,
To honour and fame, and if he woulde to hygher,
Then mortal things, above the starry skye;
Considering the pleasure, that an eye
Might geue in earth, by reason of the love,
What should that be, that lasteth still above?

And he the same himself hath said ere this,
But now, forgotten is both that and I,
That gave him her, his only wealth and blisse,
And at this woord, with deadly shreke and crye:
Thou gave her once (quod I) but by and by
Thou took her ayen from me, that woworth the
Not I, but price, more worth than thou (quod he.)

At last, eche other for himself, concluded,
I trembling still, but he, with small reverence,
Lo, thus, as we eche other have accused,
Dere lady now we wayte thene only sentence;
She smiling, at the whistled audience,

I liketh me, quod she, to have heard your question,
But longer time doth aske a resolution.

*The lovers sorrowfull state maketh him write sorrowfull
songes, but souche, his love may change the same.*

MARILL no more altho,
The songs, I sing do mone
For other life then woe,
I never proved none.

And in my heart also,
Is graven with letters deepe,
A thousand sighes and mo
A flood of teares to weepe.

How many a man in smart,
Find a matter to rejoyce!

How many a morning hart,
Set forth a pleasant voyce:
Play who so can that part,
Nedes must in me appere,
How fortune overthwart
Doth cause my morning chere.

Perdy there is no man
If he saw never sight,
That perfittly tell can,
The nature of the light.

Alas, how should I than,
That never tast but sowre,
But do as I began,
Continually to lowre.

But yet perchance some chance,
May chance to change my tune,
And when (souche) chance doth chance,
Then shall I thanke fortune.

And if I have (souche) chance,
Purchance or it be long,
For (souche) a pleasant chance,
To sing some pleasant song.

The lover complaineth himself forsaken.

WHERE shall I have at mine own wil,
Teares to complaine, where shall I set
Such sighes, that I may sigh my fill,
And then again my plaintes repete?
For though my plaint shall have none,
My tares cannot suffice my woe lend,
To mone harm, have I no friend,
For fortunes frend is mishappes foe.
Comfort (God wot) els have I none,
But in the wind to wast my woordes,
Nought moneth you my dedly mone,
But still you turn it into boordes:
I speak not now, to move your heart,
That you should rue upon my pain,
The sentence geven may not revert,
I know such labour were but vain.
But fens that I for you (my dere)
Have lost that thing, that was my best,
A right small loss it must appere,
To lese these woordes, and all the rest.

But though they sparkle in the wind,
 Yet shall they shew your falsed fayth,
 Which is returned to his kind,
 For lyke to lyke, the proverbe faith.
 Fortune, and you did me avance,
 Me thought I swam, and could not drowne,
 Happiest of al, but my mischaunce
 Did lift me up to throw me downe.
 And you with her, of cruelness,
 Did set your foole upon my necke,
 Me, and my welfare to oppresse,
 Without offence your heart to wreke.
 Where are your pleasant woordes (alas)
 Where is your faith, your stedfastness?
 There is no more but all doth pass,
 And I am left all comfortless.
 But sins so much it doth you greve,
 And also me my wretched lyfe,
 Have here my trouth nought shall relieve,
 But death alone, my wretched strife.
 Therefore farewell, my lyfe, my death,
 My gayne, my losse, my salve, my sore,
 Farewell also, with you my breath,
 For I am gone for evermore.

Of his love that pricked her finger with a needle.

SHE fate and fowed that hath done me the wrong,
 Whereof I plain, and have done many a day,
 And, whilst she heard my plaint, in piteous song,
 She wisht my heart the sampler, that it lay.
 The blind maister, whome I have served so long,
 Grudging to heare, that he did heare her say,
 Made her own weapon do her finger blede,
 To feele, if pricking were so good indede.

Of the same.

WHAT man hath hearde such crueltie before,
 That, when my plaint remembred her my wo,
 That caused it, she cruell more and more,
 Wisht eche stich, as she did sit and sow,
 Had prickt my heart, for to encrease my sore;
 And as I thinke, she thought that had been so,
 For as she thought, this is heart in dede,
 She prickt hard, and made herself to blede.

Request to Cupide for revenge of his unkind love.

BEHOLD love, thy power how she despyseth
 My grievous payn, how little she regardeth
 The solemne othe whereof she takes no cure,
 Broken she hath, and yet she bydeth sure.
 Right at her ease, and little thee she dredeth,
 Weaponed thou art, and she unarmed sitteth;
 To the disdaine, all her lyfe she leadeth
 To me spitefule, without just cause or measure:
 Behold Love, how proudly she triumpheth,
 I am in hold, but if the pittie moveth,

Go, bend thy bow, that stony hartes breaketh,
 And with some stroke, revenge the great displea-
 sure,

Of thee, and him that sorow doth endure,
 And as his lord the lowly her entreateth,

Complaint for true love unrequited.

WHAT vaileth trouth, or by it to take pain,
 To strive by stedfastness, for to attain;
 How to be just, and flee from doubleness,
 Since all alike, where ruleth craftinesse.
 Rewarded is both crafty, false, and plain?
 Soonest he speedes, that most can lye and faine.
 True meaning hart is had in hyghe disdaine;
 Against deceit and cloked doubleness,
 What vaileth trouth, or perfect stedfastnesse.
 Deceived is he, by false and craftie train,
 That meanes no gile, and faithfull doth remaine.
 Within the trap, without help or redresse,
 But for to love, lo, such a stern maistresse,
 Where crueltie dwelles, alas it were in vain.

*The lover that fled love, now folowes it with
 his harme.*

SOMETIME I fled the fire, that one so brent,
 By sea, by land, by water, and by winde,
 And now the coales I folow, that beguent,
 From Dover to Cales, with willing minde.
 Lo how desire is both sprong, and spent,
 And he may see, that whilome was so blind,
 And all this labour laughes he now to scorne,
 Meashed in the briers, that erst was onely torne.

The lover hopeth of better chaunce.

HE is not dead, that sometime had a fal,
 The sun returnes, your hed was under clowde,
 And when fortune hath spit out all her gall,
 I trust, good luck to me shal be allowed.
 For I have seen a ship in haven fal,
 After that storme hath broke bothe maste and
 shroud,
 The wellow eke, that stoupeth with the winde,
 Doth rise again, and greater wood doth binde.

The lover compareth his hart to the overcharged gonne.

THE furious gonne, in his most ragyng yre,
 When that the boule is rammed into fore,
 And that the flame cannot part from the fier,
 Crackes in sunder, and in the ayer do rere
 The shevered peces: so doth my desire,
 Whose flame encreaseth aye from more to more,
 Which to let out, I dare not loke, nor speke,
 So inwarde force my heart doth alto breake.

*The lover suspected of change, praieth that it be not
believed against him.*

ACCUSED though I be, without desert,
Sith none can prove, believe it not for true;
For never yet, since that you had my hart,
Intended I to false, or be untrue.
Sooner I would of death sustain the smart,
Than breake one worde of that I promised you,
Accept therefore my service in good part,
None is alive, that can il tongue eschew,
Hold them as false, and let not us depart,
Our friendship old, in hope of any new.
Put not thy trust in such as use to faine,
Except thou minde to put thy friend to pain.

The lover abused renounceth love.

MY love to scorn, my service to retain,
Therein me thought you used crueltye,
Since with good will I lost my libertie,
Might never wo yet cause me to refraine.
But only this, which is extremitie,
To give me nought (alas) not to agree,
That as I was your man, I might remaine,
But since that thus ye list to order mee,
That would have been your servant true and fast,
Displease you not, my doting time is past;
And with my losse to leave I must agree,
For as there is a certaine time to rage,
So is there time such madnes to assuage.

The lover professeth himselfe constant.

WITHIN my brest I never thought it gaine,
Of gentle mindes the fredome for to lose,
Not in my hart sank never such disdain,
To be a forger, faultlesse for to disclose.
Nor can not I endure the truth to glose,
To set a glosse upon an earnest paine,
Nor I am not in numbre one of those,
That list to blow, retreat to every traine.

*The lover sendeth his complaints and teares to sue for
grace.*

PASSE forth my wounted cries,
Those cruel cares to pearce,
Which in most hatefull wise,
Do still my plaintes reverse.
Doe you, my teares also,
So wot her barrein heart,
That pitie there may growe,
And crueltye depart.

For though hard rockes among
She semes to have been bred,
And of the tigre long
Bene nourished and fed.

Yet shall not nature change,
If pitie once win place,
Whom as unknowne and strange,
She now away doth chase.

And as the water soft,
Without forcing or strength,
Where that it falleth oft,
Hard stones doth pierce at length.
So in her stony heart,
My plaintes at last shall grave,
And rigour set apart,
Winne graunt of that I crave.

Wherefore my playntes present
Stil so to her my suit,
As ye through her assent,
May bring to me some frute.
And as she shall me prove,
So bid her me regarde,
And render love for love,
Which is a just reward.

The lovers case cannot be bidden, however he dissemble.

YOUR lokes so often cast,
Your eyes so frendly rolde,
Your sight fixed so fast,
Alwaies one to beholde:
Though hide it faine ye would,
It plainly doth declare,
Who hath your hart in hold,
And where good will ye bare.

Faine would ye find a cloke,
Your brenning fire to hide,
Yet both the flame and smoke
Breakes out on every side.
Ye cannot love so guide,
That it no issue winne,
Abrode nedes must it glide,
That brennes so hotte within.

For cause your self do wink,
Ye judge all other blinde,
And secret it you think,
Which every man dothe finde.
In wast of spend ye winde,
Your self in love to quit,
For agues of that kinde,
Wyll show, who hath the fit.
Your sighs you set from farre,
And all to wry your wo,
Yet are ye ner the narre,
Men are not blinded so.

Depely oft swere ye no,
But all those othes are vaine,
So well your eye doth shew,
Who putts your hart to paine.

Thinke not therefore to hide,
That still it self betraies,
Nor seke meanes to provide,
To dark the sunny dayes.
Forget those wonted wayes,
Leave of such frowning chere,
There will be found no staies,
To stop a thing so clere.

*The lover praieth not to be disdained, nor refused,
mistrusted, nor forsaken.*

DISDAINE me not without desert,
Nor leave me not so sodeynly,
Since well ye wot, that in my hert,
I meane ye not but honestly.

Refuse me not without cause why,
Nor think me not to be unjust,
Since that by lott of fantasie,
This careful knot nedes knit I must.

Mistrust me not, though some there be,
That fain would spot my stedfastnesse;
Beleve them not, sins that ye se,
The prose is not, as they expresse.

Forsake me not, till I deserve,
Nor hate me not, till I offende,
Destroy me not, till that I swerve,
But sins ye know what I entende.

Disdaine me not, that am your owne,
Refuse me not, that am so true,
Mistrust me not till all be knowen,
Forsake me not, now for no new.

The lover lamenteth his estate, with sute for grace.

FOR want of will in wo I plaine,
Under colour of soberness,
Renewing with my sute my paine,
My wan hope with your stedfastnesse.
Awake therefore of gentlenesse,
Regard at length, I you require,
My swelting paines of my desire.

Betimes who geveth willingly,
Redoubled thanks aye doth deserve,
And I that sue unfainedly,
In fruitlesse hope alas do sterve.
How great my cause is for to swerve,
And yet how stedfast is my sute,
Lo! here ye see, where is the frute.

As hounde that hath his keper lost,
Seke I your presence to obtaine,
In which my hart deliteth most,
And shall delight though I be slain.
You may release my hand of paine,
Lose then the care that makes me crie,
For want of help or els I dye.

I dye though not incontinent.
By proesse yet consumingly,
Is wast of fire which doth relent
If you as wilfull will deny.
Wherefore cease of such cruelty,
And take me wholly in your grace,
Which lacketh will to change his place.

The lover waileth his changed joyes.

If every man might him avaunt,
Of fortunes friendly chere,

VOL. I.

It was my self I must it graunt,
For I have bought it dere,
And derely have I held also
The glory of her name,
In yielding her such tribute lo,
As did set forth her fame.

Sometime I stood so in her grace,
That as I would require,
Ech joy I thought did me embrace
That fundered my desire,
And all these pleasures lo! had I,
That fancy might support,
And nothing she did me deny,
That was unto my comfort.

I had (what would you more perdie)
Ech grace that I did crave,
Thus fortunes will was unto me,
All thing that I would have,
But all to rathe, alas! the while,
She built on such a ground,
In little space, to greete a guile,
In her now have I found.

For she hath turned so her whele,
That I, unhappy man,
May waile the time that I did sele,
Wherewith she fed me then,
For broken now are her behestes,
And pleasant lookes she gave,
And therefore now all my requestes,
From perill cannot save.

Yet would I well it might appere
To her my cheife regard,
Though my desertes have been to dere
To merit such reward.
Sins fortunes will is now so bent,
To plague me thus pore man,
I must my self therewith content,
And bear it as I can.

To his love that has given answer of refusall.

THE aunswere that ye made to me my deare,
When I did sue for my pore hartes redresse,
Hath so appalde my countenance, and my chere,
That in this case, I am all comfortlesse,
Sins I of blame no cause can well expresse.

I have no wrong, where I can claim no right
Nought tane me fro, where I have nothing had,
Yet of my wo, I cannot so be quite,
Namely sins that another may be glad
With that, that thus in sorrow makes me sad.

Yet none can claime (I say) by former graunt
That knoweth not of any graunt at all.
And by desert, I dare well make a vaunt,
Of faithfull will, there is no where that shall,
Beare you more trueth, more ready at your call.

Now good then, call againe that bitter word,
That toucht your frend so nere with plagues of
paine,

And say my dere that it was said in bord.
Late or to sone, let it not rule the gaine,
Wherewith free will doth true desert retayne.

R r

To his ladie, cruel over her yelden lover.

SUCH is the course that natures kind hath wrought,
That snakes have time to cast away their stings,
Against chain'd prisoners what nede defence be
fought,

The fierce lyon will hurt no yielding things;
Why should such spight be nursed then by thoughts,
Sith all these powers are prest under thy wings,
And eke thou seest, and reason thee hath taught,
What mischiefe malice many wayes it brings,
Consider eke, that spite awayleth nought,
Therefore this song thy fault to thee it sings:
Displease thee not, for saying thus (me thought)
Nor hate thou him from whom no hate forth
springs,
For furies that in hell be execrable,
For that they hate, are made most miserable.

The lover complaineth that deadly sickness cannot help his affection.

THE enemy of lyfe, decayer of all kinde,
That with his cold withers away the grene
This other night me in my bed did fynde,
And offer'd me to ryde me fever clene,
And I did graunt so did dispaire me blinde,
He drew his bowe with arrowes sharp and kene,
And stroke the place where love had hyt before,
And drave the fyrst dart deper more and more.

The lover rejoyceth the enjoying of his love.

ONCE as methought fortune me kist,
And bade me ask what I thought best,
And I should have it as me lyst,
Therewith to set my hart at rest.

I asked but my ladyes hart,
To have forevermore myne owne,
Then at an end were all my smart,
Then should I nede no more to mone.
Yet for all that a stormy blast,
Had overturn'd this goodly nay:
And fortune semed at the last,
That to her promise she said nay.
But like as one out of dispaire,
To sodeyne hoape revived I;
Now fortune sheweth her selfe so fayre,
That I content me wonderfly.

My most desyre my hand my reach,
My will is alway at my hande,
Me nede not long for to besech,
Her that hath power me to comande.

What earthly thing more can I crave,
What would I wish more at my will;
Nothing on earth more would I have,
Save that I have, to have it still.

For fortune now hath kept her promesse,
In graunting me my most desyre,
Of my soveraigne I have redress,
And I content me with my hyre.

The lover complaineth the unkindness of his love.

My lute awake perform the last
Labour that thou and I shall wast:
And ende that I have now begunne,
And when this song is song and past,
My lute be styll for I have done.

As to be heard where care is none,
As leade to grave in marble stone,
My song may pearce her hart as soon,
Should we then sigh, or sing, or mone,
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

The rocks do not so cruelly,
Repulse the waves continually,
As she my suite and affection:
So that I am past remedy,
Whereby my lute and I have done.

Proude of the spoyle that thou hast gotte,
Of simple hearts through loves shot,
By whome unkind thou hast them wonne,
Think not he hath his bow forgott,
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdaine
That makest but game on earnest payne,
Think not alone under the sunn,
Unquit to cause thy lovers playne,
Although my lute and I have done.

May chanced thee lye withred and old,
In winter nights that are so cold,
Playing in vaine unto the moon,
Thy wishes then dare not be told,
Care then who list for I have done.

And then may chaunce thee to repent,
The time that thou hast lost and spent,
To cause thy lovers sighe and swone,
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease my lute this is the last,
Labour that thou and I shall wast,
And ended is that we begonne,
Now is this song both song and past.
My lute be still for I have done.

How by a kiss, he found both his life and death.

NATURE that gave the bee so seate a grace,
To finde honey of so wondrous fashion,
Hath taught the spyder out of the same place,
To fetch poyson by straunge alteration.
Though this be strange, it is a stranger case,
With one kiss by secret operation;
Both these at once in those your lips to finde,
In change whereof, I leave my hart behinde.

The lover describeth his being taken with sight of his love.

UNWARELY so was never no man taught,
With stedfast looke upon a goodly face,
As I of late, for sodaynly me thought,
My hart was torne out of his place.

Therow mine eye the stroke from hers dyd slide,
And down directly to my heart it ranne,
In help whereof the blood thereto did glide,
And left my face both pale and wanne.

Then was I like a man for wo amazed,
Or like the fowle that flyeth into the fyre,
For while that I upon her beauty gased,
The more I burned in my desire.

Anon the blood start in my face agayne;
Inflam'd with heat, that it had at my hart,
And brought therewith throughout in every veine,
A quakeing heat with pleasant smart.

Then was I like the straw, when that the flame
Is driven therein, by force and rage of wynde.
I can not tell, alas! what shall I blame,
Nor what to seke, nor what to finde.

But well I wot the grief doth hold me fore,
In heat and cold, betwixt both hope and drede,
That, but her help to health doe me restore,
This restless lyfe I may not leade.

To his lover to looke upon him.

ALL in thy looke my life doth whole depend,
Thou hydest thy self, and I must dye therefore,
But since thou may'st so easely help thy frende,
Why dost thou stick to salve that thou madest
fore :

Why do I dye, since thou may'st me defend,
And if I dye thy life may last noe more,
For each by other doth live and have reliefe,
I in thy look, and thou most in my grieffe.

*The lover excuseth him of woordes, wherewith he was
unjustly charged.*

PERDY I sayde it not,
Nor never thought to doe,
As well as I ye wot,
I have no power thereto.
And if I dyd, the lot
That first dyd me exchange,
May never flake the knot,
But strays it to my payne.

And if I did eche thing,
That may do harme or wo,
Continually may wring,
My heart where so I goe.
Report may always ring
Of shame on me for aye,
If in my heart did spryng,
The words that you doe say.

And if I did, each starr,
That is in heaven above,
May frame on me to marre,
The hope I have in love.
And if I did such warr
As they brought unto Troy,
Bring all my life as farre
From all his lust and joye.

And if I did so faye,
The beauty that me bounde,
Encrease from day to day,
More cruel to my wounde.
With all the mone that may,
To plaint my turne my song,
My lyfe may soon decaye,
Without redresse by wrong.

If I be cleare from thought,
Why do you then complayne,
Then is this thing but fought,
To turne my hart to payne.

Then this that you have wrought,
You must it now redresse,
Of right therefore you ought,
Such rigour to repress.

And as I have deserved,
So grant me now my hyre.
You know I never swerved,
You never found me lyer.

For Rachel have I served,
For Lea carde I never,
And her I have reserved
Within my hart for ever.

Of such as had forsaken him.

LURE my fair faulcon, and thy fellowes all,
How well pleasant it were your libertie,
Ye not forsake me, that fayre mought you fall,
But they that sometime liked my company.
Like lyce away from dead bodyes they crall,
Lo what a proof in light adversitie,
But ye my byrds I swear by all your belles,
Ye be my friends and very fewe elles.

A description of such a one as he would love.

A FACE that should content me wonderous well,
Should not be fatt, but lovely to behold,
Of lively look all grieffe for to repell
With right good grace so would I that it should.
Speak without word, such words as none can tell,
Her tress also should be of crisped gold,
With wit and these, perchaunce I might be tryde
And knit againe with knot that should not slide,

How impossible it is to fynde quietnesse in love.

EVER my hap is slack and slow in comeing
Desire encreasing aye my hope uncertayne,
With doubtful love that but encreaseth paine,
For tigre like so swift it is in parting.
Alas! the snow black, shall it bee and scalding,
The sea waterles, and fish upon the mountaine,
The Temmes shall backe returne in her fountaine,
And where he rose, the sunn shall take her
lodging.

Ere I in this finde peace or quietness,
Or that love, or my lady right wisly,
Leave to conspire against me wrongfully,
And if I have after such bitternefs,
One drop of swete, my mouth is out of taste,
That all my trust and travell is but waste.

Of love, fortune, and the lovers minde.

Love, fortune, and my minde which doe remember
Eke that is now, and that once hath bene,
Torment my hart so sore that very often
I hate and envy them beyond all measure.
Love fleeth my hart, while fortune is depriver,
Of all my comfort, the foolish minde than,
Burneth and plaineth, as one that very seldome,
Liveth in rest so still in displeasure;
My pleasant dayes they flete and passe
And dayly doth myne yll change to the worse,
When more than halfe is runne now of my course.
Alas! not of stele, but of brittle glasse,
I see that from my hand falleth my trust,
And all my thoughts are dashed into dust.

The lover praiseth his offred hart to be received.

How oft have I, my dere and cruel foe,
With my great paine to get some peace or truce,
Given you my hart but you do not use,
In soe high things, to cast your mind so low.
If any other looke for it as you trow,
Their vaine, weake hope doth greatly them abuse,
And that thus I disdaine, that you refuse,
It was once mine, it can no more be so.
If you it chafe that it in you can find
In this exile no manner of comfort,
Nor live alone nor where he is cald resort,
He may wander from his natural kinde.
So shall it be great hurt unto us twaine,
And yours the loss, and mine the deadly paine.

The lovers life compared to the Alpes.

LIKE unto these unmeasurable mountaines,
So in my painfull life the burden of yre,
For hie be they, and hie is my desire,
And I of teares, and they be full of fountaines.
Under craggy rocks they have barren plaines,
Hard thoughts in me my wofull minde doth tire,
Small fruite and many leaves their tops do attire,
With small effect great trust in me remaines.
The boisterous winds oft their high bowes do
blast,
Hott sighes in me continually be shed,
Wilde beasts in them, since love in me is fed,
Unmoveable am I, and they stedfast.
Of singing-birds, they have the tune and note,
And I alwayes plaintes passing through my throte.

Charging of his love as unpiteous and loveing other.

If amorous faith, or if an hart unfeined,
I swete langedeur, a great lovely desire,
If honest will kindled in gentle fire,
If long errour in a blind mase chained,
If in my visage eche thought distained,
Or my sparkling voice, lower or hier,
Which feare and shame so wofully doth tire,
If pale colour which love alas hath stained.
If to have another, then my self more dere,
If waleing or sighing continually,
With sorrowful anger feding busily
If burned farr of and if frising nere.
Are cause that I by love my self destroye,
Yours is the fault, and mine the great annoy.

A renouncing of love.

FAREWELL love, and all thy lawes for ever,
Thy bated hookes shall tangle me no more,
Seneca, and Plato call me from thy lore,
To parfit welth my witt for to endeavor.
In blind error when I did persever.
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore
Taught me in trifles that I set noe store,
But scape forth thence since libertie is lieffer.
Therefore farewell go trouble younger harts,
And in time claime noe more auctoritie,
With idle youth goe use thy propertie,
And thereon spend thy many brittle dartes.
For hitherto though I have lost my time,
Me list no longer rotten bowes to clime.

The lover forsaketh his unkind love.

MY hart I gave thee not to doe it paine,
But to preserve lo it to thee was taken,
I served thee, thee not that I should be forsaken,
But that I should receive reward againe.
I was content, thy servant to remaine,
And not to be repayed on this fashion,
Now since in thee there is no other reason.
Displease thee not if that I do refraine,
Unsatiate of my wo and thy desire,
Assured by craft for to excuse thy fault,
But since it pleaseth thee to faine default,
Farewell I say, departing from the fire.
For he that doth believe bearing in hand,
Ploweth in the water and soweth in the sand.

The lover describeth his restless state.

THE flameing sighes that boyle within my breast,
Sometime break forth and they can well declare,
The hartes unrest, and how that he doth fear,
The paine thereof, the griefe, and all the rest.

The shattered eye from whence the teares do fall,
Do feel some force or else they would be dry,
The wasted flesh of colour ded can try,
And sometime tell what sweetness in the gall.
And he that lust to see, and to discearne,
How care can force within a weryed mind,
Come he to me I am that place asinde,
But for all this noe force, it doth noe harme,
The wounde alas hap in some other place,
From whence noe toole away the scar can race.

But you which of such like have had your part,
Can best be judge wherefore my friend so dere,
I thought it good my state should now appere,
To you, and that there is no great defart.
And whereas you in weighty matters great,
Of fortune saw the shaddow that you know
For trifling things I now am stricken soe.
That though I feel my hart doth wound and beat,
I sit alone save on the second day,
My fever comes with whome I spend my time,
In burning heat while that she list assigne,
And who hath helth and liberty alway,
Let him thank God, and let him not provoke,
To have the like of this my painfull stroke.

The lover laments the death of his love.

The pillar perisht is whereto I lent,
The strongest stay of mine unquiet minde;
The like of it no man agayn can fynde,
From east to west still seeking though he went,
To myne unhappe forhappe away hath rent,
Of all my joy the very bark and rinde,
And I (alas!) by chaunce am thus asinde,
Dayly to mourn, till death do it relent.
But since that thus it is by destiny,
What can I more but have a wofull hart,
My penne in plaint my voice in carefull crye,
My mynde in woe my body full of smart,
And I my self, my self alwayes to hate,
Tyll dreadfull death doe ease my dolefull state.

The lover sendeth sighes to move his suite.

Goe burning sighes unto the frozen hart,
Goe break the yce which pities painfull dart,
Might never pierce, and if that mortall prayer,
In heaven be heard at least yet I desyre,
That death, or mercy, end my wofull smart.
Take with thee paine whereof I have my part,
And eke the flame from which I cannot start.
And leave me then in rest I you require,
Goe burning sighs fulfill that I desire.
I must goe worke, and see my craft and arte,
For truth and faith in her is laid apart,
Alas I cannot therefore now assaile her,
With pitifull complaint and scalding fire,
That from my brest deceivebly doth start.

Complaint of the absence of his love.

Soe feeble is the thred that doth the burden stay,
Of my poor life in heavy plight that falleth in de-
cay, [cours,
That but it have elsewhere some ayde or some suc-
The running spindle of my fate anon shall end his
course. [part,
For since the unhappy houre that dyd me to de-
From my sweet weale one only hoape hath stayed
my life apart,
Which doth perswade such words unto my sored
mynde, [luck to find.
Maintaine thy selfe, O wofull wight, some better
For though thou be deprived from thy desired
sight,
Who can thee tell, if thy returne before thy more
delight:
Or who can tell thy los if thou mayst once recover,
Some pleasant houres thy wo may wrap, and thee
defend and cover.
Thus in this trust, as yet it hath my life sustained,
But now (alas) I see it faint, and I by trust am
trayned. [bende,
The tyme doth flete, and I see how the hours do
So fast that I have scant the space to marke my
comeing end. [his lite,
Westward the sunn from out the east scant shewd
When in the west he hies him straite within the
dark of night
And comes as fast, where he began his path awry,
From east to west, from west to east, so doth his
journey lye. [here,
Thy lyfe so short so frayle, that mortall men lyve
Soe great a weight, so heavy charge the bodyes
that we bere.
That when I think upon the distance and the space,
That doth so farre divide me from thy dere desired
face. [quire,
I know not how t' attaine the winges that I re-
To lyft me up that I might fly to follow my de-
syre. [sustyne,
Thus of that hope that doth my lyfe somethyng
Alas I fear, and partly feel full little doth remaine.
Eche place doth bring me grieve where I doe not
behold,
Those lively eyes which of my thoughts, were wont
the keys to hold.
Those thoughts were pleasant sweet whilst I en-
joy'd that grace,
My pleasure past, my present pain, when I might
well embrace.
And for because my want should more my woe
increase,
In watch and sleep both day and night my will
doth never cease.
That thing to wishe whereof synce I did lose the
sight,
Was never thing that mought in ought my wofull
hart delight.
Th' uneasy life I lead doth teach me for to mete,
The floods, the seas, the land, the hills, that doth
them intermete.

Twene me and those shene lights that wonted for
to clere,
My darked pangs of cloudy thoughts as bright as
Phebus sphere;
It teacheth me also, what was my pleasant state,
The more to feele by such record how that my
welth doth bate.
If such record (alas) proveke the inflamed mynde,
Which sprung that day that I dyd leave the best of
me behynde.
If love forgeat himselfe by length of absence let,
Who doth me guid (O wofull wretch) unto this
baited net: [for me,
Where doth encrease my care, much better were
As dumm as stone all things forgott, still absent
for to be.
Alas the clear christall, the bright transplendant
glasse, [it hase.
Doth not bewray the colours hid which underneath
As doth the accumbred sprite the thoughtfull
throwes discover, [we cover.
Of teares delyte of fervent love that in our hartes
Out by these eyes, it sheweth that evermore delight;
In plaint and teares to seek redress, and eke both
day and night.
Those kindes of pleasures most wherein men soe
rejoice, [voice.
To me they do redouble still of stormy sighes the
For, I am one of them, whom plaint doth well
content, [lament.
It fits me well my absent wealth me semes for to
And with my teares t' assy to charge myne eyes
twayne,
Like as my hart above the brink is fraughted full
of payne.
And for because thereto, that these fair eyes do
treate, [repeate.
Do me provoke, I will returne, my plaint thus to
For there is nothing els, so toucheth me within,
Where they rule all, and I alone, nought but the
case or skin.
Wherefore I shall returne to them as well or spring,
From whom descends my mortall wo, above all
other thing.
So shall myne eyes in paine accompany my hart,
That were the guides, that did it lead of love to
feel the smart. [pride,
The crisped gold that doth surmount Appolloes
The lively streames of pleasant starrs that under
it doth glyde.
Wherein the beames of love doe still increase their
heate, [me sweat,
Which yet so far touch me to near in cold to make
The wise and pleasant take, soe rare or else alone,
That gave to me the curties gyft, that earst had
never none.
Be far from me alas, and every other thing,
I might forbear with better will, then this that
did me bring.
With pleasand woord and cheer, redress of lingred
payne, [trayne.
And wonted oft in kindled will, to vertue me to
Thus am I forc'd to hear and hearken after news,
My comfort scant, my large desire in doubtful
trust renews,

And yet with more delight to move my wofull case,
I must complaine these hands, those armes, that
firmly do embrace.
Me from my self, and rule the sterne of my poor
lyfe,
The sweet disdaynes, the pleasant wrathes, and
eke the holy strife.
That wonted well to tune in temper just and mete,
The rage, that oft did make me err by furour un-
discrete, [hills,
All this is hid from me with sharp and ragged
At others will my long abode, my depe dyspayr
fulfills.
And of my hope sometime ryse up by some redresse,
It stumbleth straite for seable faint my fear hath
such excesse.
Such is the sort of hoape, the less for more desyre,
And yet I trust e're that I dye, to see that I require.
The resting place of love, where virtue dwells and
and growes, [repose,
There I desire my weary life sometime may take
My song thou shalt attaine, to find the pleasant
place,
Where she doth live by whom I live, may chance
to have this grace.
When she hath read and seen, the grieve wherein
I serve,
Between her breasts she shall the put, there shall
she thee reserve.
Then tell her, that I come, she shall me shortly see,
And if for waight the body fayl, the soul shall to
her flee.

*The lover blameth his love for renting of the letter he
sent her.*

SURFISED not (madame) that you did teare,
My wofull hart, but this also to rent,
The weeping paper that to you I sent,
Whereof ech letter was written with a tear.
Could not my present paynes (alas) suffice,
Your greedy heart, and that my heart doth feel,
Torments that prick more sharper than the steel,
But new and new must to my lott aryse,
Use then my death, soe shall your crueltye,
Spite of your spyte, rid me from all my smart,
And I no more such torments of the hart,
Feel as I doe this shall you gayne thereby.

The lover curseth the tyme when fyrst he fell in love.

WHEN fyrst myne eyes did view and mark,
Thy fayr beauty to behold,
And when my ears lysned to hark,
The pleasant woords that thou me tolde.
I would as then I had been free,
From ears to hear, and eyes to see.
And when my lipps gan fyrst to mone,
Whereby my hart to thee was knowne,
And when my tongue dyd talke of love,
To thee that hast true love downe throwne.

I would my lipps and tongue alſoe,
 Had then been dumme, no deal to goe.
 And when my hands have handled ought,
 That thee hath kept in memory,
 And when my feet have gone and fought,
 To find and get the company.
 I would each hand a foot had beene,
 And I each foot a hand had ſeen.
 And when in mind I dyd conſent,
 To follow this my fancies will,
 And when my hart did firſt relent,
 To taſt ſuch bait my life to ſpill.
 I would my hart had been as thine,
 Or els thy hart had been as myne.

The lover determineth to ſerve faithfully.

SINCE love will needs, that I ſhall love,
 Of very force I muſt agree,
 And ſince no chaunce may it remove,
 In wealth and in adverſitie.
 I ſhall alway my ſelfe apply,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.
 Though for good will I finde but hate,
 And cruelly my life to waſt,
 And though that ſtill a wretched ſtate,
 Should pyne my days unto the laſt:
 Yet I profeſs it willingly,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.

For ſince my hart is bound to ſerve,
 And I not ruler of myne owne,
 What foe befall, tyll that I ſterve,
 By prooſe full well it ſhall be knowne.
 That I ſhall ſtill my ſelf apply,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.

Yet though my grieve finde noe redreſs,
 But ſtill encrease before myne eyes,
 Though my reward be cruelneſſe,
 With all the harme, happs can devyſe,
 Yet I profeſs it willingly,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.

Yea though fortune her pleaſant face,
 Should ſhew, to ſet me up aloft,
 And ſtraight my wealth for to deface,
 Should wrythe away, as ſhe doth oft.
 Yet would I ſtill my ſelf applye,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.

There is no grieve, no ſmert, no wo,
 That yet I feel, or after ſhall,
 That from this minde may make me goe,
 And whatſoever me befall,
 I do profeſs it willingly,
 To ſerve and ſuffer patiently.

The lover ſuſpected, blameth ill tongues.

MISTRUSTFULL minds be moved,
 To have me in ſuſpect,
 The truth it ſhall be proved,
 Which time ſhall once detect.

Though falſhed goe about,
 Of crime to me accuſe,

At length I do not doubt,
 But truth ſhall me excuſe.
 Such ſauce, as they have ſerved,
 To me without deſert,
 Even as they have deſerved,
 Thereof God ſend them part,

The lover complaineth, and his ladie comforteth.

Lover. It burneth yet, alas, my heartes deſire,

Lady. What is the thing, that hath inflam'd thy heart?

Lo. A certaine point as fervent as the fyre.

La. The heat ſhall ceaſe if that thou wilt convert,

Lo. I cannot ſtop the fervent raging yre,

La. What may I do, if thy ſelf cauſe thy ſmart?

Lo. Heare my requeſt, and rew my weeping chere

La. With right good will ſay on, lo, I thee here.

Lo. That thing would I, that maketh two content,

La. Thou ſeekeſt, perchaunce of me, that I may not.

Lo. Would God, thou wouldeſt, as thou mayſt, well aſſent.

La. That I may not the grieve is myne, God wot,

Lo. But if I feele, whatſo thy woordes have ment.

La. Suſpect me not, my woordes be not forgett.

Lo. Then ſay, alas! ſhall I have help or no.

La. I ſee no time to anſwer, yea, but no.

Lo. Say yea, dere hart, and ſtand no more in doubt.

La. I may not grant a thing that is ſo dere.

Lo. Lo with delayes, thou dryves me ſtill aboot.

La. Thou wouldeſt my death, it plainly doth appeare, {out.

Lo. Firſt may my heart his blood, and life blede

La. Then for my ſake, alas! thy will forbear.

Lo. From day to day, thus waſtes my lyfe away.

La. Yet for the beſt, ſuffre ſome ſmale delay.

Lo. Now good, ſay yea, do once ſo good a dede,

La. If I ſayd yea, what ſhould thereof enſue?

Lo. An heart in payne of ſuccour ſo ſhould ſpede,
 Twixt yea, and nay, my dout ſhall ſtill renew,
 My ſwete, ſay yea, and do away this drede.

La. Thou wilt nedeſ ſo, be it ſo, but then be trew.

Lo. Nought would I elſe, nor other treaſure nene,
 Thus hearts be wonne by love, requeſt, and mone.

Why love is blinde.

Or purpoſe, love choſe firſt for to be blinde,
 For he with ſight of that, that I beholde,
 Vanquiſh't had been, againſt all godly kynde,
 His bow your hand, and truſſe ſhould have unfold.

And he with me to ſerve had been aſſinde,
 But, for he blind, and reckleſs would him hold
 And ſtill, by chance, his dredly ſtrokes beſtow
 With ſuch, as ſee, I ſerve, and ſuffer wo.

To his unkinde love

WHAT rage is this, what furor of what kynde,
What power, what plage, doth wery thus mye
minde?

Within my bones to rankle is assynde,
What poison pleasant swete.

Lo see myne eyes flow with continual teares,
The body still away sleepleffe it weares,
My foode nothing my fainting strength repayres
Nor doth my lim mee sustayne. [turne,

In depe wyde wound, the deadly stroke doth
To curelesse skarre that never shall returne,
Go to, triumph, rejoyce thy goodly turne,
Thy frend thou doest oppresse.

Oppresse thou doest, and hast of him no cure,
Nor yet my plaint no pitie can procure,
Fierce tygre, fell, hard rocke without recure
Cruell rebell to love.

Once may thou love, never be loved again,
So love thou still, and not thy love obtayne,
So wrathfull love with spites of just disdaine,
May thret thy cruell hart.

The lover blameth his instant desyre.

DESYRE, (alas!) my maister, and my foe,
So sore altered thy selfe, how maist thou see,
Some time thou seekest, and dryves me to and fro,
Some time thou ledest, that leadeth thee and me,
What reason is to rule thy subjects so,
By forced law and mutabilitie?
For where by thee I doubted to have blame,
Even now by hate agayne I doubt the same.

The lover complaineth his estate.

I SEE that chance hath chosen me,
Thus secretly to live in payne,
And to another geven the free,
Of all my losse to have the gayne,
By chance assinde thus do I serve,
And other have that I deserve.

Unto my self some time alone,
I do lament my wofull case,
But what availeth me to mone,
Since truth and pitie hath no place,
In them, to whom I sue and serve,
And other have that I deserve.

To seke by meane to change this mind,
Alas, I prove it will not be,
For in my heart I cannot finde,
Once to refrayne, but still agree
As bound by force alway to serve,
And other have that I deserve.

Such is the fortune that I have,
To love them most, that love me lest,
And to my payne to seek and crave
The thing, that other have possesse,
So thus in vaine alway I serve,
And other have that I deserve,

And till I may appease the heate,
If that my happe will happe so well
To wayle my wo my heart shall create
Whose pensif payne my tong can tell,
Yet thus unhappy must I serve,
And other have that I deserve.

Of his love called Anna.

WHAT woord is that, that changeth not,
Though it be turnde and made in twayne,
It is mynne, Anna, God it wote
The only causer of my payne,
My love that medeth with disdaine,
Yet is it loved, what will you more,
It is my salve, and eke my fore.

That pleasure is mixed with every paine.

VENEMOUS thornes that are so sharpe and kene,
Beare flowers we see, full fresh and sayre of hue,
Poyson is also put in medicine,
And unto man his health doth oft renue,
The fyre that all things eke consumeth cleue,
May hurt and heale: then if that this be true,
I trust some time my harm may be my health,
Sins every woe is joynd with some wealth.

A riddle of a gyft geven by a ladie.

A LADY gave me a gift she had not,
And I received her gift which I took not,
She gave it me willingly, and yet she would not,
And I received it albeit I could not.
If she give it me I force not,
And if she take it again she cares not,
Conster what this is and tell not,
For I am fast sworne, I may not.

That speaking or profering brings alway speding.

SPEAKE thou and spede, where will or power
ought helpeth, [by welth:
Where power doth want, will must be wonne
For nede will spede, where will workes not his
kynde, [fynd.
And gayne, thy foes thy frendes shall cause thee
For sute and golde, what do not they obtayne,
Of good and bad the tryers are these wayne.

*He ruleth not, though he reigne over realmes, that is
subject to his owne lustes.*

If thou wilt mighty be, flee from the rage,
Of cruell will, and see thou kepe the free,

From the foul yoke of sensual bondage,
For though thine empire stretcht to Indian see,
And for thy fear trembleth the fardeth Thules,
If thy desyre have over thee the power,
Subject then art thou, and no governour.

If to be noble and high thy mind be moved,
Consider well thy ground and thy beginning,
For he that hath eche starre in heaven fixed,
And gives the moone her hornes and her eclipsing.
A lyke hath made the noble in his working,
So that wretched no way may thou be,
Except soule lust and vyce doe conquer thee,

All wer that so thou had a flood of golde,
Unto thy thirst yet should it not suffice.
And though with Indian stones a thousand folde,
More precious then can thy self devise.
Ycharged were thy backe, thy covetise,
And busy byting yet should never let,
Thy wretched lyfe, nede do thy death profet.

Whether libertie by losse of life, or life in prison and thraldome, be to be preferred.

LYKE as the byrde within the cage inclosed,
The dore unsparred, her foe the hawke without
Twixt death and prison pitiously oppressed,
Whether for to choose standeth in dout.
Lo so do I, which seke to bring about,
Which should be best by determination
By losse of life, libertie, or lyfe by prison.

O mischief by mischief to be redressed,
Where payne is best there lyeth but little pleasure,

By short death better to be delivered,
Then byde in painfull lyfe, thraldome and dolour.
Small is the pleasure where much payne we suffer,

Rather therefore to chuse me thinketh wisdom,
By loss of lyfe libertie, then lyfe by prison.

And yett me thinkes although I live and suffer,
I do but wayte a time and fortunes chance,
Oft many thinges do happen in one hower,
That which opprest me now may me advance,
In time is trust which by deatnes grevaunce
Is wholly lost. Then were it not reason

By death to chuse libertie, and not life by prison,

But death wer deliverance where lif lengthens paine,

Of these two illes let see now chuse the best,
This bird to deliver that here doth plaine;
What say ye lovers, which shal be the best?
In cage thraldome, or by the hawke opprest;
And which to chuse, make plain conclusion
By loss of lyfe libertie, or lyfe by prison,

Against bouders of money.

FOR shamefast harme of great and hatefull nede,
In depe dispayre, as did a wretch go,
With ready corde out of his life to spede,
His stumbling foot did fynde an hooorde, lo,

Of gold, I say, where he preparde this dede
And in exchange, he left the corde tho'
He that hid the golde, and found it not,
Of that he found he shapt his kneck a knot.

Description of a gonne.

VULCANE begat me, Minerva me taught,
Nature my mother, craft nourisht me yere by yere
Three bodies are my foode; my strength is in Anger, wrath, waste, and noyse, are my children dere.

Gesse frende, what I am, and how I am wraught,
Monster of sea or of lande, or of els where
Know me, and use me, and I may thee defend,
And if I be thineemie I may thy life ende,

Wyat being in prison to Bryan.

SIGHES are my foode, my drink are my teares,
Clinking of fetters would such musike crave,
Stink, and close ayre, away my life it weares,
Poor innocence is all the hope I have,
Rayne, wynde, or weather, judge I by myne ears,
Malice assautes that righteousnesse should have.
Sure am I, Bryan, this wound shall heale againe,
But yett, alas! the skarre shall still remaine.

Of dissembling words.

THROUGHOUT the world if it were fought,
Fayre words ynoughe a man shall fynde;
They be good chepe, they cost right nought,
Their substance is but only wynde:
But well to say, and so to meane,
That swete accorde is seldome sene.

Of the mean and sure estate.

STAND whofo lis upon the slipper wheele,
Of high estate, and let me here rejoyce,
And use my life in quietnesse eche dele,
Unknowne in court that hath the wanton joyes,
In hidden place my time shall slowly passe,
And when my yeres be past without annoyse,
Let me dye old after the common trace,
For gypes of death do he too hardly pass;
That knowne is to all, but to himself, alas!
He dyeth unknown dased with dreadfull face.

The courtiers life.

IN court to serve decked with freshe araye,
Of sugared meates feling the swete repast,

The lyfe in bankets and fundry kyndes of playe.
Amid the preffe the worldly lookes to waste.
Hath with it joined of times fuch bitter taſte,
That who ſo joyes fuch kinde of life to holde,
In priſon joyes fettred with chaines of golde,

Of diſappointed purpoſe by negligence.

OF Carthage he that worthy warriour,
Could overcome, but could not uſe his chance
And I likewyſe of all my long endeavour,
The ſharp conqueſt though fortune did advance,
Ne could I uſe, the hold that is given over.
I unpoſſeſſe, ſo hangeth now in balance.
Of warre, my peace, rewarde of all my payne,
At Mountzon thus I reſtleſs reſt in Spaine.

Of his returne from Spayne.

TAGUS farewell that weſtward with thy ſtremes,
Turnes up the graines of golde already tryde,
For I with ſpurre and ſaile go ſeke the Temmes,
Gayneward the ſunne that ſheweth her welthy
pride;
And to the towne that Brutus fought by dreames,
Like bended moon that leaves her luſty ſyde,
My king, my country, I ſeke for whom I live,
O mighty Jove the wyndes for this me geve.

Of ſedaine truſting.

DRIVEN by deſyre I did this ded,
To danger my ſelf without cauſe why,
To truſt th' untrue not lyke to ſpede,
To ſpeake and promiſe faithfully.
But now the prooſe doth verify,
That who ſo truſteth ere he know,
Doth hurt himſelf and pleaſe his foe.

*Of the mother that eat her child at the ſiege of Je-
ruſalem.*

IN doubtfull breſt whyles motherly pittie,
With furious famine ſtandeth at debate
The mother faith, O child unhappy,
Return thy blood where thou haſt milke of late.
Yeld me thoſe lymmes that I made unto thee,
And enter there where thou wer generate,
For of one body againſt all nature,
To another muſt I make ſepulture.

Of the means and ſure eſtate, written to John Poynts.

My mothers maides when they do ſow and ſpinne,
They ſing a ſong made of a fieldiſh mouſe,

That for becauſe her lived was but thinne,
Would needs go ſee her towniſh ſiſters houſe.
She taught her ſelf endure to grievous payne,
The ſtormy blaſtee her cave ſo ſore did ſouſe;
That when the furrous ſwimmed with the rayne,
She muſt lye cold and wet in ſory plight,
And worſe then that bare meate ther did remayne,
To comfort her, when ſhe her houſe had dight,
Some tyme a barley corne, ſome time a beane,
For which ſhe laboured hard both day and night.
In harveſt tyme, whyle ſhe might go and gleane,
And when her ſtore was ſtroyed with the floode,
Then welaway for ſhe undone was clene,
Then was ſhe faine to take inſtede of foode
Slepe if ſhe might, her hunger to begyle,
My ſiſter, quod ſhe, hath a living good,
And hence from me ſhe dwelleth not a myle;
In colde and ſtorme ſhe lyeth warm and drye
In bed of downe, the durt doth not deſyle
Her tender foot, ſhe labours not as I.
Richely ſhe fedes and at the riche mannes coſt,
And for her meate ſhe nedes not crave nor cry,
By ſea, by land, of delicacies the moſt
Her cater ſekes, and ſpareth for no perell,
She fedes on boyld meate, bake meate and on roſt,
And hath therefore no whit of charge nor travell
And when ſhe liſt, the licour of the grape
Doth glad her heart, till that her belly ſwell;
And at this journey makes ſhe but a jape,
So forth ſhe goes, truſting of all this wealth,
With her ſiſter her part ſo ſore to ſhape,
That if ſhe might there kepe herſelf in health,
To live a lady while her life doth laſt,
And to the dore now is ſhe come by ſtealth,
And with her foote anone ſhe ſcrapes full faſt,
Th' other for feare durſt not well ſcarce appeare
Of every noiſe ſo was the wretch agaſt
At laſt, ſhe asked ſoftly who was there,
And in her language as well as ſhe could,
Pepe (quod the other) ſiſter I am here.
Peace (quod the towne mouſe) why ſpeakeſt
thou ſo loude,
And by the hand ſhe took her fayre and well,
Welcome, quod ſhe, my ſiſter by the roode,
She feaſted her, that joy it was to tell,
The fayre they had, they drank the wyne ſo clere,
And as to purpoſe now and then it fell
She chered her, with how ſiſter what chere?
Amid this joy beſell a ſory chance,
That welaway, the ſtranger bought full dere,
The fare ſhe had, for as ſhe lookte a ſkunce,
Under a ſtole ſhe ſpied two ſteming eyes
In a rounde heade with ſharp eares: In France
Was never mouſe ſo ferde, for the unwyſe
Had not yfene ſuch a beaſt before,
Yet had nature taught her after guyſe
To know her foe, and dread him evermore;
The towne mouſe fled, ſhe knew whither to go,
The other had no ſhift, but wonders ſore,
Ferde of her life, at home ſhe wiſht her tho',
And to do, alas! as ſhe did ſkippe, [was ſo,
The heaven it would, lo! and eke her chaunce
At the theſholde her ſely foote did trippe,
And ere ſhe might recover it again,
The traytour cat had caught her by the hippe,

And made her there against her will remayne,
That had forgot her poore suertie, and rest,
Forseking welth, wherein she thought to raygne.
Alas! (my Poynes) how men do seke the best,
And finde the worse, by error as they staye;
And no marvell, when sight is so opprest,
And blindes the guyde, anone out of the way
Goeth guyde, and all in seking quiet life.
O wretched myndes! there is no golde that may,
Graunt that you seek, no warre, no peace, no
strife,

No, no, although thy head were hoopte with gold,
Serjeant with mace, with hawbert, sword, nor
knife,

Can not repulse the care that folow should,
Eche kynde of lyfe hath with him his disease,
Live in delites, even as thy lust woulde,
And thou shalt finde when lust doth most thee
please,

It yrketh straight, and by itself doth fade.

A small thing is that, that may thy minde appease:

None of you all there is, that is so madde

To seke for grapes on brambles, or on briers,

For none I trow, that hath a witte so badde

To set his hay for conies over rivers,

Nor ye set not a dragge net for an hare;

And yet the thing that most is your desire,

You do mislike, with more travell and care

Make plaine thine heart that it be not knotted

With hope or dreade, and see thy will be bare

From all affectes, whom vyce hath never spotted;

Thyself content with that is thee assynde,

And use it well that is to thee allotted:

Then seke no more out of thy self to fynde

The thing that thou hast sought so long before;

For thou shalt feele it sticking in thy mynde

Made, if ye list to continue your sore,

Let present passe, and gape on time to come,

And depe thy self in travell more and more,

Henceforth (my Poynes) this shall be all and some,

Those wretched fooles shall have nought els of
me:

But, to the great God, and to his dome,

None other payne pray I for them to be,

But when the rage doth leade them from the right

That looking backward vertue they may see

Even as she is so goodly, fayre and bright;

And whylst they claspe theyr lusts in armes
acroffe,

Graunt them, good Lord, as thou maist of thy
might,

To freat inward, for losing such a los.

Of the courtiers life, written to John Poynes.

MYNE own, John Poynes, sins ye delight to know
The causes why that homeward I me draw,
And flee the prease of courtes, wherso they goe,
Rather then to live thrall under the awe
Of lordly lookes, wrapped within my cloke,
To will and lust learning to set a law
It is not, that because I storme or mocke
The power of them whom fortune here hath lent

Charge over us, of right to strike the stroke;

But true it is, that I have always ment

Less to esteeme them, then the common sort,

Of outward thinges that judge in their entent;

Without regarde, what inward doth resort,

I graunt, some time of glory that the fyre,

Doth touch my heart, me list not to report.

Blame by honour and honour to desyre.

But how may I this honour now attaine,

That cannot dye the colour blacke a lyer?

My Poynes, I cannot frame my tune to fayn.

To cloke the truth, for praise without desert,

Of them that list all vice for to retayne,

I cannot bonour them that set theyr part

With Venus and Bacchus all their life long.

Nor hold my peace of them, although I smart,

I cannot crouche nor knele to such a wronge.

To worship them like God on earth alone,

That are as wolves these sely lambes among,

I cannot with my woordes complayne and mone.

And suffer nought nor smart without complaint,

Nor turne the word that from my mouth is gone,

I cannot speak and looke like a faint.

Use wyles for wit, and make desceit a pleasure,

Call craft counsaile, for lucre still to paynt,

I can not wrest the law to fyll the coffer

With innocent blood to feed my self fatte,

And do most hurt where that most helpe I offer.

I am not he that can allow the state,

Of hye Cæser, and damne Cato to dye,

That with his death could scape out of the gate,

From Cæser's hands, if Livy doth not lye.

And would not live where liberty was lost,

So did his heart the common wealth apply,

I am not he, such eloquence to boast,

To make the crow in singing, as the swanne;

Nor call the lyon of coward beastes the most,

That cannot take a mouse, as the cat can,

And he that dyeth for hunger of the golde,

Call him Alexander, and say that Pan

Passeth Apollo in musike many folde,

Praise Syr Copas for a noble tale,

And scorne the story that the knight tolde,

Praise him for counsell that is dronke of ale.

Grinne when he laughs, that beareth all the sway,

Frowne when he frownes, and grone when he is
pale;

On others lust, to hang both night and day,

None of these pointes would ever frame in me,

My wit is nought, I can not learn the way,

And much the less of things that greater be.

That asken helpe of colours to devise,

To joyne the meane with eche extremitie,

With nereft vertue ay to cloke the vyce,

And as to purpose likewise it shall fall,

To presse the vertue that it may not ryse.

As dronkenness good felowship to call,

The frendly foe with his faire double face,

Say he is gentle, and curties therewithall,

Affirme that favill hath a goodly grace.

In eloquence, and cruelty to name,

Zeale of justice, and change in time and place,

And he that suffereth offence without blame,

Call him pitiefull, and him true and playne,

That rayleth recheles unto eche mans shame,

Say he is rude, that cannot lye and fayne.
 The lecher a lover and tyranny
 To be right of a princes raigue,
 I cannot, I, no, no, it will not be.
 This is the cause that I could never yet
 Hang on their sleeves the weigh (as thou maist see)
 A chippe of chaunce, more then a pound of wit;
 This makes me at home to hunt and hawke,
 And in foul weather at my book to sit;
 In frost and snow, then with my bowe stalke;
 No man doth marke wherefo I ryde or goe;
 In lusty leas at libertie I walke.
 And of these newes I fele no weale no woe,
 Save that a clogge doth hang yett at my hele;
 No force for that, for that is ordred so,
 That I may leape both hedge and dyke full wele.
 I am not now in France to judge the wyne,
 With savery sauce those delicates to feel,
 Nor yet in Spayne, where one must him incline,
 Rather then to be, outwardly to seme,
 I meddle not with wittes that be so fyne,
 Nor Flanders chere lettes not my sight to deme,
 Of black and white nor taket my wittes away,
 With beastliness, such doe those beastes esteeme,
 Nor I am not, where truth is geven in pray
 For money, pryson, and treason, of some
 A common practice used night and daye;
 But I am here in Kent and Christendome,
 Among the muses, where I reade and ryme,
 Where if thou list, mine own John Poynes to come,
 Thou shalt be judge, how I do spende my tyme.

*How to use the court and himself therein, written to Syr
 Fraunces Bryan.*

A SPENDING hend that alway powreth out,
 Had nede to have a bringer in as fast,
 And on the stone that still doth turne about,
 There groweth no mosse: These proverbes yet
 doe last.

Reason hath set them in so sure a place,
 That length of yeres their force can never waste:
 When I remember this, and eke the case
 Wherein thou standst, I thought forthwith to write
 (Bryan) to thee, who knowes how great a grace,
 In writing is to counsaile man the right;
 To thee, therefore, that trottes styll up and downe,
 And never rests but running day and night,
 From realme to realme, from citie, strete, and
 towne;

Why doest thou weare thy body to the bones,
 And mightest at home slepe in thy bedde of downe,
 And drinke good ale so nappy for the nones,
 Fede thyself fatte and heape up pounce by pound,
 Lykest thou not this? no, why? for swine so
 groines

In stye, and chaw dung moulded on the ground,
 And drivel on pearles, with head still in the man-
 ger,

So of the harpe the asse doth heare the sound,
 So sackes of durt be filde. The neat courtier
 So serves for lesse, then do these fatted swine,
 Though I seme leane and drye without a moister,

Yet will I serve my prince, my lord, and thynne,
 And let them live to fede the paunch that list,
 So may I live to fede both me and myne,
 By God well sayd. But what and if thou wist
 How to bring in, as fast as thou doest spende
 That would I learne, and it shall not be mist
 To tell the how. Now harke what I intende
 Thou knowest well first, who so can seke to please,
 Shal purchase frendes, where trouth shall but of-
 fende,

Flee therefore truth, it is both welth and ease,
 For though that trouth of every man hath praise,
 Full neare that wynde goth trouth in great mischance,
 Use vertue, as it goeth now a dayes,
 In woord alone to make thy language swete,
 And of the dede, yet doe not as thou sayes,
 Els be thou sure, thou shalt he farre unmete,
 To geat thy bread, eche thing is now so skant,
 Seke still thy profit upon thy bare fete,
 Lend in no wise for fear that thou do want;
 Unless it be, as to a calfe a chese,
 But if thou can be sure to win a cant
 Of half at least, it is not good to leese.
 Learne at the ladde, that in a long white cote,
 From under the stall withouten landes or fee,
 Hath lept into the shoppe, who knowes by rote,
 This rule that I have tolde thee here before,
 Sometime also riche age begynnes to dote,
 Se thou when there thy gayne may be the more,
 Stay him by the arme where so he walk or goe,
 Be nere alway, and if he cough to fore,
 What he hath spyt treade out, and please him so
 A diligent knave that pykes his maisters purse
 May please him so, that he withouten mo,
 Executour is, and what is he the worse,
 But if so chance, thou get nought of the man,
 The widow may for all thy payne disburse
 A riveled skinne, a stinking breath, what than?
 A toothelesse mouth shall doe thy lippes no harme;
 The gold is good, and though she curse or banne,
 Yet where thee list, thou mayst lye good and
 warme;

Let the old mule byte upon the brydle,
 Whilst there do lye a sweter in thine arme,
 In this also see that thou be not ydle,
 Thy nece, thy cosin, sister, or thy daughter,
 If she be sayre, if handsome be her middle,
 If thy better hath her love besought her,
 Avaunce his cause and he shall helpe thy nede
 It is but love, turne thou it to a laughter.
 But ware I say, so gold the helpe and spede,
 That in this case thou be not so unwyse,
 As pander was in such a lyke dede,
 For he the foole of conscience was so nyce,
 That he no gayne would have for all his payne;
 Be next thy selfe, for friendship bears no pryce.
 Laughest thou at me? why, do I speak in vayne?
 No, not at thee, but at thy thyrsty jest;
 Wouldest thou, I shoulde for any losse or gayne
 Change that for golde that I have tane for best?
 Next godly thinges, to have an honest name,
 Should I leave that then take me for a beast.
 Nay then farewell, and if thou care for shame
 Content the with honest povertie,
 With free tong, what thee mislikes, to blame

And for thy trowth some time aduersitie,
And therewithall this gyft I shall thee give,
In this world now little prosperitie,
And quoyne to kepe, as water in a fyve.

The song of Jopas unfinished.

WHEN Dido feasted furst the wandring Trojan knight,
Whom Junos wrath with stormes did force in Libik sands to light.
That mighty Atlas taught the supper lasting long,
With crisped lockes, in golden harpe Jopas sang
in song: [and name.
That same (quod he) that we the world do call
Of heaven and earth with all contentes, it is the
very frame:
Of thus, of heavenly powers by more powre
kept in one,
Repugnant kindes, in middes of whom the earth
hath place alone. [and nourse,
Firme, rounde, of living things the mother, place
Without the which in egall weight this heaven
doth hold his course. [ven,
And it is calde by name, the first and moving hea-
The firmament is placed next, containg other seven.
Of heavenly powers that same is planted full and
thicke,
As shining lights, which we call starres, that there-
in cleave and sticke.
With great swift sway the fyrst, and with his rest-
less fours, [nual cours.
Carieth itself, and all those eyght in even conti-
And of this world so round within that rolling case,
Two points there be that never move, but firmly
kepe their place.
The tone we see alway, the tother stands object,
Against the same divyding just, the ground by line
direct. [th' other,
Which by ymagination, drawne from the one to
Toucheth the centre of the earth, for way there is
none other, [not bright,
And these becalde the poles, descride by starres
Artike the one northward we see, Antartike tho-
ther hight
The lyne, that we deyse from thone to thother so,
As axell is, upon which the heavens about do go,
Which of water nor earth, of ayre nor fyre have
kinde;
Therefore the substance of those same were hard
for man to find;
But they been uncorrupt, simple and pure unmixt;
And so we say been all those starres, that in the
same be fixt;
And eke those erring seven, in cyrcle as they stray,
So calde, because against that fyrst they have re-
pugnant way,
And smaller by ways too, scant sensible to man,
To busy woorke for my poor harpe, let sing then
he that can,
The wydest save the fyrst of all these nyne above,
One hundred yere doth aske of space for one de-
gree to move:

Of which decrees we make in the fyrst moving
heaven,
Three hundred and threescore in partes, justly
divided even;
And yet there is another between those heavens
two, [for now.
Whose moving is so flye so slacke, I name it not
The seventh heaven, or the shell next to the starry
skye, [so flie,
All those degrees that gathered up with aged pace,
And doth perfourme the same, as elders count
hath bene,
In nine and twenty yeres complete, and days al-
most sixteen,
Do carye in his bought the starre of Saturne olde,
A threatner of all living things with drought, and
with his cold, [pase,
The sixt whom this conteins, doth stalke with yonger
And in twelve yere doth some what more then
thothers vyage was, [nigne,
And thys in it doth beare the starre of Jove be-
Twene Saturnes malice, and us men, friendly de-
fending signe; [dayes,
The fifth beares bloody Mars, that in three hundred
And twise eleven with one full yere hath finish't
all those wayes. [fixe,
A yere doth aske the fourth, and howers therto
And in the same the dayes eye, the sunne therein
he stickes: [me,
The thyrd that governde is by that, that governs
And love for love, and for no love provokes, as
oft we see. [the tother,
In like space doth perfourme that course, that dyd
So doth the next, the next unto the same, that
second is in order.
But it doth beare the starre, that calde is Mercury,
That many a crafty secret sleppe doth tread, as
Calcars trye, [gone
That skye is last, and sixt next us those wayes hath
In seven and twenty common days, and eke the
third one; [about.
And beareth with his sway the dyvers moone
Now bright, now brown, now bent, now full, and
now her light is out:
Thus have they of their owne two movinges all
these seven,
One, wherein they be carried still, eche in his
several heaven: [layde
Another of themselves, where theyr bodies be
In by waies, and in lesser roundes, as I afore have
sayde, [the streight,
Save of them all the sunne doth stray least from
The starry skye hath but one course, that we have
calde the eight.
And all these movinges eyght are ment from west
to east, [east to west;
Although they seeme to clyme aloft, I say from
But that is but by force of theyr first moving skye,
In twise twelve howres from east to east that car-
rieth them by and by.
But marke me well also, the moving of these
seven, [heaven;
Be not about the axletree of the fyrst moving
For they have theyr two poles directly tone to
the tother.

UNCERTAIN E AUCTORS.

SONGES AND SONETTES.

A praise of his ladie.

GEVE place you ladies and be gone,
Boast not your selves at all,
For here at hande approacheth one,
Whose face will stayne you all.

The vertue of her lively lookes
Excels the precious stone,
I wishe to have none other bookes
To reade or look upon.

In eche of her two christal eyes,
Smyleth a naked boy;
It would you all in heart suffice
To see that lampe of joye.

I think nature hath lost the moulde,
Where she her shape did take;
Or else I doubt if nature could
So fayre a creature make.

She may be well comparde
Unto the Phenix kinde,
Whose like was never seene nor heard,
That any man can fynde.

In lyfe she is Diana chaste
In trouth Penelopey,
In woord and eke in dede stedfast;
What will you more we say:

If all the world were sought so farre,
Who could finde such a wight,
Her beauty twinkleth lyke a starre
Within the frosty night.

Her roseall coulour comes and goes,
With such a comely grace,
More ruddier too, then doth the rose,
Within her lively face.

At Bacchus feast none shall her mete,
Ne at no wanton playe,
Nor gasing in an open strete,
Nor gadding as astray.

The modest myrth that she doth use,
Is mixt with shamefastnesse,
All vyce she doth wholly refuse,
And hateth ydlenesse.

O lord it is a world to see,
How vertue can repayre,

And decke in her such modestie,
Whome nature made so fayre.

Truely she doth as farre exceede,
Our women now adayes,
As doth the jelliflowre, a wede,
And more a thousand wayes

How might I doe to get a grasse
Of this unspotted tree:
For all the rest are playne but chaffe
Which seme good corne to bee.

This gyft alone I shall her geve,
When death doth what he can,
Her honest fame shall ever live,
Within the mouth of man.

They of the meane estate are happiest.

If right be raft and overronne,
And power take part with open wronge,
If feare by force do yeld to sone,
The lacke is like to last to long.

If God for goodes shal be unplaced,
If right for riches loses hys shape,
If world for wisedome be embraced,
The gesse is great much hurt may hap.

Among good things I prove and finde,
The quiet lyfe doth most abound,
And sure to the contented mynde
There is no riches may be founde.

For riches hates to be content,
Rule is enemy to quietnesse,
Power is most part impatient,
And seldome lykes to live in peace.
I heard a heardman once compare,
That quiet nights he had mo slept
And had mo merydayes to spare,
Then he which ought the beast he kept.

I would not have it thought hereby,
The dolphin swimme I mean to teach,
Nor yet to learne the fawlcen flye
I rowe not so farre past my reache.

But as my part above the rest,
Is well to wish and well to will,
So tyll my breath shall fayle my brest,
I will not cease to wish you still.

Upon consideration of the state of this life be wisshed death.

THE longer life the more offence
The more offence the greater paine,
The greater paine the lesse defence,
The lesse defence the lesser gaine:
The loss of gaine long yll doth trye,
Wherefore come death and let me dye.

The shorter life, lesse count I finde,
The less account the sooner made,
The account soon made, the merier mind,
The merier mynd doth thought evade;
Short life in truth this thing doth trye,
Wherefore come death and let me dye.

Com gentle death, the ebbe of care,
The ebbe of care, the flood of life,
The flood of life, the joyful fare,
The joyful fare, the end of strife,
The end of strife, that thing wish I.
Wherefore come death and let me dye.

The lover that once disdained love, is now become subject being caught in his snare.

To this my song give eare who list
And mine entent judge as ye will,
The time is come that I have mist
The thing whereon I hoped styll,
And from the toppe of all my trust
Myshap hath throwen me in the dust.

The time hath been and that of late,
My hart and I might leap at large;
And was not shut within the gate
Of love's desire, nor took no charge
Of any thing that did pertaine,
As touching love in any paine.

My thought was free my hart was lyght
I marked not who lost, who laught,
I plaide by day, I slept by night,
I forced not, who wept, who laught,
My thought from all such things was free,
And I my self at libertie.

I toke no hede to tauntes nor toys
As leef to see them frowne as smyle,
Where fortune laught I scornde their joyes
I found their fraudes and every wyle,
And to my self oft tymes I smyled.
To see how love had them begiled.

Thus in the net of my conceit,
I masked still among the fort
Of such as fed upon the bayte
That Cupide laide for his disport,
And ever as I saw them caught
I them beheld and thereat laught.

'Till at the length when Cupide spied
My scornful wyll and spiteful use,
And how I past not who was tyed
So that my self myght still live lose,
He set himself to lye in waite
And in my way he threw a baite.

Such one as nature never made
I dare well say save she alone,
Such one she was as would invade
A hart more hard then marble stone,
Such one she is, I know it right,
Her nature made to shew her might.

Then as a man in a mase
When use of reason is away,
So I began to stare and gase
And sodeinly, without delay
Or ever I had the wit to loke
I swallowed up both bait and hooke.

Which daily grieves me more and more
By sundry sortes of careful wo,
And none alive may salve the sore
But only she that hurt me so,
In whom my lyfe dothe now consist
To save or slay me as she lyst.

But seeyng now that I am caught
And bounde so fast I cannot flee.
Be ye by myne ensample taught
That in your fantasies sele you free
Despyse not them that lovers are
Lest you be caught within his snare.

Harpalus complaint of Philliades love bestowed on Corin, who loved her not, and denied him that loved her.

PHILLIDA was a fayre mayde
As fresh as any flowre
Whom Harpalus the heardman prayde
To be his paramour.

Harpalus and eke Corin
Were herdmen both yfere:
And Phillida could twist and spinne,
And thereto sing full clere

But Phillida was all to coy
For Harpalus to winne,
For Corin was her only joy
Who forst her not a pinne.

How often would she flowers twine,
How often garlandes make
Of couslips and of columbine,
And all for Corins sake.

But Corin he had hawkes to lure
And forced more the field,
Of lovers law he took no cure
For once he was begylde.

If Harpalus prevayled mought,
His labour all was lost,
For he was farthest from her thought,
And yet he loved her most.

Therefore waxt he both pale and leane
And drye as clod of clay,
His flesh it was consumed cleane,
His colour gone away.

His beard it had not long be shave,
His heare hong all unkempt,
A man most fit even for the grave
Whom spitefull love had spent.

His eyes were read, and all forewatched,
His face besprent with teares;
It semde unhap had him long hatched,
In middes of hys dispayres.

His cloaths were black and also bare,
As one forlorne was he,
Upon his head he alwaies ware
A wreathe of willowe tree,

His beastes he kept upon a hill,
And he fate in the dale,
And thus with sighs and sorrows shrill
He gan to tell his tale.

Oh Harpalus (thus would he say)
Unhappiest under sonn,
The cause of thine unhappy day
By love was fyrst begunne.

For thou wentst first by sute to seeke
A tygre to make tame.
That settis not by thy love a lecke
But makes thy grieve her game.

As easy it were for to convert
The frost into the flame,
As for to turne a froward hart,
Whom thou so feign wouldest frame.

Corin he liveth carelesse,
He leapes among the leaves,
He eates the frutes of thy redresse.
Thou reapes, he takes the sheaves.

My beastes awhile your foode refraine,
And harke your heardsman's sounde;
Whome spightful love alas! hath slayne,
Through gyrt with many a wounde.

O happily be ye beastes wild,
That here your pastures takes;
I see that ye be not begylde,
Of these your faithful mates.

The hart he feedeth by the hinde,
The buck hard by the do;
The turtle dove is not unkinde.
To him that loves her so.

The ewe she hath by her the ramme,
The young cow hath the bull;
The calfe with many a lusty lambe,
Doe feed their hunger full.

But well away that nature wrought
Thee Phillida so faire;
For I may say that I have bought
Thy beauty all to deare.

What reason is that crueltie,
With beauty should have part:
Or else that such great tyranny,
Should dwell in woman's hart.

I see therefore to shappe my death
She cruelly is prest.
To th' ende that I may want my breath,
My days been at the best.

O Cupide, graunt this my request,
And do not stoppe thine eares;
That she may feel within her brest,
The paynes of my despayres.

Of Corin that is carelesse
That she may crave her see,

As I have done in great distresse
That loved her faithfully.

But since that I shall dye her slave,
Her slave and eke her thrall;
Write you my friendes upon my grave,
This chaunce that is befall.

Here lyeth unhappy Harpalus,
By cruell love now flaine;
Whom Phillida unjustly thus,
Hath mured with disdaine.

Of the death of Philips.

BEWAILE with me all ye that have profest
Of musicke th' arte, by touch of coarde or wind,
Lay down your lutes and let your gyttens rest
Philips is dead whose like you cannot fynde,
Of musicke much exceeding all the rest;
Muses therefore of force now must ye wrest
Your pleasant notes into another sounde,
The string is broke, the lute is dispossessed,
The hande is colde, the body in the ground,
The lowring lute lamenteth now therfore,
Philips her frende, that can her touche no more.

*That all things sometime finde ease of thyr payne, save
only the lover.*

I SEE there is no sort
Of things that live in grieve,
Which at sometime may not resort
Whereas they have reliefe,

The stricken dere by kinde
Of death that stands in awe,
For his recure an herb can fynde,
The arrowe to withdrawe.

The chafed dere hath soyle,
To coole him in his heate;
The asse after his wery toyle,
In stable is up set.

The cony hath his cave,
The little byrd his nest,
From heate and colde themselves to save,
At all times as they list.

The owle with feble sight,
Lyes lurking in the leaves,
The sparrow in the frosty night
May shroude her in the eaves.

But wo to me, alas,
In sunne nor yet in shade,
I cannot find a resting place,
My burden to unlade.
But day by day still beares
The burden on my backe,
With weeping eyen and watry teares,
To holde my hope aback.

All things I see have place,
Wherein they bowe or bende,
Save this, alas, my woful case,
Which no where fyndeth ende.

*Th' assaulte of Cupide upon the fort where the lovers hart
lay wounded, and how he was taken.*

WHEN Cupide scaled fyrst the fort,
Wherein my heart lay wounded sore,
The batry was of such a fort
That I must yelde or dye therefore.

There saw I love upon the wall,
How he his banner dyd dysplay,
Alarme, alarme, he 'gan to call,
And bade his souldiours kepe aray.

The armes the which that Cupide bare,
Were pearced heartes with tears besprent,
In silver and sable to declare
The stedfast love he always ment.

There myght you see his hand all drest,
In colours like to whyte and blacke,
With powder and with pellets preste,
To bring the forte, to spoyle and sacke.

Good while the maister of the shot,
Stoode in the rampyre brave and proude,
For spence of powder he spared not,
Assaulte, assaulte, to cry aloude.

There myght you heare the cannons rore,
Eche piece dyscharged a lover's looke,
Which had the power to rent, and tore
In any place whereas they tooke.

And even with the trumpets sowne,
The scaling ladders were up set,
And beauty walked up and downe,
With bow in hand and arrowes whet.

Then fyrst desyre began to scale
And throwed him under his targe,
As one the worthiest of them all,
And aptest for to give the charge.

Then pushed souldiours with theyr pykes,
And holborders with handy strokes,
The hargabushe in fleshe it lightes,
And dims the ayre with misty smokes.

And as it is now souldiers use,
When shot and powder gins to want,
I hanged up my flag of truce,
And pleaded for my lyves graunt.

When fancy thus had made her breache,
And beauty entred with her bande,
With bag and baggage sely wretch,
I yelded into beauties hand.

Then beauty bad to blow retrete,
And every souldiour to retyre,
And mercy mylde with spede to fet
Me captive bound as prisoner.

Madame (quoth I) sith that this day
Hath served you at all assayes,
I yelde to you without delay,
Here of the fortresse all the kayes.

And sith that I have been the marke,
At whom you shot at with your eye,
Nedes must you with your handy warke,
Or salve my fore, or let me dye.

The aged lover renounceth love.

FLORHE that I dyd love,
In youth that I thought swete,

VOL. I.

As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not mete.

My lustes they do me leave,
My fancies all are fled,
And tract of time begynnes to weave
Gray heares upon my hed.

For age with stealing steppes
Hath clawde me with his crouche,
And lusty lyfe away she leapes
As there had been none such.

My muse doth not delight
Me as she dyd before,
My hand and pen are not in plight,
As they have been of yore.

For reason me denyes
This youthly ydle ryme.
And day by day to me cryes,
Leave of these toyes in tyme.

The wrinkles in my browe,
The furrows in my face,
Say lymping age will lodge hym now,
Where youth must geve him place.

The harbinger of death,
To me I see him ride,
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath
Doth byd me to provyde.

A pickax and a spade,
And eke a shrowding shete,
A house of clay for to be made,
For such a geast most mete.

Methinkes I hear the clarke
That knoles the carefull knell,
And byddes me leave my woful warke,
Ere nature me compell.

My keepers knit the knot,
That youth did laugh to skorne,
Of me that cleane shall be forgot,
As I had not been borne.

Thus must I youth geve up,
Whose badge I long dyd weare,
To them I yelde the wanton cup,
That better may it beare.

Lo, here the bare hed skull,
By whose balde signe I know,
That stouping age away shall pull,
Which youthful yeres did sowe.

For beauty with her band
These croked cares hath wrought,
And shipped me into the land,
From whence I fyrst was brought.

And ye that byde behinde,
Have ye none other trust
As ye of clay were cast by kynd,
So shall ye waste to dust.

Of the death of Sir Thomas Wyat the Elder.

Lo, dead! he lives, that whilome lived here,
Among the dead, that quick goes on the ground,
Though he be dead, yet quick he doth appeare
By lively name, that death cannot confound,
His lyfe for ay of fame the trump shall sound,
Though he be dead, yet lives he here alive,
Thus can no death from Wyat life deprive.

S 1

Of a new married student that plaid fast or lose.

A STUDIENT, at his boke so plast,
That welth he might have wonne,
From boke to wife did flete in hast,
From welth to wo to runne,
Now, who hath plaid a feater cast,
Since jugling first begonne?
In *knitting* of himself so *fast*,
Himself he hath *undonne*.

The lover in despaire, lamenteth his case.

ADIEU, desert, how art thou spent?
Ah! dropping tears, how do ye wash?
Ah! scalding sighes, how be yee spent.
To pricke them forth that will not haste?
Ah! pained hart, thou gapst for grace,
Even then where pitie hath no place.

As easy it is the stony rocke
From place to place for to remove,
As by thy plaint for to provoke
A frozen hart from hate to love:
What should I say? Such is thy lott,
To fawne on them that force thee not.

Thus mayst thou safely say and sweare,
That rigour raigneth and ruth doth faile,
In thanklesse thoughts my thoughts do weare;
Thy truth, thy faith may nought availe;
For thy good will, why should thou so;
Still graft where grace it will not grow.

Alas! poor hart, thus hast thou spent
Thy flowring time, thy pleasant yeres,
With sighing voice wepe and lament;
For of thy hope no fruite apperes:
Thy true meaning is paid with scorne,
That ever soweth and reapeth no corne.

And where thou seekest a quiet port,
Thou dost but weigh against the winde;
For where thou gladdest wouldst resort,
There is no place for thee aslinde:
Thy destiny hath sett it so,
That thy true hart should cause thy wo.

Of his maiſtresse, M. B.

IN bayes I boast, whose branche I beare,
Such joy therein I finde,
That to the death I shall it weare,
To ease my carelesse minde.
In heat, in cold, both night and day,
Her virtue may be sene,
When other fruits and flowers decay,
The bay yett grows full green;
Her beries fede the birdes full oft;
Her leves swete water make,
Her bowes be set in every loſt
For their swete favours sake:
The birdes do shroud them from the cold,
In her we daily see;
And men made arbers as they would,
Under the pleasant tree.

It doth me good when I repaire
There, as these bayes do grow,
Where oft I walk to take the air,
It doth delight me so.
But so I stand, as I were dumme,
Her beauty for to blase,
Wherewith my sprites be overcome,
So long thereon I gase.
At last I turne unto my walke,
In passing to and fro,
And to my false I smile and talk,
And then away I go,
Why smilest thou? say lookers on,
What pleasure hast thou found?
With that I am as cold as stone,
And ready for to founde,
Fie, fie for shame, sayth fanſie than,
Pluck up thy fainted hart,
And speak thou boldly like a man.
Shrink not for little smart,
Whereat I blush and change my cheare
My senses wax so weak,
O God, think I, what make I here,
That never a word may speake:
I dare not sigh, lest I be heard,
My lokes I slyly cast,
And still I stand, as out were scard,
Untill my stormes be past.
Then happy hap doth me revive,
The blood comes to my face;
A merrier man is not alive,
Then I am in that case
Thus after sorow seke I rest;
When fled is fancies fitt:
And though I be a homely gest,
Before the bays I sit;
Where I do watch till leaves do fall:
When winde the tree doth shake,
Then, though my branche be very small,
My lease away I take,
And then I go and clap my handes,
My heart doth leap for joy.
These bayes do ease me from my bands,
That long did me annoy;
For when I do behold the same,
Which makes so fair a show,
I find therein my maiſtress name,
And see her virtues grow.

A praise of Maiſtresse R.

I HEARD when fame with thundring voice did
summon to appear
The chief of nature's children all, that kind hath
placed here.
To view what brute by virtue got their lives could
justly crave;
And bad them shew what praise by truth they
worthy were to have:
Wherewith I saw how Venus came and put her self
in place,
And gave her ladies leave at large to stand and
plead their case:

Each one was called by name a row, in that assembly there,
 That hence are gone or here remains, in court or other where :
 A solemn silence was proclaim'd, the judges sat and heard
 What truth could tell, or craft could fain, and who should be prefer'd :
 Then beauty slept before the bar, whose brest and neck was bare,
 With hair trust up, and on her head a caul of gold she ware.
 Thus Cupids thralls began the flock, whose hungry eyes did say,
 That she had stained all the dames, that present were that day.
 For ere she spake with whispering words, the praise was filld throughout,
 And fancy forced common voice, thereat to give a shout.
 Which cried to fame take forth thy trump, and found her praise on hy,
 That glads the heart of every wight, that her beholds with eye.
 What stir and rule (quod order than) do these rude people make ?
 We hold her best that shall deserve a praise for virtues sake.
 This sentence was no sooner said, but beauty therewith blusht,
 The noise did cease, the hal was still and every thing was husht.
 Then fineness thought by training talk to win that beauty lost,
 And whet her tongue with jolly words, and sparred for no cost ;
 Yet wantoness could not abide, but broke her tale in hast,
 And peevish pride for peacocks plumes would needs be hiest plast.
 And therewithal came curiousness and carped out of frame,
 The audience laught to hear the strife, as they beheld the same.
 Yet reason soon appeas'd the brute, her reverence made and done,
 She purchased favour for to speak, and thus her tale begun.
 Since bounty shall the garland wear, and crowned be by fame,
 O happy judges call for her, for she deserves the same.
 Where temperance governs beauties flowers, and glory is not sought,
 And shamefaced meekness mastreth pride, and virtue dwells in thought :
 Bid her come forth, and shew her face, or else assent each one,
 That true report shall grave her name in gold or marble-stone.
 For all the world to read at will what worthynesse doth rest,
 In perfect pure unspotted life, which she hath here possesse.

Then skill rose up and sought the praise, to find that if he might,
 A person of such honest name, that men should praise of right :
 This one I saw full sadly fit, and shrink her selfe a side,
 Whose sober looks did shew gifts her wively grace did hide.
 Lo here (quoth skill, good people all) is lucre left alive,
 And she shall most accepted be, that least for praise did strive.
 No longer fame could hold her peace, but blew a blaste so highe,
 That made an echo in the air, and sounding through the skie ;
 The voice was loud, and thus it said, come R. with happy days,
 Thy honest life hath won the fame, and crowned thee with praise.
 And when I heard my maistres named, I thrust amids the throng,
 And clapt my hands and wisht of God, that she might prosper long.

Songes written by N. G. of the Nine Muses.

IMPS of kyng Jove, and queen remembraunce lo
 The sisters nine, the poets pleasant feres.
 Caliope doth stately style bestowe,
 And worthy praises payntes of princely peres :
 Clion in solemn songes reneweth all day,
 With present yeres conjoyning age by past,
 Delightful talke loves comical I'haley,
 In fresh grene youth, who doth lyke lawrel last :
 With voices tragicall, foundes Melpomen
 And as with cheynes thallured care she byndes.
 Her stringes, when Terpescor doth touch, even then
 She toucheth hartes, and raigneth in mens myndes :
 Fyne Erato, whose looke a lyvely chere
 Presents in dancing, kepes a comely grace,
 With semely gesture doth Polomyne sterc,
 Whose woordes whole routes of rankes do rule in place.
 Urany her globes to view all bent,
 The ninefold heaven observes with fixed face ;
 The blastes Eutrepe tunes of instrument,
 With solace sweet, hence my heavy dumpes to chase.
 Lord Phæbus, in the myddes, (whose heavenly sprite
 These ladies doth inspire) embraceth all
 The graces in the muses weed delyte,
 To lead them fourth, that men in maze they fall.

Musonius the philosophers saying.

IN woorking well, if travel you sustaine,
 Into the winde shall lightly passe the payne ;

But of the dede the glory shall remayne,
And cause your name with worthy wights to
raigne.

In working wrong, if pleasure you attaine,
The pleasure soon shall vade, and void as vaine.
But of the dede throughout the lyfe the shame
Endures, defacing you with foul defame,
And still torments the minde both night and day;
Scant length of time the spot can washe away.
Flee then ill suading pleasures, baits untrue,
And noble vertues fayre renowne pursue.

Description of virtue.

WHAT one art thou, thus in torn wedey clad?
Vertue in price, whom auncient sages had.
Why poorely rayde? for fading goodes peast care.
Why double faced? I marke eche fortunes fare.
This bridle what? Myndes rages to restraine.
Fooles why beare you? I love to take great
payne.
Why winges? I teach above the starres to flye.
Why treade you death? I onely cannot dye.

Praise of measure-keeping.

THE ancient time commended not for nought;
The meane what better thinge there be sought.
In meane is virtue placed on eyther side,
Both right and left amisse a man shall flyde.
Icar, with fire hadst thou the midway flowne,
Icarian beck by name had no man knowne.
If myddle path kept had proud Phaeton
No burning brand this earth had faine upon:
Ne cruel power, ne none so soft can raigne,
That kepes a meane, the same shall still remayne.
The Julie once dyed, to much mercy spill;
The Nero stern, rigor extreme dyd kill.
How could August so many yeres well passe,
Nor over meke nor over fierce he was:
Worship not Jove with curious fancies vaine,
Nor him despise; hold right atwene these twaine:
No wastfull wight, no gredy gutt is prazed,
Stand largesse just in egall ballance payde:
So Catoes meal surmountes Antonius chere,
And better fame his sober fare hath here
To slender building bad as bad to grosse?
One an eye sore, the tother falles to losse.
As medicines helpe in measure, so (God wot)
By overmuch the sicke their bane have got.
Unmete me semes to utter this mo waies;
Measure forbiddes unmeasurable praise.

Man's life, after Possidonius or Crates.

WHAT pathe list you to treade? what trade will
you assay?
The courts of plea by braule and bate drive gecie
peace away.

In house for wife and childe there is but carke
and care,
With travel and with toyle enough in fields we
use to fare.
Upon the seas lyeth dread; the riche in foreign
lande,
Do feare the losse, and there the poore like my-
fers poorely stand.
Stryfe with a wife, without your thriftfull harde
to see:
Yong brats a troble, none at all a mayme it semes
to be.
Youth fonde, age hath no hart, and pincheth all
to nye;
Chooße then the leiser of these two, ay life, or
soon to dye.

Metrodorus's mynde to the contrary.

WHAT race of lyfe ronne you? what trade will
you assay?
In courts is glory got, and witt increased day
by day.
At home wee take our ease, and beake our selves
in rest:
The fieldes our nature do refreshe with pleasures
of the best.
On seas is gain to geat; the stranger he shall be
Esteem'd, having much, if not, none knoweth his
lack but he.
A wyfe will trimme thy house, no wyle then art
thou free;
Brood is a lovely thing, without thy lyfe is loose
to thee.
Yong bloodes be stronge, olde fyres in double ho-
nour dwell,
Doway that choyse, no lyfe or soon to dye, for all
is well.

Of friendship.

Of all the heavenly gifts that mortal men com-
mend,
What trusty treasure in the world can counter-
vaile a frende.
Our health is soon decaied; goodes casual, light,
and vaine;
Broke have we seen the force of power and ho-
nour suffer staine.
In bodies lust man doth resemble but base brute,
True vertue geates and keeps a frende: good
guyde of our pursute, [case:
Whose hearty zeale with ours accordes in every
No terme of time, no space of place, no storme can
it deface.
When fickle fortune sailes, this knot endureth still.
The kin out of their kind may swerve, when
frendes owe thee good will:
When sweter solace shall befall, then one to finde,
Upon whose brest thou mayst repose the secrets of
thy minde?

He waileth at thy wo; his tears with thine be shed;
 With thee doth he joys, so lefe a lyfe is led.
 Behold thy frende, and of thy self the paterne see,
 One foul a wonder shall it seeme in bodies twaine
 to be;
 In absence present ryche in want, in sicknesse found,
 Ye after death alive, maist thou by thy sure frende
 be founde.
 Eche house, eche towne, each realme by stedfast
 love doth stande;
 Where foule debate brede bitter bale in eche di-
 uided lande,
 O friendship, flower of flowers! O lively sprite
 of lyfe!
 O sacred bond of blisful peace, the stalworth
 stanche of strife:
 Scipio with Lelius didst thou conioyne in care;
 At home in warres for weale and wo, with equal
 faith to fare.
 Gifippus eke with Tyte, Damon with Pythias;
 And with Menethus' sonne Achill by the combyn-
 ed was:
 Eurialus and Nisus gave Virgil cause to sing
 Of Pylades do many rymes and of Orestes ring:
 Downe Theseus went to hell, Pirith his frende to
 finde;
 O that the wyues in these our daies wer to their
 mates so kynd!
 Cicero the frendly man, to Atticus, his frende,
 Of friendship wrote, such couples, lo! doth lot, but
 seldom lend,
 Recount thy race now ronne, how few shalt thou
 there see, [mee:
 Of whom to say this same is he that never failed
 So rare a jewell then must nedes be holden dere,
 And as thou wilt esteem thy selfe, so take thy
 chosen fere:
 The tyrant in dispaire no lacke of gold bewayles,
 But out, I am undone (saith he) for all my friend-
 ships failes:
 Wherefore since nothing is more kyndly for our
 kynde,
 Next wisdom thus that teacheth us, love wee the
 frendly minde.

*The death of Zoroas, an Egyptian astronomer, in the
 first fight that Alexander had with the Persians*

Now clattring armes, now raging broyles of warre,
 Gan passe the noys of dredfull trumpetts clang,
 Shrowded with shafts, the heaven with cloude of
 dartes,
 Covered the ayre against full fatted bulles.
 As forceth kyndled yre the lyons keene,
 Whose greedy gutts the gnawing hunger prickes:
 So Macedons against the Persians fair,
 Now corpses hyde the purpurde soyle with blood;
 Large slaughter on eche side, but Perses more,
 Moyst fieldes he bled, theyr heartes and numbers
 bate,
 Fainted while they gave backe, and fall to flighte:
 The litening Macedon by swordes, by gleaves,
 By bandes and troupes of footemen, with his garde,

Speedes to dary, but hym his merest kyn,
 Oxate preserves with horsemen on a plumpe
 Before his carr, that none his charge should give:
 Here grunts, here groans, eche where strong youth
 is spent:
 Shaking her bloody hands, Bellone among
 The Perses soweth all kind of cruel death:
 With throte ycut he roares, he lyeth along,
 His entrailes with a launce through gyrded quyte,
 Hym smytes the club, hym woundes farre stryk-
 ing bowe,
 And him the sling, and him the shining sword;
 He dyeth, he is all dead, he pantes, he restes.
 Right over stoode in snow white armor brave,
 The Memphite Zoroas, a cunning clarke,
 To whom the heaven lay open as his booke;
 And in celestiall bodies he could tell
 The moving meeting light aspect eclips,
 And influence, and constellations all;
 What earthly chaunces would betyde, what yere
 Of plenty storde, what signe forewarned death,
 How winter gendreth snow, what temperature
 In the primetyde doth season well the soyle,
 Why summer burnes, why autumn hath ripe
 grapes,
 Whither the circle quadrate may become,
 Whether our tunes heaven's harmony can yelde,
 Of four begyns among themselves howe great
 Proportion is; what sway the erryng lightes
 Doth send in course gayne that fyrst movyng hea-
 ven;
 What grees one from another distant be,
 What starr doth let the hurtfull fyre to rage,
 Or him more mylde what opposition makes,
 What fyre doth qualifye Mavorse's fyre,
 What house eche one doth seeke, what planet
 raignes
 Within this heaven sphere, or that small thynges,
 I speake, whole heaven he closeth in his brest.
 This sage then in the starres hath spyed the fates
 Threatned him death without delay, and sith
 He saw he could not fatall order chaunge,
 Foreward he prest in battayle, that he might
 Mete with the rulers of the Macedons,
 Of his right hand desirous to be slain,
 The bouldrest bourne, and worthiest in the feilde;
 And as a wight, now wery of his lyfe,
 And seking death in fyrst front of his rage,
 Comes desperately to Alexander's face,
 At him with dartes one after other throwes,
 With recklesse words, and clamour him provokes,
 And sayth, Nestanak's bastard shamefull stayne
 Of mothers bed, why lokest thou thy strokes,
 Cowardes among, turne thee to me, in case
 Manhood there be so much left in thy heart:
 Come fight with me, that on my helmet weare
 Apollo's laurell both for learninges laude,
 And eke for martiall praise, that in my shielde
 The seven-fold sophie of Minerve contein,
 A match more mete fyr king then any here.
 The noble prince amoved takes ruth upon
 The wilfull wight, and with soft words ayen,
 O monstrous man (quoth he) what so thou art,
 I pray thee live, ne do not with thy death
 This lodge of lore, the muse's mansion marre;

That treasure house this hand shall never spoyle,
My sword shall never bruise that skilfull brayne,
Long gather'd heapes of science some to spill;
O how fayre fruites may you to mortall men
From wisdom's garden give; how many may
By you the wiser and the better prove:
What error, what mad moode, what frenzy thee,
Perswades to be downe, sent to kepe Auerne,
Where no artes flourish, nor no knowledge vailes
For all these sawes. When thus the soveraign
said,

Alighted Zoroas with sword unsheathed,
The careless king there smote above the greve,
At th' opening of his quishes wounded him,
So that the blood down traile on the ground:
The Macedon perceiving hurt, gan gashe,
But yet his mynde he bent in any wise,
Hym to forbear, sett spurrs unto his steede,
And turnde away, lest anger of his smarte
Should cause revenger hand deale balefull blowes.
But of the Macedonians chieftaines knights,
One Meleager could not bear this fight,
But ran upon the said Egyptian reuk,
And cutt him in both knees: He fell to ground,
Wherewith a whole rout came of fouldiours
sterne.

And all in pieces hewed the sely seg,
But happely the foule fled to the starres,
Where, under him, he hath full sight of all,
Whereat he gazed here with reaching looke:
The Persians waild such sapience to forgoe,
The very sone the Macedonians wisht
He would have lived, King Alexander selfe
Demde him a man unmete to dye at all;
Who wonne like praise for conquest of his yre,
As for stoute men in fiede that day subdued,
Who princes taught how to discerne a man,
That in his head so rare a jewel beares,
But over all those same Camenes, those same,
Divine Camenes, whose honour be procurde,
As tender parent doth hys daughters weale,
Lamented, and for thanks all that they can,
Do cherish hym decaist, and sett him free,
From dark oblivion of devouring death.

Marcus Tullius Cicero's death.

THEREFORE when restless rage of wynde and
wave,

He saw by fates, alas, calde for, (quoth he)
Is hapless Cicero, sayle on, shap course
To the next shore, and bring me to my death.
Perdy these thanks rescued from evill sword,
Wilt thou my country pay? I see myne end:
So powers divine so bid the gods above,
In citie saved that consul Marcus shend,
Speaking no more, but drawing from diep hart
Great grones, even at the name of Rome rehearst,
His eyes and cheekes with showers of teares he washt;
And (though a route in daily dangers worne)
With forced face the shipmen held their teares,
And strivng long, the seas rough flood to passe,
In angry windes and stormy showers made way.

And at the last safe ancred in the rode,
Came heavy Cicero a land, with payne,
His saynted lymmes the aged fyre doth drawe,
And round about their master stood his band:
Nor greatly with their own hard hap dismayde,
Nor plighted faith prove in sharpe tyme to breake,
Some swordes, prepare some theyr dere Lord as-
sist:

In littour laid, they lead him unkouth wayes.
If so deceave Antonius cruell gleaves,
They might, and threats of following routs escape:
Thus lo, that Tullie, went that Tullius,
Of royal robe and sacred senate prince,
When he a farre the men approche espyeth;
And of his sone the ensign doth acknow,
And with drawn sword, Popilius threat'ning
death,

Whose life and whole estate, in hazard once
He had preserved, when Rome, as yett to free,
Heard him, and at his thundring voice amazed:
Herennius eke more tyger than the rest,
Present enflam'd with fury, him pursues.
What might he do, should he use in defence
Dysarmed handes, or pardon ask for Mede?
Should he with wordes to turne the wrath
Of th' armed knight, whose safeguard he had
wrought:

No age forbids, and fixt within diepe brest
His countrys love, and falling Romes ymage;
The charret turn, sayth he, let lose the raines,
Runne to the undeserved death mee, lo,
Hath Phæbus foule, as messenger forewarnde,
And Jove desires a new heavens man to make.
Brutus and Cassius souls, live you in blifs?
In case, yett all the fates gain strive us not,
Neither shall wee, perchaunce, dye unrevenge.
Now have I lived, O Rome! ynough for me;
My passed life nought suffreth me to doubt:
Noytome oblivion of the loathsome death.
Slea me: Yett all the off-spring to come shall
know,

And this decaise shall bring eternal life;
Yea, and (unlesse I fall, and all in vaine:
Rome, I sometime thy angur chosen was)
Not evermore shall friendly fortune thee
Favour, Antonius, once the day shall come,
When her dear wights, by cruell spight thus
slaine,

Victorious Rome shall at thy hands require;
Me likes ther while, go see the hoaped heaven.
Speche had he left, and therewith, he, good man,
His throat preparde, and held his head unmov'd.
His hasting to those fates the very knightes
Be loth to see, and rage rebated, when
They his bare necke beheld, and his hoare heares;
Scant could they hold the teares that fourth gan
burst,

And almost fell from bloody hands the swordes;
Only the sterne Herennius, with grim looke,
Dastards, why stand you still? he sayeth, and
straight

Swaps of the head with his presumptuous yron.
Ne with that slaughter yett he is not filde:
Foul shame on shame to heape, is his delight,
Wherefore the handes also doth he of smyte,

Which darst Antonius life so lyfely paint.
 Him yelding, strained ghost, from welkin hye,
 With lothy chere lord Phœbus gan behold,
 And in black cloud, they say, long hid his head.
 The Latine muses and the graces they wept,
 And for his fall eternally shall pepe :
 And lo, here piercing Pitho, (strange to tell)
 Who had to him suffisde both sense and wordes.
 When so he spake, and drest with nectar foode
 That flowing tong, when his wind pipe dis-
 clofd,
 Fled with her fleeing frend, and (out alas)
 Hath left ther earth, ne will no more returne :
 Popilious flieth ther while, and leaving there

The senseless stock, a griezely sight doth bear,
 Unto Antonius boord with mischief fed,

Of M. T. Cicero.

For Tullie late a tombe I gan prepare,
 When Cynthie, thus, bad me my labour spare :
 Such manner thinges become the dead, quoth
 he,
 But Tully lives, and still alyve shall be.

N. G.

S f iij

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS SACKVILLE,
LORD BUCKHURST.

Containing his

INDUCTION TO THE MIRROR FOR
MAGISTRATES.

COMPLAINT OF HENRY DUKE OF
BUCKINGHAM.

To which is prefixed

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

In vain I think, right honourable lord,
By this rude rime to memorize thy name,
Whose learned muse hath writ her owne record
In golden verse, worthy immortal fame.
Thou much more fit, were leisure for the same,
Thy gracious soveraigne's prayers to compile,
And her imperiall majestie to frame
In loftie numbers, and heroick stile.

SPENSER'S SONNET TO LORD BUCKHURST.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MUNDELL AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE,

Anno 1793.

THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF
THOMAS SACKVILLE

LORD BUCKHURST

Copyright 1855

A FACSIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT
OF THE POETICAL WORKS OF LORD BUCKHURST

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

In vain I think I should be bold
By this poor name to venture on the world
My little hearted muse hath with the pen
In golden verse, written immortal verse
Then teach me how to write in such a way
That future generations may be glad
And not impatiently will turn to scorn
In idle numbers, and in vain
To leave a name behind me here below

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MURRAY AND SON, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

1855

THE LIFE OF SACKVILLE.

IN the turbulent and sanguinary reign of Queen Mary, when the fires of persecution were kindled in Smithfield, and every part of England was polluted with murders, more atrocious than the slaughters of the most bloody civil war; the cultivation of polite literature was neglected amidst the calamities of the state, and only one poetical production, of prominent excellence, intituled, *A Mirror for Magistrates*, illuminates that interval of darkness between Surrey and Spenser.

More writers than one were concerned in the composition of that popular poem, which originated in the reign of Mary, and was not finally completed till the beginning of the seventeenth century; but its inventor, and most distinguished contributor was THOMAS SACKVILLE, the first Lord Buckhurst, and Earl of Dorset, Lord High Treasurer of England, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, author of the first genuine English tragedy, and "the Patriarch of a race of genius and wit."

This distinguished statesman and poet, was the son of Richard Sackville, Esq. of Buckhurst, in the parish of Withiam, in Sussex, where he was born in the year 1527. His mother was a daughter of Sir John Bruges, Lord Mayor of London, and afterwards wife of John Powlet, Marquis of Winchester.

He discovered, from his childhood, a lively wit and vigorous understanding, and was removed from a domestic tuition, to Hart-hall in Oxford, where he resided some time; but took no degree. He afterwards removed to Cambridge, where he did not reside long; but had the degree of Master of Arts conferred on him.

At both universities he became celebrated as a Latin and English poet. Wood mentions him as "having been in his younger years poetically inclined; and wrote, while he continued in Oxon, several Latin and English poems: though published, either by themselves, or mixed among other men's poems, yet I presume they are lost or forgotten, as having no name to them, or that the copies are worn out."

He afterwards entered himself a student in the Inner Temple, and at an early period of life was called to the bar.

He carried his love of poetry, which he seems to have almost solely cultivated, to the Inner Temple, where, in conjunction with Thomas Norton, a fellow-labourer of Hopkins and Sternhold, he wrote a tragedy, intituled, *Ferrex and Porrex*, which was acted before Queen Elizabeth, at Whitehall, by the students of the Inner Temple, in 1561. It was printed incorrectly and surreptitiously in 1565; more accurately in 1570; in 1590, by the title of *Gorboduc*; and reprinted by Doddsley in 1736, with a preface by Mr. Spence, by the procuration of Pope, "who wondered that the propriety and natural ease of it had not been better imitated by the dramatic authors of the succeeding age."

About the year 1557, he formed the plan of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, in which all the illustrious but unfortunate characters of the English history, from the Conquest to the end of the fourteenth century, were to pass in review before the poet, who descends, like Dante, into hell, and is conducted by *Sorrow*. Every personage was to recite his own misfortunes in a soliloquy. But he had leisure only to finish a poetical preface, called an *Induction*, and one legend, which is the *Life of Henry Stafford Duke of Buckingham*.

Relinquishing, therefore, the design abruptly, and hastily adapting the close of his *Induction* to the appearance of Buckingham, whose story was to have been the last in his series, he recommended the completion of the whole to Richard Baldwyne and George Ferrers, men of the greatest wit in that age.

Deterred, perhaps, by the greatness of the attempt, they invited to their assistance Churchyard, Phayer, and other men of wit and genius, who chose such lives from the chronicles of Fabian and Hall, as seemed to display the most affecting catastrophes, and which were probably pointed out by Sackville.

This collection was printed in 4to, 1559, with the following title, *A Myrroure for Magistrates, wherein may be seen, by example of others, with howe greuous plages vices are punished, and how frail and unstable worldly prosperitie is founde, even of those whom fortune seemeth most highly to favour.* "*Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.*" Anno 1559, *Ædibus Thomæ Marshe.*

As he early quitted the study of the law for the flowery paths of poetry; so the poet was soon lost in the statesman; and negociations and embassies extinguished the milder ambitions of the ingenious muse.

In the fourth and fifth years of Queen Mary, his name appears in the parliamentary lists; and in the fifth of Queen Elizabeth, 1564, when his father was elected knight of the shire for Suffex, he was returned one of the members for Buckinghamshire.

Not long after this, he travelled into France and Italy, and was detained some time a prisoner at Rome, in consequence of some pecuniary inconvenience.

On his father's death in 1566, his liberty was procured, and he returned to England, to take possession of an ample patrimony.

His eminent accomplishments and abilities having acquired the confidence and esteem of Queen Elizabeth, he was knighted in 1567, in her presence, by the Duke of Norfolk, and at the same time promoted to the peerage, by the title of *Baron Buckhurst.*

In consequence of the Queen's frequent admonitions, he is said to have corrected his taste for magnificence and expence, which had some times subjected him to considerable inconveniencies.

In 1573, he went ambassador to France. In 1574, he sat on the trial of the Duke of Norfolk; at which time he was also in the Privy Council.

He was nominated one of the commissioners for the trial of Mary Queen of Scots; but it does not appear that he was present at her condemnation at Fotheringay Castle; yet after the confirmation of the sentence, he was appointed to bear the unhappy tidings to her, and to see the sentence put in execution.

In 1587, he went ambassador to the States-General; but, having incurred the displeasure of the Earl of Leicester and Lord Burleigh, he was recalled, and confined to his house nine months.

On the death of Leicester, he recovered the Queen's favour, and was made Knight of the Garter, one of the peers who sat on the trial of Lord Arundel, and joined with Burleigh, in negotiating a peace with Spain and Holland.

In 1591, he was, by the Queen's recommendation, elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in opposition to Essex, the object of her capricious passion, and incorporated Master of Arts.

On Burleigh's death, he was appointed Lord High Treasurer, and soon after joined in commission with Essex and Sir Thomas Egerton for negotiating an alliance with Denmark; and when that unfortunate nobleman was brought to his trial, with his friend Southampton, he was constituted Lord High Steward on the occasion.

At the accession of King James, his patent of Lord High Treasurer was renewed for life; and in 1603, he was created *Earl of Dorset*, and appointed one of the commissioners for executing the office of Lord Marshal.

He died suddenly at the council-table, Whitehall, April 19th 1608, in the 81st year of his age, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Abbot, his chaplain, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he is very lavish in his praise.

The character of Sackville, as a statesman, is to be sought elsewhere. It is sufficient to say, that few first ministers have left so fair a character. Amidst the intrigues of an artful court, he preserv-

ed the integrity of a private man. His family disdained the offer of an apology for him, against some little cavils of a rival party. In the exercise of his political functions, the brilliancy of his imagination grew more correct, not less abundant. Naunton relates, that his "secretaries had difficulty to please him, he was so *facete* and choice in his style." Even in the decisions of that rigid tribunal, the Star Chamber, which was never esteemed the school of eloquence, "so strong," says Lloyd, "was his invention, that he was called the *Star Chamber Bell*." Amidst the business of an envoy at Paris, he found time to prefix a *Latin Epistle* to Clerke's Latin translation of Castiglion's "Courtier," which is not an unworthy recommendation of a treatise remarkable for its polite Latinity. Himself a poet, he encouraged the art which he improved, by his liberality; and left his wit and patronage of polite literature to his descendants, of whom was Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the well known patron of Dryden and Prior;

— Whose great forefathers every grace,
Reflecting and reflected in his race;
Where other *Buckbursts*, other *Dorsets* shine,
And poets still, or patriots deck the line.

He was more courted and complimented by poets than any nobleman of his time, except Essex, whose love of literature, heroism, integrity, and generosity, made him the favourite of the nation, and the subject of innumerable sonnets and ballads, from Spenser to the lowest rhymers: And if panegyric were any where justifiable, it must be when paid to the man, who endeavoured to save Spenser from starving in the streets of Dublin, and who buried him in Westminster Abbey, with becoming solemnity.

As a poet, Sackville has pretensions to the gratitude of posterity, which have not hitherto been fully considered or allowed. He is entitled to rank with Spenser, Shakspeare, and Marlowe, the most eminent poets of his age; by the first of whom he is only surpassed in the perfection of allegory, by having had the disadvantage of writing before him; and, by the second, in his magic power of moving the passions, and the unrivalled excellence of his dramatic dialogue.

His tragedy of *Gorboduc* has the merit of being the first specimen in our language of a heroic tale written in blank verse, divided into acts and scenes, and clothed in all the formalities of a regular drama. It is praised by Sidney for its *notable moralitie*; but it was never popular, owing to the uninteresting nature of the plot, the tedious length of the speeches, the want of a discrimination of character, and almost a total absence of pathetic incidents. The dialogue, however, contains much dignity, strength of reflection, and good sense; and the language has great purity and perspicuity, and is entirely free from that tumid phraseology, and those exaggerated imageries and pedantic metaphors, which are the chief blemishes of the scenes of Shakspeare.

The assistance of Norton, to whom the three first acts are given by Wood, may be justly doubted. Every scene of *Gorboduc* is marked by Sackville's characteristic manner, which consists in a perspicuity of style, and a command of numbers, superior to the tone of his age.

In the *Mirror for Magistrates* he has two poems of considerable length, the *Induction*, and *Legend of Buckingham*, which are the chief foundation of his fame.

The collection, of which they make a conspicuous part, was reprinted in 1563, 1571, 1574, and in 1587, with an Induction, and the additions of many new lives, by John Higgins. At length the whole was digested anew, with additions by Richard Niccols, an ingenious poet, and printed in 1610, under the following title: *A Mirrour for Magistrates, being a true chronicle historie of the untimely fallies of such unfortunate princes, and men of note, as have happened since the first entrance of Brute into this island, until this our age, newly enlarged, with a last part, called, A Winter's Night Vision, being an addition of such tragedies, especially famous, as are exempted in the former historie, with a poem annexed, called, England's Eliza*. At London, imprinted by Felix Kyngston, 1610.

Sackville's share in it is illustrated in the preface. "I purpose only to follow the intended scope of that most honorable patronage, who, by how much he did surpass the rest in the eminence of his noble condition, by so much he hath exceeded them all in the excellence of his heroical stile,

which, with golden pen, he hath limmed out to posteritie in that worthy object of his minde, *THE TRAGEDIE OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM*, and in his preface, then intituled *MASTER SACKVILL'S INDUCTION*." This edition, which contains 86 lives and 875 pages, has never been reprinted, and is extremely scarce. That it was in high esteem throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth, appears not only from its numerous editions, but from the testimonies of Sidney, Heywod, Webbe, Bolton, and other contemporary writers. It is reasonable to suppose, that it enriched the stores, and extended the limits of our drama. Shakspeare is indebted to it for many scenes in his plays. Much of it might bear republication, and make good its claim to public notice; particularly the legends written by Churchyard and Niccols, which have considerable merit, and often shew a command of language and versification. But the *Induction* and *Legend* of Sackville, afford the most favourable specimen of those popular legends, and deserve being revived equally as compositions of real and intrinsic merit, and as objects of curiosity. They are now received, for the first time, into a collection of classical English poetry.

The Earl of Orford and Mr. Warton have characterised the poetry of Sackville with such elegance and minuteness, that it will be sufficient to add their testimonies as a justification of the revival of his writings, and as unquestionable authorities in his favour. |

"Our historic plays," says Lord Orford, "are allowed to have been founded on the heroic narratives in the *Mirror for Magistrates*; to that plan, and to the boldness of Lord Buckhurst's new scenes, perhaps we owe Shakspeare."

"Sackville's *Induction*," says Mr. Warton, "loses much of its dignity and propriety, by being prefixed to a single life, and that of no great historical importance; the plan is confessedly copied from Boccaces' *De Casibus virorum illustrium*, translated by Lydgate; the descent into hell, from Dante's "*Commedia*," and the sixth book of Virgil. The shadowy inhabitants of hell-gate are his own, and conceived with the vigour of a creative imagination, and described with great force of expression; they are delineated with that fullness of proportion, that invention of picturesque attributes, distinctness, animation, and amplitude, of which Spenser is commonly supposed to have given the first specimens in our language, and which are characteristical of his poetry. The readers of the "*Faery Queene*" will easily point out many particular passages, which Sackville's *Induction* suggested to Spenser."

"The *Complaynt of Henrye Duke of Buckingham*, is written with a force and even elegance of expression, a copiousness of phraseology, and an exactness of versification, not to be found in any other parts of the collection. On the whole, it may be thought tedious and languid; but that objection unavoidably results from the general plan of these pieces. It is impossible that soliloquies of such prolixity, and designed to include much historical, and even biographical matter, should every where sustain a proper degree of spirit, pathos, and interest."

THE INDUCTION

TO A MIRROUR FOR MAGISTRATES.

THE wrathfull winter proching on a pace,
With blustering blastes had al ybared the treen,
And olde Saturnus with his frosty face
With chilling colde had pearst the tender green :
The mantels rent, wherein enwrapped been
The gladfom groves that nowe laye overthrowen,
The tapets torne, and every blome downe blowen.

The soyle that erst so seemly was to seen,
Was all despoyled of her beauties hewe :
And foot freshe flowers (where with the sommers
queen [blewe
Had clad the earth) now Boreas blastes downe
And small fowles flocking, in their song did rewe
The winters wrath, wher with eche thing defaste
In woful wise bewayled the sommer past.

Hawthorne had lost his motley lyverye,
The naked twiggess were shivering all for colde :
And dropping downe the teares abundantly,
Eche thing (me thought) with weping eye me
tolde
The cruell season, bidding me withholde
My selfe within, for I was gotten out
Into the felde whereas I walkte about.

When loe the night with mistie mantels spred,
Can darke the daye, and dim the azure skyes,
And Venus in her message Hermes sped
To bluddy Mars, to wyl him not to ryse,
While she her selfe approcht in speedy wise :
And Virgo hiding her disdainful brest
With Thetis now had layd her downe to rest.

Whiles Scorpio dreading Sagittarius dart,
Whose bowe prest bent in fight, the string had
flypt,
Downe flyd into the ocean flud aparte,
The Beare that in the Iryshe seas had dipt
His griesly feete, with speede from thence he
whypt :
For Thetis hasting from the Virgines bed
Pursued the Bear, that ear she came was fled.

And Phaeton nowe neare reaching to his race
With glistering beames, gold streamynge where
they bent
Was prest to enter in his resting place.
Crythius that in the carte fyrste went
Had even now attaynde his journeyes stent
And fast declining hid away his head,
While Titan couched him in his purple bed.

And pale Cinthea with her borrowed light
Beginning to supply her brothers place,
Was past the noonsteede fyre degrees in fight,
When sparkling starres amynd the heavens face
With twinkling light sheen on the earth apace,
That whyle they brought about the nightes
chare

The darke had dimmed the day ear I was ware.

And forowing I to see the sommer flowers
The livly greene, the lusty leas forlorne,
The sturdy trees so shartered with the showers,
The fields so fade that floorisht so beforne
It taught me wel all earthly thinges be borne
To dye the death, for nought long time may last ;
The sommers beauty yeeldes to winters blast.

Then looking upward to the heavens leames
With nightes starres thicke powdred every where,
Which erst so glistened with the golden streames
That chearefull Phebus spred downe from his
sphere,
Beholding darke oppressing day so neare :
The sodayne light reduced to my minde
The sundry chaunges that in earth we fynde.

That musing on this worldly wealth in thought,
Which comes and goes more faster than we see
The flyckering flame that with the fyre is wrought,
My busie minde presented unto me
Such fall of pieres as in this realme had be :
That ofte I wisht some would their woes descryve.
To warne the rest whom fortune left alive

And strait forth stalking with redoubled pace
For that I sawe the night drewe on so fast,
In blacke all clad there fell before my face
A piteous wight, whom woe had al forwaite,
Furth from her iyen the cristall teares outbraist,
And syghing fore her handes she wrong and
folde,
Tare al her heare, that ruth was to beholde.

Her body small forwithered and forespent,
As is the stalk that sommers drought opprest;
Her wealked face with woful teares besprent,
Her colour pale, and (as it seemd her best)
In woe and playnt reposed was her rest.
And as the stone that droppes of water weares;
So dented wer cher cheekes with fall of teares.

Her iyes swollen with flowing streames afloate,
Wherewith her lookes throwen up full piteouslie,
Her forceles handes together ofte she smote,
With doleful shrikes, that echoed in the skye:
Whose playnt such sighes dyd strait accompany,
That in my doome was never man did see
A wight but halfe so woe begon as she.

I stoode agast beholding all her plight,
Tweene dread and dolour so distreynd in hart,
That while my heares upstart with the sight,
The teares out streamde for sorowe of her smart:
But when I sawe no ende that could aparte
The deadly dewle, which she so fore dyd make,
With dolefull voice then thus to her I spake.

Unwrap thy woes what ever wight thou be,
And stint betime to spill thy selfe wyth playnt;
Tell what thou art, and whence, for well I see
Thou canst not dure with sorowe thus attaynt.
And with that worde of sorowe all forfaynt
She looked up, and prostrate as she laye
With piteous sound loe thus she gan to saye.

Alas! I wretche whom thus thou seest distreynd
With wasting woes that never shall aslake,
Sorowes I am, in endeles tormentes payned,
Among the furies in the infernall lake:
Where Pluto god of hel so grievely blacke
Doth hold his throne, and *Letheus* deadly taste
Doth rieve remembrance of eche thyng forepast.

Whence come I am, the drery destinie
And luckeles lot for to bemone of those,
Whom fortune in this maze of miserie
Of wretched chaunce most wofull myrrours chose
That when thou seest how lightly they did lose
Theyr pope, theyr power, and that they thought
most sure
Thou mayest soone deeme no earthly joy may dure

Whose rusfull voyce no sooner had out brayed
Thou se woful woordes, wherewith she sorrowed so,
But out alas! she shryght and never sayed,
Fell downe, and all to dasht her selfe for woe.
The cold pale dread my lymes gan overgo
And I so sorrowed at her sorowes est, [rest.
That what with grieve and feare my wittes were

I strecht my selfe, and strait my heart revives,
That dread and dolour erst did so appale;
Lyke him that with the fervent fever stryves
When sicknes seekes his castell health to skale:
With gathered spirites so forst I feare to availe:
And rearing her with anguisshe all fordone,
My spirits return'd, and then I thus begonne.

O Sorrowe, alas! sith sorrowe is thy name,
And that to thee this drere doth well pertayne,
In vayne it were to seeke to ceas the fame:
But as a man hym selfe with sorrowe slayne,
So I, alas! do comfort thee in payne,
That here in sorrowe art forsonke so depe
That at thy sight I can but sigh and wepe.

I had no sooner spoken of a stike,
But that the storm so rumbled in her brest,
As Eolus could never roare the like,
And showers downe rayned from her iyen so fast,
That all bedreynt the place, till at the last
Well eased they the dolour of her minde,
As rage of rayne doth swage the stormy wynde.

For furth she placed in her fearfull tale:
Cum, cum, (quod she) and see what I shall shewe,
Cum heare the playning, and the bytter bale
Of worthy men, by fortune overthrowe.
Cum thou and see them rewing all in rowe.
They were but shades that erst in minde thou rolde.
Cum, cum with me, thine eyes shall them beholde.

What could these wordes but make me more agast:
To heare her tell whereon I musde while eare:
So was I mazed therewyth, tyll at the last,
Musing upon her wurdes, and what they were,
All todaynly well lessoned was my feare:
For to my minde returned howe she telde
Both what she was, and where her wun she helde.

Whereby I knewe that she a goddesse was,
And therewithall resorted to my minde
My thought that late presented me the glas
Of brittle state, of cares that here we finde,
Of thousand woes to silly men assynde:
And howe she nowe byd me come and beholde,
To see with iye that erst in thought I rolde.

That downe I fell, and with al reverence
Adored her, perceyving nowe that she
A goddesse sent by godly providence,
In earthly shape thus showed herself to me,
To wayle and rue this worldes uncertayntye:
And while I honoured thus her godheds might,
With playning voyce these wurdes to me she
shryght:

I shall the guyde first to the grievely lake,
And thence unto the blissful place of rest,
Where thou shalt see and heare the playnt they
make,
That whilom here bare swinge among the best.
This shalt thou see, but great is the unrest
That thou must byde before thou canst attayne
Unto the dreadfull place where these remayne.

And with these wurdcs as I uprayed stood,
And gan to folowe her that strayght furth paced,
Eare I was ware, into a desert wood

We nowe were cum : where hand in hand im-
braced,

She led the way, and through the thicke so traced
As but I had beene guided by her might,
It was no way for any mortall wight.

But loe, while thus amid the desert darke,
We passed on with steppes and pace unmette :
A rumbling roar confusde with howle and bark
Of dogs, shoke all the ground under our feete,
And stroke the din within our eares so deepe
As halfe distraught unto the ground I fell,
Besought retourne, and not to visite hell.

But she forthwith uplifting me apace
Removed my dread, and with a stedfast minde
Bad me come on, for here was now the place,
The place where we our travayle ende should finde.
Wherewith I arose, and to the place assynde
Astoynde I stalke, when strayt we approached nere
The dredfull place, that you wil dread to here.

An hydeous hole al vaste, withouten shape, 30
Of endles depth, orewhelmde with ragged stone,
Wyth ougly mouth, and grisly jawes doth gape,
And to our sight confounds it selfe in one.
Here entred we, and yeding forth, anone
An horrible lothly lake we might discerne
As blacke as pitche, that cleped is Avene.

A deadly gulfe where nought but rubbishe grows,
With fowle blacke swelth in thickned lumpes
lyes,

Which up in the ayer such stinking vapors throwes
That over there, may flye no fowle but dyes,
Choakt with the pestilent favours that aryse.
Hither we cum, whence forth we still dyd pace,
In dreadful feare amid the dreadfull place.

And first within the portche and jawes of hell
Sate deepe Remorse of Conscience, al besprent
With teares : and to her selfe oft would she tell
Her wretchednes, and cursing never stent
To sob and sigh : but ever thus lament,
With thoughtful care, as she that all in wayne
Would weare and waste continually in payne.

Her iyes unstedfast rolling here and there,
Whurld on eche place, as place that vengeauns
brought,

So was her minde continually in feare,
Tossed and tormented with the tedious thought
Of those detested crymes which she had wrought :
With dreadful cheare and lookes thrown to the
skye,

Wyshyng for death, and yet she could not dye.

Next sawe we Dread al tremblyng how he shooke,
With foot uncertayne proferd here and there :
Benumde of speache, and with a gastly looke
Searcht evry place al pale and dead for feare,
His cap borne up with starting of his heare,

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Stoynde and amazde at his owne shade for deed,
And fearing greater daungers than was nede.

And next within the entry of this lake
Sate fell Revenge gnashing her teeth for yre,
Devising means howe she may vengeaunce take,
Never to rest tyll she have her desire :
But frets within so far forth with the fyre
Of wreaking flames, that now determines she,
To dye by death, or vengde by death to be.

When fell Revenge with bloudy foule pretence
Had showed her selfe as next in order set,
With trembling limmes we softly parted thence,
Tyll in our iyes another sight we met :
When fro my hart a sigh forthwith I fet,
Rewing alas upon the wofull plight
Of Miserie, that next appeared in sight.

His face was leane, and sumdeale pyned away,
And eke his handes consumed to the bone,
But what his body was I can not say,
For on his carkas rayment had he none,
Save cloutes and patches pieced one by one.
With staffe in hande, and skrip on shoulders cast,
His chiefe defence agaynst the winters blast.

His foode for most, was wylde fruytes of the tree,
Unles sumtimes sum crummes fell to his share :
Which in his wallet long, Ged wote, kept he,
As on the which full dayntlye would he fare.
His drinke the running streame : his cup the bare
Of his palme closed : his bed the hard colde
grounde.

To this poore life was Miserie ybound.

Whose wretched state when we had well behelde
With tender ruth on him and on his feres,
In thoughtful cares, furth then our pace we helde ;
And by and by, an other shape apperes,
Of greedy Care, stil brushing up the breres,
His knuckles knob'd, his fleshe depe dented in,
With tawed handes, and hard ytanned skyn.

The morrowe graye no sooner had begunne
To sprede his light even peping in our iyes,
When he is up and to his worke yrunne :
But let the nightes blacke mistye mantels rise,
And with fowle darke never so much disguyse
The sayre bright day, yet ceasseth he no whyle,
But hath his candels to prolong his toyle.

By him lay heavy Slepe the cosin of death
Flat on the ground, and still as any stone,
A very corps, save yelding forth a breath.
Small kepe took he whom Fortune frowned on,
Or whom she lifted up into the trone
Of high renowne, but as a living death,
So dead alyve, of lyef he drewe the breath.

The bodyes rest, the quyetie of the hart,
The travayles ease, the still nightes feer was he,
And of our life in earth the better parte,
Reuen of sight, and yet in whom we see
Thingcs of that tide, and ofte that never bee.

T t

Without respect esteeming equally
Kyng Crefus pompe, and Irus povertie.

And next in order sad Old Age we found
His beard all hoare, his eyes hollow and blynde,
With drouping chere still poring on the ground,
As on the place where nature him affinde
To rest, when that the sisters had untwynde
His vitall threde, and ended with theyr knyfe
The fleeting course of fast declining life.

There heard we him with broken and hollow
playn,

Rewe with him selfe his ende approaching fast,
And all for nought his wretched minde torment
With swete remembraunce of his pleasures past,
And freshe delites of lusty youth forwaste.
Recounting which, how would he sob and shrike :
And to be yong againe of Jove beseke.

But and the cruell fates so fixed be
That time forpast can not retourne agayne,
This one request of Jove yet prayed he :
That in such withered plight, and wretched paine,
As elde (accompanied with his lothfom trayne)
Had brought on him, all were it woe and grieve.
He might a while yet linger forth his lief ;

And not so soone descend into the pit,
Where death, when he the mortall corps hath
flayne,

With retchles hande in grave doth cover it,
Thereafter never to enjoye agayne
The gladfome light, but in the ground ylayne
In depth of darknes waste and weare to nought,
As he had never into the world been brought.

But who had seene him sobbing, howe he stoode
Unto himselfe, and howe he would bemone
His youth forepast, as though it wrought hym good
To talke of youth, al wer his youth foregone,
He would have mused, and mervayled muche
whereon

This wretched age should life desyre so fayne,
And knowes ful wel life doth but length his payne.

Crookebackt he was, tooth shaken, and blere eyed,
Went on three feete, and sometime crept on fower,
With olde lame bones, that ratled by his syde,
His skalpe all pilde, and he with elde forlore :
His withered fist stil knocking at deathes dore,
Tumbling and driveling as he drawes his breth ;
For brieft, the shape and messenger of death.

And fast by him pale Maladie was plaste,
Sore sicke in bed, her colour all forgone,
Bereft of stomake, favor, and of taste,
Ne could she brooke no meat but brothes alone.
Her breath corrupt, her keepers every one
Abhorring her, her sicknes past recure,
Detesting phisicke, and all phisickes cure.

But oh the doleful sight that then we see.
We turnde our looke, and on the other side
A grielly shape of Famine mought we see,

With greedy lookes, and gaping mouth that
cried,

And roard for meat as she should there have dyed,
Her body thin and bare as any bone,
Wharto was left nought but the case alone ;

And that alas was knawen on every where
All full of holes, that I ne mought refrayne
From teares, to see how she her armes could teare,
And with her teeth gnash on the bones in vayne :
When all for nought she fayne would so sustayne
Her starven corps, that rather seemde a shade,
Then any substance of a creature made.

Great was her force whom stonewall could not
stay,

Her tearyng nayles scratching at all she sawe :
With gaping jawes that by no means ymay
Be satisfied from hunger of her mawe,
But eates her selfe as she that hath no lawe :
Gnawing alas her carkas all in vayne, [vayne.
Where you may count eche sinow, bone, and

On her while we thus firmly fixt our eyes,
That bled for ruth of such a drery sight,
Loe sodaynelye she shryght in so huge wyfe,
As made hell gates to shyver with the myght.
Wherewith a dart we sawe howe it did lyght
Ryght on her breast, and therewithal pale death,
Enthryling it to rave her of her breath.

And by and by a dum dead corps we sawe,
Heavy and colde, the shape of death aryght,
That dauntes all earthly creatures to his lawe :
Agaynst whose force in vayne it is to fyght
Ne pieres, ne princes, nor no mortall wyght,
No townes, ne realmes, cities, ne strongest tower,
But al perforce must yeeld unto his power.

His dart anon out of the corps he tooke,
And in his hand (a dreadful sight to see)
With great triumphe estfones the same he shooke,
That most of all my feares affrayed me :
His bodie dight with nought but bones perdye,
The naked shape of man there sawe I playne,
All save the fleshe, the synowe, and the vayne.

Lastly stoode Warre in glitteryng armes yclad.
With visage grym, sterne lookes, and blackely
hewed :

In his right hand a naked sworde he had,
That to the hiltes was al with bloud embrewed :
And in his left (that kinges and kingdomes rewed)
Famine and fyer he held, and therewythall
He razed townes, and threwe downe towers and
all.

Cities he sakt, and realmes that whilom flowered,
In honour, glory, and rule above the best,
He overwhelnde, and all theyr fame devowred,
Consumed, destroyed, wasted, and never ceast,
Tyll he theyr wealth, their name, and all opprest.
His face forehewed with woundes, and by his
side

There hunge his terge with gashes depe and wyde.

INDUCTION TO A MIRROUR FOR MAGISTRATES.

In mids of which, depaynted there we founde
Deadly Debate, al ful of snaky heare,
That with a bloudy fillet was ybound,
Out breathing nought but discord every where.
And round about were portrayed here and there
The hugie hostes, Darius and his power,
His kynges, prynces, his pieres, and all his flower;

Whom great Macedo vanquisht there in fight,
With diepe slaughter, dispoyling all his pryde,
Pearst through his realmes, and daunted all his
might.

Duke Hanniball beheld I there beside,
In Cannas field, victor howe he did ride,
And woful Romaynes that in vayne withstoode,
And Consul Paulus covered all in bloode.

Yet sawe I more, the fight at Trasimene,
And Trebery fyeld, and eke when Hannibal
And worthy Scipio last in armes were seene
Before Carthago gate, to trye for all
The worldes empyre, to whom it should befall.
There sawe I Pompeye, and Cesar clad in armes,
Theyr hostes alyed, and al theyr civil harmes.

With conquerours hands forbathe in their owne
blood,

And Cesar weeping over Pompeyes head.
Yet sawe I Scilla and Darius where they stoode,
Theyr great crueltie, and the diepe bludshed
Of frendes: Cyrus I sawe and his host dead,
And howe the queene with great despyte hath
slonge
His head in bloud of them she overcome.

Xerxes the Percian kyng yet sawe I there,
With his huge host that dranke the rivers drye,
Dismounted hilles, and made the vales upre,
His hoste and all yet sawe I slayne perdye.
Thebes I sawe all razde howe it dyd lye
In heapes of stones, and Tyrus put to spoyle, [foyle.
With walles and towers flat evened with the

But Troy, alas! (me thought) above them all,
It made mine eyes in very teares consume,
When I beheld the wofull werd befall,
That by the wrathful wyl of Gods was come:
And Jove's unmooved sentence and foredome
On Priam kyng, and on his towne so bent.
I could not lyn, but I must there lament.

And that the more sith Destinie was so sterne
As force perforce, there might no force avayle,
But she must fall: and by her fall we learne,
That cities, towres, wealth, world, and al shall
quayle. [vayle,

No manhoode, might, nor nothing mought pre-
Al wer there prest, ful many a prynde and pierce,
And many a knight that sold his death full deere.

Not wurthy Hector wurthyest of them all,
Her hope, her joye; his force is now for nought.
O Troy, Troy, there is no boote but bale;
The hugie horse within thy walles is brought:
Thy turrets fall, thy knightes that whilom fought

In armes amynd the fyeld, are slayne in bed,
Thy Gods defylde, and all thy honour dead.

The flames upspring, and cruelly they crepe
From wall to roose, til all to cindres waste;
Some fyre the houses where the wretches slepe,
Sum rushe in here, some run in there as fast.
In every where or sword or fyre they taste.
The walles are torne, the towers whurld to the
ground;
There is no mischiefe but may there be found.

Cassandra yet there sawe I howe they haled
From Pallas' house, with sperckled tresse undone,
Her wristes fast bound, and with Greeks rout em-
paled:

And Priam eke in vayne howe he did runne
To armes, when Pyrrhus with despite hath done
To cruel death, and bathed him in the bayne
Of his sonnes blud before the altare slayne.

But howe can I descryve the doleful fight,
That in the shyld so livlike layer did shyne!
Sith in this world I think was never wyght
Could have set furth the halfe, nor halfe so fyne.
I can no more but tell howe there is seene
Fayer Ilium fall in burning red gledes downe,
And from the soyle great Troy Neptunus towne.

[drawe,
Herefrom when scarce I could mine eyes with-
That fylde with teares as doth the sprynging well,
We passed on so far furth tyl we sawe
Rude Acheron, a lothsome lake to tell,
That boyles and bubs up swelth as blacke as hell,
Where grisly Charon at theyr fixed tide
Still ferries ghostes unto the farder side.

The aged god no sooner Sorowe spyed,
But hasting strait unto the banke apace
With hollow call unto the rout he cryed,
To swarve apart, and geve the goddess place.
Strait it was done, when to the shoar we pace,
Where hand in hand as we then linked faste,
Within the boate we are together plaste.

And furth we launch full fraughted to the brinke,
Whan with the unwonted weght, the rustye keele
Began to cracke as if the same should sinke.
We hoysed up mast and sayle, that in a whyle
We fet the shore, where scarcely we had while
For to arryve, but that we heard anone
A thre sound barke confounded al in one.

We had not long furth past, but that we sawe,
Blacke Cerberus the hydeous hound of hell,
With bristles reard, and with a thre mouthed jawe;
Foredinning the ayr with his horrible yel.
Out of the diepe dark cave where he did dwell,
The goddess strait he knewe, and by and by
He peaste and couched, while that we passed by.

Thence cum we to the horror and the hel,
The large great kyngdomes, and the dreadful
raygne
Of Pluto in his trone where he dyd dwell,

THE WORKS OF SACKVILLE.

The wyde waste places, and the hugye playne :
The waylinges, shrykes, and fundry fortes of
payne,

The syghes, the sobbes, the diep and deadly groane,
Earth, ayer, and all resounding playnt and moane.

Here pewled the babes, and here the maydes un-
wed

With folded handes theyr sory chaunce bewayled;
Here wept the gyltles flayne, and lovers dead,
That slewe them selves when nothing else awayled:
A thousand fortes of sorrowes here that wayled
With sighes and teares, fobs, shrykes, and all yfere,
That (oh, alas!) it was a hel to heare.

We stayed us strayt, and wyth a rufull feare,
Beheld this heavy sight, while from mine eyes
The vapored teares downstilled here and there,
And Sorowe eke in far more woful wyse,
Looke on with playnt, up heaving to the skyes
Her wretched handes, that with her crye the rout
Can all in heapes to swarme us round about.

Loe here (said Sorowe) prynces of renowne,
That whilom sat on top of Fortune's wheele
Now layed ful lowe, like wretches whurled downe,
Even with one frowne, that stayed but with a
smyle,
And now beholde the thing that thou erewhile,

Saw only in thought, and what thou now shalt
heare

Recompt the same to Kesar, King, and Pier.

Then first came Henry Duke of Buckingham,
His cloke of blacke al pilde and quite sorworne,
Wringing his handes, and Fortune ofte doth
blame,

Which of a duke hath made him now her skorne.
With ghastly lookes as one in manner lorne,
Oft spred his armes, stretcht handes he joynes as
fast,

With ruful chere, and vapored eyes upcast.

His cloke he rent, his manly breast he beat,
His heare al torne about the place it laye,
My hart so molte to see his grieve so great,
As felingly me thought it dropt awaye :
His iyes they whurled about withouten staye,
With stormy syghes the place dyd so complayne,
As if his hart at eche had burst in twayne.

Thryse he began to tell his doleful tale,
And thryse the sighes did swallowe up his voyce,
At eche of which he shryked so wythal
As though the heavens vied with the noyse :
Tyll at the last recovering his voyce,
Supping the teares that all his brest beraynde,
On cruel Fortune weeping thus he playnde.

THE COMPLAINT
OF
HENRYE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Who trustes to much in honour's highest throne
And warely watche not fly dame Fortune's snare :
Or who in courte will beare the swaye alone,
And wysely weygh not how to wyeld the care,
Beholde he me, and by my death beware :
Whom flattering Fortune falsely so begylde,
That loe she flewe, where erst ful smooth she
smylde.

And Sackevylle sith in purpose nowe thou hast
The woful fal of prynces to discryve,
Whom Fortune both uplyft, and gayn downe cast,
To shewe thereby the unsurety in this life,
Mark wel my fal, which I shall shewe belyve,
And paynt it furth that all estates may knowe :
Have they the warning, and be mine the woe.

For noble bloud made me both prince and pier,
Yea pierles too, had reason purchast place,
And God with giftes endowed me largely here.
But what avayles his giftes, where fayles his
grace :

My mothers syer sprong of a kyngly race
And calde was Edmund Duke of Somerset,
Bereft of lyfe ere tyme by nature set.

Whose faythful hart to Henry fyrst so wrought,
That never he hym in weale or woe forfooke,
Tyl lastly he at Tewxbury fyeld was caught
Wherewith an axe his violent death he toke :
He never could Kyng Edwardes party brooke,
Tyll by his death he vouchte that quarell good,
In which his syer and graundsyer spylt theyr
bloud.

And such was erst my fathers cruell chaunce,
Of Stafford Earle, by name that Humfrey hyght,

Who ever prest dyd Henries parte avaunce,
And never ceast tyl at Saynt Albones fight
He lost his lyfe, as than did many a knyght :
Where eke my graundsyer Duke of Buckingham
Was wounded sore, and hardly skapte untane.

But what may boote to stay the sisters three ?
When Atropos perforce wil cut the threde :
The doleful day was come when you might see
Northampton fyeld with armed men orespred,
Where fate would algateshave my graundsyer dead :
So rushing furth amyds the fyercest fight,
He lived and dyed there in his masters ryght.

In place of whom, as it besel my lot,
Like on a stage, so stept I in strait waye,
Enjoying there but wofully, God wot,
As he that had a slender part to playe :
To teache therby, in earth no state may stay,
But as our partes abridge, or length our age,
So passe we all, while others fylle the stage.

For of my selfe, the drery fate to playne,
I was sometime a prince withouten pier,
When Edward Fift began his rusul raygne,
Ay me, then I began that hatefull yeare,
To cumpas that which I have bought so deare :
I bare the swynge, I and that wretched wyght,
The Duke of Glocester that Rychard hyght.

For when the fates had rest that royal prince
Edward the Fourth, chiefe myrrour of that name,
The Duke and I fast joyned ever since,
In faythfull love, our secrete dristes to frame :
What he thought best to me so seemde the same,
My selfe not bent so much for to aspyer,
As to fulfyl that greedy Dukes desyre ;

Whose restless minde sore thyrsting after rule,
 When that he sawe his nephewes both to ben
 Through tender yeares as yet unfit to rule,
 And rather ruled by theyr mothers kyn,
 There fought he first his mischyeffe to begyn,
 To plucke from them theyr mothers frendes af-
 fynde,
 For wel he wist they would withstand his mynde.

To folowe which, he ran so headlong swyft,
 With eygrr thyrst of his desired draught,
 To seeke theyr deathes that fought to dashe his
 dryft,
 Of whom the chiefe the queenes allyes he thought,
 That bent thereto with mountes of mischiefe
 fraught,
 He knewe theyr lyves would be so fore his let,
 That in theyr deathes his only helpe he set.

And I most cursed caytief that I was,
 Seeing the state unstedfast howe it stood,
 His chief complyce to bryng the same to passe,
 Unhappy wretche, consented to theyr blood:
 Ye kinges and piers that swim in worldly good,
 In seeking blud the ende advert you playne,
 And see if bloud ey aske not blud agayne.

Consyder Cyrus in your cruell thought,
 A makeles prynce in ryches and in myght,
 And weygh in minde the bloody dedes he
 wrought,
 In sheading which he set his whole delyght:
 But see the guerdon lotted to this wyght,
 He whose huge power no man might overthrowe,
 Tomyris queen with great despite hath flowe.

His head dismembred from his mangled corps,
 Her selfe she cast into a vessel fraught
 With clotted bloud of them that felt her force.
 And with these wordes a just reward she taught:
 Drynke nowe thy syll of thy desyred draught.
 Loe marke the fine that did this prynce befall:
 Marke not this one, but marke the ende of all.

Behold Cambyses and his fatal daye,
 Where murders mischiefe myrrour like is left:
 While he his brother Mergus cast to slaye,
 A dreadful thing, his wittes were him bereft.
 A sword he caught, wherewith he perced est
 His body gored, which he of liefe benooms:
 So just is God in all his dreadfull doomes.

O bluddy Brutus, rightly didst thou rew,
 And thou Cassius justly came thy fall,
 That with the swurd wherewith thou Cesar flewe
 Muredst thy selfe, and rest thy life withall.
 A myrrour let him be unto you all
 That murderers be, of murder to your meede:
 For murder crieth out vengeance on your feede.

Loe Bessus, he that armed with murderers knyfe,
 And traytrous hart agaynst his royall king,
 With bluddy handes bereft his maysters life,
 Advert the fine his fowle offence dyd bryng:
 And lothing murder as most lothly thing,

Beholde in him the just deserved fall,
 That ever hath, and shall betide them all.

What booteth him his false usurped raygne,
 Whereto by murder he did so ascende?
 When like a wretche, led in an yron chayne
 He was presented by his chiefeest frende
 Unto the foes of him whom he had slayne:
 That even they should venge so fowle a gylt,
 That rather fought to have his bloud yspylt.

Take hede ye princes and ye prelates all
 Of this outrage, which though it sleepe a while,
 And not disclosde, as it doth seeld befall,
 Yet God that suffreth silence to beguyle
 Such gyltes, wherewith both earth and ayre ye
 file,
 At last discryes them to your fowle deface,
 You see the examples set before your face.

And deeply grave within your stony hartes,
 The drery dewle that myghty Macedo,
 With teares unfolded wrapt in deadly smartes,
 When he the death of Clitus sorowed so,
 Whom erst he mured wyth the deadly blowe,
 Raught in his rage upon his frende so deare,
 For which beholde loe how his panges appere.

The launced spear he writhes out of the wound,
 From which the purple blud spins on his face:
 His heynous gylt when he returned found,
 He throwes him selfe upon the corpes alas.
 And in his armes howe ofte doth he imbrace
 His mured frende? and kyssyng him in vayne,
 Furth flowe the fluds of false repentant rayne.

His frendes amaze at such a murder doen,
 In fearful flockes begyn to shrynke away.
 And he thereat with heapes of grief forenoen,
 Hateth him selfe, wishing his latter daye.
 Nowe he him selfe perceyved in lyke staye,
 As is the wilde beast in the desert bred,
 Both dreading others, and him selfe adred.

He calles for death, and loathing lenger lyfe,
 Bent to his bane, refuseth kyndely foode:
 And ploungde in depth of death and dolours stryfe,
 Had quelde him selfe, had not his frendes wyth
 stoode.

Loe he that thus had shed the gylteles blud,
 Though he were kyng and Cesar over all,
 Yet chose he death to guerdon death withall.

This prynce whose pyer was never under sonne,
 Whose glystening fame the earth did overglyde,
 Whych with his power welnye the world had
 wonne,

His bluddy handes him selfe could not abyde,
 But fully bent with famine to have dyed:
 The wurthy prynce deemed in his regarde
 That death for death could be but just rewarde.

Yet we that were so drowned in the depth
 Of diep desyre to drinke the gylteles blud,
 Lyke to the wulfe, with greedy looks that lepth

Into the snare, to feede on deadly foode,
So we deliyghted in the state we floode,
Blinded so farre in all our blynded trayne,
That blind, we sawe not our destruction playne.

We spared none whose life could ought forlet
Our wycked purpose to his pas to cum.
Fower worthy knyghtes we headed at Pomfret,
Gyltles (God wot) withouten lawe or doome.
My heart even bleedes to tell you al and some,
And howe Lord Hastings when he feared least,
Dispiteously was murdred and opprest.

These rockes uprcught, that threatned most our
wreck,

We seemde to sayle much surer in the streame:
And fortune sayring as she were at becke,
Layed in our lap the rule of all the realme.
The nephewes strait deposde were by the game;
And we advaunst to that we bought full deare,
He crowned king, and I his chyefest pyer.

Thus having wonne our long desirid pray,
To make him king that he might make me chiefe,
Downthrow we strait his sellie nephews twaye
From princes pompe, to woful prisoners lyfe:
In hope that nowe stynt was all funder stryfe.
Sith he was king, and I chief stroke did beare,
Who joyed but we, yet who more cause to feare?

The gyltles blood which we unjustly shed,
The royal babes deuestest from theyr trone,
And we like traytours raygning in theyr sted,
These heavy burdens pressed us upon,
Tormenting us so by our selves alone,
Much like the felon that pursued by night,
Starts at eche bushe as his foe were in fight.

Nowe doubting state, nowe dreading losse of life,
In fear of wrecke at every blast of wynde,
Nowe start in dreames through dread of murderers
knyfe,

As though even then revengement were assynde.
With restles thought so is the gylty minde
Turmoyled, and never feeleth ease or stay,
But lives in feare of that which followes aye.

Well gave that judge his doome upon the death
Of Titus Clelius that in bed was slayne:
Whan every wight the cruell murder leyeth
To his two sonnes that in his chamber layen,
The judge, that by the prooffe perceyveth playne,
That they were found fast sleeping in theyr bed,
Hath deemde them gyltles of this blud yshed.

He thought it could not be, that they which brake
The lawes of God and man in such outrage,
Could so forthwith them selves to slepe betake:
He rather thought the horror and the rage
Of such an haynous gylt, could never swage,
Nor never suffer them to slepe or rest,
Or dreadles breath one breath out of theyr brest.

So gnawes the grieve of conscynce evermore,
And in the hart it is so diepe ygrave,
That they may neyther slepe nor rest therefore,

Ne thynke one thought but on the dread they
have.

Styl to the death fortossed with the wave
Of restles woe, in terror and dispeyre,
They lead a lyef continually in feare.

Like to the dere that stryken with the dart,
Withdrawes him selfe into some secrete place,
And feeling green the wound about his hart,
Startles with panges tyl he fall on the grasse,
And in great feare lyes gasping there a space,
Furth braying sighes as though eche pange had
brought

The present death which he doeth dread so oft.

So we diepe wounded with the bluddy thought,
And gnawing wurme that grieved our conscience so,
Never took ease, but as our hart furth brought
The strayned fyghes in wytnes of our woe,
Such restles cares our fault did well beknowe:
Wherewith of our deserved fall the feares
In every place rang death within our eares.

And as yll grayne is never well ykept,
So fared it by us within a while:
That which so long wyth such unrest we reapt,
In dread and daunger by all wyt and wyle,
Loe see the fine, when once it felt the whele
Of slipper fortune, stay it mought no stowne,
The whele whurles up, but strait it whurleth
downe.

For having rule and riches in our hand,
Who durst gaynsay the thing that we averde?
Wyl was wysedome, our lust for lawe dyd stand,
In forte so straunge, that who was not afeard
When he the sound but of Kyng Rychard heard?
So hatefull wart the hearyng of his name,
That you may deeme the residewe by the same.

But what awaylde the terror and the fear,
Wherewyth he kept his lieges under awe?
It rather wan him hatred every where,
And fayned faces forst by feare of lawe:
That but while fortune doth with favour blaw
Flatter through fear: for in their hart lurkes aye
A secrete hate that hopeth for a daye.

Recordeth Dionisius the kynge,
That with his rigor so his realme opprest,
As that he thought by cruell feare to bryng
His subjects under, as him lyked best:
But loe the dread wherewyth him selfe was strest,
And you shall see the fine of forced feare,
Most myrrour like in this proud prynce appeare.

All were his head with crowne of golde ysprad,
And in his hand the royal scepter set,
And he with pryncely purple rychely clad,
Yet was his hart wyth wretched cares orefret:
And inwardly with deadly fear beset,
Of those whom he by rygour kept in awe,
And fore opprest with might of tyrants lawe.

Agaynst whose feare, no heapes of golde and glie,
Ne strength of garde, nor all his hired power,

Ne prowde hyghe towers that preaced to the skye,
His cruel hart of safetie could assure :
But dreading them whom he should deeme most
sure, [cear,
Hym selfe his beard wyth burning brand would
Of death deservde so vexed him the feare.

This might suffice to represent the fine
Of tyrantes force, theyr feares, and theyr unrest.
But hear this one, although my hart repyne
To let the found once synk wythin my brest;
Of fell Phereus, that above the rest,
Such lothsum crueltee on his people wrought,
As (oh alas) I tremble wyth the thought.

Sum he encased in the coates of beares,
Among wylde beastes devoured so to be :
And sum for preye unto the hunters speares,
Lyke savage beastes withouten ruth to dye.
Sumtime to encrease his horrible crueltye,
The quicke with face to face engraved hee,
Eche others death, that eche mought living see.

Loe what more cruell horror mought be found,
To purchase feare, if feare could staye his raygne ?
It booted not, it rather strake the wounde
Of feare in him, to feare the lyke agayne.
And so he dyd full ofte and not in vayne :
As in his life his cares could wytness well
But mooste of all his wretched ende doth tell.

His owne dere wyfe whom as his life he loved,
He durst not trust, nor proche unto her bed,
But causing fyrst his slave with naked sworde
To go before, him selfe with tremblyng dread
Strayt foloweth fast, and whorling in his head
His rolling iyen, he searcheth here and there
The diepe daunger that he so fore did feare.

For not in vayne it ranst yll in his brest,
Sum wretched hap should hale him to his ende.
And therefore alwaye by his pillowe prest
Had he a sworde, and with that sworde he wende,
In vayne (God wote) all peryls to defende :
For loe his wife foreyrked of his rayne,
Sleeping in bed this cruell wretche hath slayne.

What should I more now seeke to say in this ?
Or one jot farder linger furth my tale ?
With cruel Nero, or with Phalaris,
Caligula, Domician, and all
The cruell route ? or of theyr wretched fall ?
I can no more, but in my name advert
Al earthly powers beware of tyrants hart.

And as our state endured but a throwe;
So best in us the slaye of such a state
May best appeare to hang an overthrowe,
And better teache tyrantes deserved hate
Than any tyrantes death to fore or late.
So cruell seemde this Rychard Thyrd to me,
That loe my selfe now loathde his crueltee.

For when, alas ! I saw the tyrant kyng
Content not only from his nephewes twayne
To ryve worldes blysse, but also al worldes beyng,

Saunce earthly gylt ycausing both be slayne,
My hart agreyed that such a wretch should
raygne,
Whose bluddy brest so salvaged out of kynde,
That Phalaris had never so bluddy a minde.

Ne could I brooke him once wythin my brest,
But wyth the thought my teeth would gnashe
wythal :

For though I earst wer his by sworne behest ;
Yet when I sawe mischiefe on mischiefe fall,
So diepe in blud, to murder prynce and all,
Ay then thought I, alas, and wealaway,
And to my selfe thus mourning would I say.

If neyther love, kynred, ne knot of bloud,
His own alegeaunce to his prynce of due,
Nor yet the state of trust wherein he stoode,
The worldes defame, nor nought could turn him
true. [rue?

Those gyltleles babes, could they not make him
Nor could theyr youth, nor innocence withal
Move him from reving them theyr lyfe and all ?

Alas, it could not move him any jote,
Ne make him once to rue or wet his iye,
Sturde him no more than that that styrreth not :
But as the rocke or stone that wyl not plye,
So was his hart made hard to crueltye,
To murder them; alas I weepe in thought,
To thinke on that which this fell wretche hath
wrought.

That nowe when he had done the thing he sought,
And as he would, complyht and cumpast all,
And sawe and knewe the treason he had wrought
To God and man, to slaye his prynce and all,
Then seemde he fyrst to doubte and dreade us all,
And me in chiefe, whoes death all meanes he
myght,
He sought to wurke by malice and by might.

Such heapes of harmes upharbard in his brest,
With envious hart my honour to deface,
As knowing he that I whych woted best
His wretched drystes, and all his curfed case,
If ever sprang within me sparke of grace,
Must nedes abhorre him and his hatefull race :
Now more and more can cast me out of grace.

Which sodayne chaunge, when I by secrete
chaunce,

Had well perceyved by prooffe of envious frowne,
And sawe the lot that did me to advaunce
Hym to a kyng that sought to cast me downe,
To late it was to linger any stowne :
Syth present choyse lay cast before myne iye,
To wurke his death, or I my selfe to dye.

And as the knyght in fyeld among his foes,
Beset wyth swurdes, must slay or there be slayne :
So I, alas, lapt in a thousand woer,
Beholding death in every syde so playne,
I rather chose by sum flye secrete trayne
To wurke his death, and I to lyve thereby,
Than he to lyve, and I of force to dye.

Which heavy choyse so hastened me to chose,
That I in parte agryeved at his disdayne,
In part to wreke the dolefull death of those
Two tender babes, his sillye nephewes twayne,
By him alas commaunded to be slayne,
With paynted chere humbly before his face,
Strayght tooke my leave, and rode to Brecknocke
place.

And there as close and covert as I myght,
My purposed practise to his passe to bryng,
In secrete dryftes, I lingred day and night:
All howe I might depose this cruell kyng,
That seemd to all so much desyred a thyng,
As thereto trusting I emprysde the same;
But to much trusting brought me to my bane.

For while I nowe had fortune at my becke,
Mistrusting I no earthly thing at all,
Unwares, alas, least looking for a checke,
She mated me in turning of a ball:
When least I fearde, then norest was my fall,
And when whole hostes wer prest to stroy my
foen,
She chaunged her chere, and left me post alone.

I had upraysde a mighty band of men,
And marched furth in order of array,
Leadyng my power amynd the forest Dene,
Agaynst that tyrant banner to displaye:
But loe my souldiers cowardly shranke away.
For such is fortune when she lyst to frowne;
Who seemes most sure, him soonest whurles she
downe

O let no prynce put trust in commontie,
Nor hope in fayth of gyddy peoples mynde,
But let all noble men take hede by me,
That by the prooffe to well the payne do fynde:
Loe, where is truth or trust? or what could bynde
The vayne people, but they will swarve and swaye,
As chaunce bryngs chaunge, to dryve and draw
that way?

Rome, thou that once advaunced up so hye,
Thy staye, patron, and flower of excellence,
Hast nowe throwen him to depth of miserye,
Exiled him that was thy whole defence,
He comptest it not an horryble offence:
To reven him of honour and of fame,
That wan it thee, when thou hadst lost the same.

Beholde Camillus, he that erst revyved
The state of Rome, that dyeng he dyd fynde,
Of his own state is nowe alas depryved,
Banisht by them whom he dyd thus det bynde:
That cruel folke, unthankful and unkynde,
Declared wel theyr false inconstancye,
And fortune eke her mutability.

And thou Scipio, a myrrour mayst thou be
To all nobles, that they learn not too late,
Howe they once trust the unstable commontye,
Thou that recuredst the torne dismembred state,
Even when the conquerour was at the gate,

Art now expide, as though thou not deserved
To rest in her, whom thou hadst so preserved.

Ingrateful Rome hast shewed thy crueltye,
On hym, by whom thou lyvest yet in fame,
But nor thy dede, nor his desert shall dye,
But his owne wurdes shal witnes aye the same:
For loe hys grave doth thee most justly blame.
And with disdayne in marble sayes to thee:
Unkynde countrey, my bones shalt thou not see.

What more unworthy than this his cryle:
More just than this the wofull playnt he wrote:
Or who could shewe a playner prooffe the while,
Of moste false fayth, than they that thus forgot
His great desertes: that so deserved not:
His cindres yet loe, doth he them denye,
That him denyed amongst them for to dye.

Milciades, O happy hast thou be,
And well rewarded of thy countrey men.
If in the fyeld when thou hadst forst to flye
By thy prowes, thre hundred thousand men,
Content they had bene to cryle thee then:
And not to cast thee in depth prision so,
Laden wyth gyves to ende thy lyfe in woe.

Alas howe harde and steely hartes had they,
That not contented there to have thee dye,
With fettred gyves in pryson where thou laye,
Increast so far in hateful crueltye,
That buryall to thy corps, they eke denye
He wyl they graunt the same tyll thy sonne have
Put on thy gyves to purchase thee a grave.

Loe Hanniball as long as fired fate,
And bryttle fortune had ordayne so,
Who ever more advauntst his countrey state
Then thou, that lyvedst for her and for no moe:
But when the stormy waves began to grow,
Without respect of thy desertes erwhile,
Art by thy countrey throwen into exyle.

Unfrendly Fortune, shall I thee now blame:
Or shal I faulte the fates that so ordayne?
Or art thou Jove the causer of the same?
Or crueltye her selfe, doth she constayne?
Or on whom els alas shal I complayne?
O trustles world I can accusen none,
But fyckle fayth of commontye alone,

The polipus nor the chameleon straunge,
That turne them selves to every hewe they see,
Are not so full of bayne and fickle chaunge
As is this false unstedfast commontye.
Loe I alas with mine adversitie
Have tryed it true, for they are fled and gone,
And of an host there is not left me one.

That I alas in this calamitie
Alone was left, and to my selfe mought playne
This treason, and this wretched cowardye,
And eke with teares bewepen and complayne.
My hateful hap, styll looking to be slayne.
Wandryng in woe, and to the gods on hye
Cleapyng for vengeance of this treacherye.

And as the turtle that hath lost her make,
Whom grypyng sorowe doth so sore attaynt,
With doleful voyce and found whych she doth
make

Mourning her losse, fylles all the grove with playnt;
So I, alas! forsaken, and forsaynt,
With restless foote the wud come up and downe,
Which of my dole al shyvering doth resowne.

And beyng thus alone, and all forsake,
Amyd the thycke, forwandred in despayre,
As one dismayed ne wyft what waye to take;
Untyll at last gan to my mynde repayer,
A man of mine called Humfrey Banastar:
Wherewith me feeling much recomforted.
In hope of succour to his house I fled.

Who beyng one whom earst I had upbrought
Even from his youth, and loved and lyked best,
To gentrye state avaunciug him from nought;
And had in secrete trust above the rest,
Of specyall trust nowe being thus dystrest
Full secreatly to him I me conveyed
Not doubting there but I should fynde some ayde.

But out alas on cruell trecherye,
When that this caytief once an ynklyng hard,
How that Kyng Rychard had proclaymde, that he
Which me descryed should have for his rewarde
A thousand poundes, and farther be prefarde,
His truthe so turnde to treason, all distaynde,
That fayth quyte fled, and I by trust was traynde.

For by this wretch I beyng strait betrayed,
To one John Mitton, shiriffe of Shropshire then,
All sodaynely was taken, and convayed
To Salisbury, wyth rout of harnest men,
Unto Kyng Rychard there encamped then:
Fast by the citey with a myghtye hoste
Withouten doome where head and lyfe I lost.

And with these wordes, as if the are even there
Dismembred had his head and corps aparte,
Dead fel he downe: and we in woful feare
Stoode mazed when he would to lyf revert:
But deadly griefes still grewe about his hart,
That styll he laye, sumtyme revived wyth payne,
And wyth a sygh becoming dead agayne.

Mydnyght was cum, and every vitall thing
With swete sound slepe theyr weary lyms did rest,
The beastes were still, the lytle hyrdes that syng,
Nowe sweetely slept besides theyr mothers brest:
The olde and all were shrowded in theyr nest.
The waters calme, the cruel seas did ceas,
The wuds, the fyeldes, and all thinges held theyr
peace.

The golden stars wer whyrlde amyd thyer race,
And on the earth did laugh with twinkling lyght,
When eche thing nestled in his restyng place,
Forgat dayes payne with pleasure of the nyght:
The hare had not the greedy houndes in sight,
The fearfull deare of death stood not in doubt,
The partrydge drept not of the falcons foot.

The ougly beare nowe myndeth not the stake,
Nor how the cruell mastyves do hym tear;
The stag lay still unroused from the brake,
The fomy boar feard not the hunters spear.
All thing was still in desert, bush, and brear.
With quyet heart now from their travailes rest,
Soundly they slept in midst of all their rest.

When Buckyngham amidst his plaint opprest,
With surgyng sorowes and with pinching paynes
In fort thus sowned, and with a sigh he ceast.
To tellen furth the treachery and the traynes,
Of Banastar, which him so sore distraynes.
That from a sigh he falles into a founde,
And from a founde lyeth ragyng on the ground.

So twiching wer the panges that he assayed,
And he so sore with rufull rage distraught,
To thinke upon the wretch that hym betrayed,
Whom earst he made a gentylman of naught,
That more and more agreved with this thought;
He stormes out fighes, and with redoubled fore,
Stroke with the furies, rageth more and more.

Who so hath seene the bull chafed with dartes,
And with dyepe woundes forgald and gored so,
Tyl he oppressed with the deadlye smartes,
Fall in a rage, and runne upon his foe,
Let him I saye, beholde the ragyng woe
Of Buckyngham, that in these grypes of gryefe
Rageth gaynst him that hath betrayed his lyf.

With blud red iyen he stareth here and there,
Frothing at mouth, with face as pale as cloute:
When loe my lymmes were trembling all for feare;
And I amazde stoode styll in dread and doubt,
While I mought see him throwe his armes about:
And gaynst the ground him selfe plounge with
such force,
As if the lyfe forth wyth should leave the corps.

With smoke of syghes sumtyme I myght beholde
The place al dymde, like to the mornyng myst:
And strait agayne the teares how they downrolde
Alongst his cheekes, as if the ryvers hyft:
Whoes flowing streemes ne wer no sooner whist,
But to the stars such dreadfull shoutes he sent,
As if the trone of mighty Jove should rent.

And I the while with spirites wel nye bereft,
Beheld the plyght and panges that dyd him strayne,
And howe the blud his deadly colour left,
And strait returnde with flamyng red agayne:
When sodaynly amid his ragyng payne,
He gave a sygh, and with that sygh he sayed:
O! Banastar, and strait agayne he stayed.

Dead laye his corps as dead as any stone,
Tyll swellng syghes stormyng within his brest
Upraysde his head, that downe ward fell anone,
With lookes upcast, and syghes that never ceast:
Furth streamde the teares, recordes of his unrest,
When he wyth shrykes thus groveling on the
ground,
Ybrayed these wordes with shryll and doleful sound.

Heaven and earth, and ye eternal lampes
That in the heavens wrapt, wyl us to rest,
ThoubryghtPhebe, thatclearestthenightesdampes,
Witnes the playntes that in these panges opprest
I woful wretche unlade out of my brest.
And let me yeald my last wordes ere I part,
You, you, I call to record of my smart.

And thou, Alecto, feede me wyth thy foode,
Let fal thy serpentes from thy snaky heare,
For such relyefe wel fittes me in this moode,
To feede my playnt with horror and wyth feare,
While rage afreshe thy venomd worme arear.
And thou Sibilla, when thou seest me faynte,
Addres thy selfe the gyde of my complaynt.

And thou, O Jove, that with thy depe fordoome
Dost rule the earth, and raygne above the skyes,
That wrekest wronges, and gevest the dreadful
doome

Agaynst the wretche that doth thy trone despyse,
Receyve these wurdes, and wreake them in such
wyse,

As heaven and earth may witnesse and beholde,
Thy heapes of wrath upon this wretche unfold.

Thou, Banaster, gaynst thee I clepe and call
Unto the gods, that they just vengeaunce take
On thee, thy bloud, thy stayned stocke and all :
O Jove, to thee, above the rest I make
My humble playnt, guyde me that what I speake
May be thy wyll upon thys wretche to fall,
On thee, Banastar, wretche of wretches all.

O would to God, that cruel dismal daye,
That gave me lyght fyrst to behold thy face,
With fowle eclipse had rest my syght away :
The unhappy hower, the tyme, and eke the place,
The sunne and moone, the sters, and all that was
In theyr aspectes helping in ought to thee,
The earth, and ayer, and all accursed bee.

And thou, caytief, that like a monstar swarved,
From kynde and kyndenes, hast thy mayster lorne,
Whom neyther truth, nor trust wherein thou ser-
ved,

Ne his desertes, could move, nor thy fayth sworne
Howe shall I curse, but wyth that thou unborne
Had bene, or that the earth had rent in twaye,
And swallowed thee in cradle as thou laye.

To this did I even from thy tender youth
Witfave to bryng thee up : dyd I therefore
Beleve the oath of thy undoubted trouth ?
Advaunce thee up, and trust thee evermore ?
By trusting thee that I should dye therefore ?
O wretche, and wurse than wretche, what shal I
say,
But cleap and curse gaynst thee and thyne for aye ?

Hated be thou, disdaynd of every wyght,
And poynted at where ever that thou goe,
A trayterous wretche, unworthy of the light,
Be thou esteemed : and to encrease thy woe,
The sound be hatefull of thy name also :

And in this sort with shame and sharpe reproche,
Leade thou thy life till greater grief approach.

Dole and despayr, let those be thy delight,
Wrapped in woes that can not be unfold,
To wayle the day, and wepe the weary night,
With rayny iyen and syghes can not be tolde,
And let no wyght thy woe seeke to withholde :
But coumpt thee wurthy (wretche) of sorrowes
store,

That suffryng much, oughtest still to suffer more.

Deserve thou death, yea be thou demed to dye
A shamefull death, to ende thy shamefull lyfe :
A syght longed for, joyfull to everye iye,
Whan thou shalt be arraygned as a thief,
Standing at bar, and pleading for thy lyef,
With trembling tounge in dread and dolors rage,
Lade with white lockes, and fowerskore yeres of
age.

Yet shall not death delyver thee so soone
Out of thy woes, so happye shalt thou not bee :
But to the eternal Jove this is my boone,
That thou may live thine eldest sonne to see
Rest of his wits, and in a fowle bores styte
Te ende his dayes in rage and death distrest,
A wurthy tumber where one of thyne should rest

And after this, yet pray I more, thou may
Thy second sonne see drowned in a dyke,
And in such sorte to close his latter daye,
As heard or seen earst hath not bene the lyke :
Ystrangled in a puddle not so deepe
As halfe a foote, that such hard losse of lyfe,
So cruelly chaunst, may be thy greater gryefe.

And not yet shall thy hugie sorrowes cease ;
Jove shal not so withholde his wrath fro thee,
But that thy plagues may more and more increas,
Thou shalt still lyve, that thou thy selfe mayst see
Thy deare doughter stroken with leprosy :
That she that earst was all thy hole delyght,
Thou now mayst loath to have her cum in sight :

And after that, let shame and sorrowes gryefe
Feede furth thy yeares continually in wo,
That thou mayest live in death, and dye in lyef,
And in this sorte forewayld and wearyed so,
At length thy ghost to parte thy body fro :
This pray I Jove, and wyth this latter breath,
Vengeaunce I aske upon my cruell death.

This sayd, he floung his retchles armes abroad,
And groveling flat upon the ground he lay,
Which with his teeth he al to gnasht and gnawed :
Depe groanes he set, as he that would awaye.
But loe in vayne he dyd the death assay :
Although I thinke was never man that knewe,
Such deadly paynes where death dyd not enfewe.

So strove he thus a while as with the death,
Nowe pale as lead, and colde as any stone.
Nowe styl as calme, nowe storming forth a breath
Of smoaky syghes, as breath and al were gone :
But every thing hath ende : so he anone

Came to him selfe, when wyth a fygh outbrayed,
With woful cheare these woful wurdcs he sayd.

Ah where am I, what thing, or whence is this?
Who rest my wyts? or howe do I thus lye?
My lims do quake, my thought agasted is,
Why fyghe I so? or whereunto do I
Thus grovel on the ground: and by and by
Uprayside he stoode, and wyth a fygh hath stayd,
When to him selfe returned, thus he sayd.

Suffiseth nowe this playnt and this regrete,
Whereof my hart his bottome hath unfraught:
And of my death let pieres and princes wete
The wolves untrust, that they thereby be taught.
And in her wealth, sith that such chaunge is
wrought,
Hope not to much, but in the myds of all
Thinke on my death, and what may them befall.

So long as fortune would permyt the same,
I lyved in rule and ryches wyth the best:
And past my time in honour and in fame;
That of mishap no feare was in my brest:
But false fortune whan I suspected least,
Dyd turne the wheele, and wyth a dolefull fall
Hath me bereft of honour, life, and all.

Loe what avayles in ryches fluds that flowes:
Though she so smylde as all the world wer his:

Even kinges and kesars byden fortunes throwes,
And simple sorte must bear it as it is.
Take hede by me that blithd in balefull blisse:
My rule, my riches, royall blud and all,
Whan fortune frounde, the feller made my fall.

For hard misbaps that happens unto such,
Whoes wretched state earst never fell no chaunge,
Agryve them not in any part so much,
As theyr distres to whome it is so straunge,
That all theyr lyves nay passed pleasures raunge:
Theyr sodayne wo that ay wield welth at will,
Algates their hartes more pearcingly must thrill.

For of my byrth, my blud was of the best,
Fyrst borne an Earle, than Duke by due discent:
To swinge the sway in court amonge the rest,
Dame Fortune me her rule most largely lent:
And kynd with corage so my corps had blent,
That loe on whom but me dyd she most smyle:
And whom but me lo, dyd she most begyle?

Now hast thou heard the whole of my unhap,
My chaunce, my chaunge, the cause of all my
care:

In wealth and wo, how fortune dyd me wrap,
With world at will to win me to her snare.
Byd kynges, byd kesars, byd all states beware,
And tell them this from me that tryed it true:
Who reckles rules, right soone may hap to rue.

A GLOSSARY.

A, which is commonly called the indefinite article, is really nothing more than a corruption of the Saxon adjective *ane* or *an*, before a substantive beginning with a consonant.—It is sometimes prefixed to another adjective, the substantive to which both belong being understood, *e. g.* A Frere there was, a wanton and a mery.—It is also joined to nouns plural taken collectively, as, an hundred frankes, a thousand frankes,—and to such as are not used in the singular number, as a listes. So the Latins said *Unæ litteræ*, Cic. ad Att. v. 9, and the French formerly *unes lices, unes lettres, unes trêves*. *Froissart*, v. i. c. 153, 237, v. ii. c. 78

A, *prep.* before a gerund, is a corruption of *on*. To go a begging, *i. e.* on begging. The *prep.* is often expressed at length; on hunting ben they ridden; To ride on hawking.—In the same manner, before a noun it is generally a corruption of *on* or *in*; *e. g.* a'bed; a'fire; a'God-des name; a'morwe; a'night; a'werke; though in some of these instances perhaps it may as well be supposed to be a corruption of *at*.—**A**, in composition, in words of Saxon original, is an abbreviation of *af* or *of*, of *at*, of *on* or *in*, and often only a corruption of the prepositive particle *ge* or *y*. In words of French original it is generally to be deduced from the Latin *ab*, *ad*, and sometimes *ex*

A, *interj.* ah!

Abacke, *adv. Sax.* backwards

Abaisht, *part. pa. Fr.* abashed, ashamed

Abate, *v. Fr.* to beat down

Abawed, *part. pa. Fr.* esbai, astonished; I was abawed for merveille. *Orig.* Moulte m'esbahy de la merveille

Abegge, abeye, abie, *v. Sax.* to suffer for

Abet, *n. Sax.* help

Abide, *v. Sax.* to stay

Abidden } *part. pa*

Abiden }

Abit *for* abiderh

Able, *adj. Fr.* fit, proper

Abote, *part. pa.* of abate

Abought, *part. pa.* of abegge

Abouten, *prep. Sax. on-bucan*, about

Abraide, *v. Sax.* to awake, to start. See Braide

Abraide, *pa. t.* awaked, started.

Abrede, *adv. Sax.* abroad

Abrege, *v. Fr.* to shorten, to abridge]

Abroche, *v. Fr.* to tap, to set abroach; spoken of a vessel of liquor

Abusion, *n. Fr.* abuse, impropriety

Accesse, *n. Fr.* properly the approach of a fever, a fever

Accidie, *n. Fr.* from *Azhdia*, *Gr.* negligence; arising from discontent, melancholy, &c.

Accord, *n. Fr.* agreement

Accord, *v. Fr.* to agree

Accordeden, *pa. t. pl.*

Accordant, } *part. pr.*

According, }

Accuse, *v. Fr.* to discover

Achate, *n. Fr.* purchase

Achatour, *n. Fr.* a purchaser, a caterer

Acheked, *part. pa. Sax.* choked

Acheve, *v. Fr.* to accomplish

Ackele, (akele) *v. Sax.* to cool

Acloye, *v.* may perhaps mean to cloy, to embarrass with superfluity

Acoiè, *v. Fr.* to make quiet

Acomberd, *part. pa. Fr.* encombered

Acroke, *adj. Fr.* crooked, awkward.

Adawe, *v. Sax.* to awake

Ado, *v. Sax.* to do; it is used to express the *Fr.* à faire, to have ado; to have to do; and don all that they han ado. *Et facent ce qu'ils doivent faire.*

Adon, (corruption of of-don) *part. pa. Sax.* done away

Adon, *pr. n.* Adonis

Adoun, *adv. Sax.* downward

Adrad, adrade, *part. pa.* of adrede, *v. Sax.* afraid

Adriane for Ariadne, *pr. n.*

Advertence, *n. Fr.* attention

Advocacies, *n. pl. Fr.* law-suits

Advocas, *n. pl. Fr.* lawyers, advocates

Afered, aferde, *part. pa. Sax.* afraid, frightened

Affecte, *n. Lat.* affection

Affermed, *part. pa. Fr.* confirmed

Affie, *v. Fr.* to trust

Affray, *v. Fr.* to affright

Affray, *n. Fr.* disturbance, fear

Affriken, *pr. n.* the elder Scipio Africanus

Afile, *v. Fr.* to file, polish

Aforen, aforne, afore, *adv. prep. Sax. et-foran*, before.

Again, *prep. Sax.* against, toward, *adv.*
 Agaste, *v. Sax.* to terrify
 Agast, for agasted, *part. pa.* terrified
 Agathon, *pr. n.* I have nothing to say concerning this writer, except that one of the same name is quoted in the prol. to the tragedie of Cambrises, by Thomas Preston. There is no ground for supposing, with Gloss. Ur. that a philosopher of Samos is meant, or any of the Agathoes of antiquity
 Ageins, *prep.* against
 Agen, *adv.* again
 Agilte, *v. Sax.* to offend, to sin against
 Agilte, for agilted, *pa. t.* sinned
 Ago, agon, for ygon, *part. pa. Sax.* gone, past
 Agree, *Fr.* à gré, in good part
 Agrese, (a'grese) in grief
 Agrege, *v. Fr.* to aggravate
 Agreved, *part. pa. Fr.* injured, agrieved
 Agrise, *v. Sax.* to shudder, to make to shudder
 Agrofe, *pa. t.* shuddered, trembled
 Agroted, *part. pa.* cloyed, surfeited; agrotone with mete or drinke. *Ingurgito.* Prompt. parv.
 Aguiler, *n. Fr.* a needle-case
 Ajult, *v. Fr.* to apply
 Akehorns, *n. pl. Sax.* acorns
 Aknowe, *part. pa. Sax.* to ben aknowe; I am aknowe; I acknowledge
 Al, alle, *adj. Sax.* all; al and som, the whole thing, at al, in the whole; over all, through the whole; in alle manere wise, by every kind of means; at alle rightes, with every thing requisite
 Alain, *pr. n.* a poet and divine of the 12th century. Beside his *Planctus Naturæ*, or *Plaint of Kinde*, which is here quoted, he wrote another poem in Latin verse, called *Anticlaudianus*. For the rest of his works see *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. *Alanus de Insulis*
 Alder, aller, *gen. ca. pl.* of all; it is frequently joined in composition with adjectives of the superl. deg. e. g. alderfirst; alderlast; alderlewest; first, last, dearest of all
 Al, all, *adv. Sax.* generally answers to the Lat. *omnino*; al alone, quite alone; al hol, entire; al holly, entirely; all in one, at the same time; all newe, anew; al only, solely, singly. It is sometimes used elliptically for although, or all be it that; all tell I not now as now his observances; all be ye not of o complexion
 Alarged, *part. pa. Fr.* estargi, given largely
 Alauns, *n. pl.* a species of dog. They were much esteemed in Italy in the 14th century. *Gualv. de la flamma*, [ap. Murator. *Antiq. Med. Æt.* t. II. p. 394.] commends the governors of Milan, "quod equos emissarios equabus magnis commiscuerunt, et procreati sunt in nostro territorio Destrarii nobiles, qui in magno pretio habentur. Item Canes Alanos altæ staturæ et mirabilis fortitudinis nutrire studuerunt"
 Alayne, *n. Fr.* allay, a mixture of base metal
 Albification, *n. Lat.* a chemical term for making white [salt
 Alcaly, *n. Arab.* a chemical term for a species of
 Alchymistre, *n. Fr.* alchymist

Aldrian, *pr. n.* a star on the neck of the lion, *Sp.*
 Ale and bred. This oath of Sire Thopas on ale and bred was perhaps intended to ridicule the solemn vows which were frequently made in the days of chivalry to a peacock, a pheasant, or some other noble bird. See *M. de Sainte Palaye, Sur l'anc. cheval. Mem. III^{me}*. I will add here, from our own history, a most remarkable instance of this strange practice. When Edward I. was setting out upon his last expedition to Scotland in 1306, he knighted his eldest son and several other young noblemen with great solemnity. At the close of the whole, (says Matthew of Westminster, p. 454,) "Allati sunt in pompaticâ gloria duo cygni vel olores ante regem, phalerati retibus aureis vel fistulis deauratis, desiderabile spectaculum intuentibus. Quibus visis, Rex votum vovit Deo cali et cygnis se proficisci in Scotiam, mortem Johannis Comynnet fidem læsam Scotorum vivus sive mortuus vindicaturus," &c. This practice is alluded to in Dunbar's wish, *that the king were Johne Thomsonnis man*, ms. *Maitland*, st. 5.

I wold gif all that ever I have
 To that condition, so God me saif,
 That ye had vovit to the swan
 Ane yeir to be Johne Thomsonnis man.

And so in the Prol. to the Contin. of The Cant. T. the Hosteler says—I make a vowe to the peacock ther shall wake a foule mist
 Alege, *n. Fr.* to alleviate
 Alegeance, *n. Fr.* alleviation
 Aleis, *n. Fr.* alife, the lote tree
 Alembikes, *n. pl. Fr.* vessels for distilling, stills
 Ale-stake, *n. Sax.* a stake set up before an alehouse by way of sign
 Aleye, *n. Fr.* an alley
 Algates, Algate, *adv. Sax.* always; toutesfois
 Algezir, *pr. n.* a city of Spain
 Alight, *v. Sax.* to descend; alight, *pa. t.* for alighted
 Alisandre, *pr. n.* Alexandria, a city in Egypt
 Allege, *v. Fr.* to alledge
 Almagest, *pr. n.* the Arabs, called the *Μεγαλη Ευραξια* of Ptolomee Almagesthi or Almegisthi, a corruption of *Μεγιστη*. See D'Herbelot, in v.
 Almandres, *n. pl. Fr.* almond-trees
 Almesse, *n. Sax.* from the Lat. Gr. *eleemosyna*, alms, Almesses, *pl.*
 Alnath, *pr. n.* the first star in the horns of Aries, whence the first mansion of the moon takes its name, *Sp.*
 Alonge, (a'londe) on land
 Along, *prep. Sax.* whereon it was along, by what it was occasioned; on me is nought along thine evil fare, thy ill fare is not occasioned by me
 Alosed, *part. pa. Fr.* praised
 Aloue, *v. Fr.* to allow, to approve, his dedes are to alowe for his hardynesse, therefore lorda alow him litle, or lysten to his reason
 Alowe, *adv. Sax.* low
 Alpes, *n. pl.* bulfinches
 Als, *conj. Sax.* also, us

- Amalgaming, a chemical term for mixing of quicksilver with any metal
- Ambassatrie, *n. Fr.* embassy
- Ambes as, two aces at dice, *Fr.*
- Ambling, *part. pr. Fr.*
- Amende, *v. Fr.* to mend
- Amenuse, *v. Fr.* to lessen
- Ameved, *part. pa. Fr.* moved
- Amias, *pr. n.* the city of Amiens
- Amiddes, *prep. Sax.* at, or in the middle
- Amis, *adv. Sax.* ill, badly. See Mis
- Amonefte, *v. Fr.* to admonish, to advise
- Among, *adv. Sax.* together, at the same time, at the same place, *Du.* 298, ever among, ever at the same time, *Conf. Am.* 114, b.
- Amonges, *prep. Sax.* among
- Amorette, *n. Fr.* an amorous woman.—And eke as well by [*r. be*] amorettes.—*Car aussi bien sont amourettes*, orig.
- Amorily, is perhaps put by mistake for merrily.
- Amortised, *part. pa. Fr.* killed
- Amorwe, on the morrow [sions
- Amphibologies, *n. pl. Fr. Gr.* ambiguous expressions
- An, for on, *prep.*
- Ancille, *n. Lat.* a maid-servant
- Ancre, *n. Fr.* anchor
- And, *conj. Sax.* if
- Anelace, *n.* a kind of knife or dagger, usually worn at the girdle. See *Gloss. to M. Paris*, in v. *Analacius*
- Anes, *adv.* for ones, once
- Anhang, *v. Sax.* to hang up
- Anientified, *part. pa. Fr.* reduced to nothing
- Anight, in the night
- Anker, *n. Sax.* an anchorite or hermit
- Annuelier, *n.* a priest employed solely in singing annuals, or anniversary masses for the dead
- Annunciat, *part. pa. Lat.* foretold
- Anoie, *n. Fr.* hurt, trouble
- Anoie, *v.* to hurt, to trouble
- Anoiful, *adj.* hurtful, unpleasant
- Antem, *n. Sax.* an anthem
- Anticlaudian, the title of a Latin poem by Alanus de Insulis. See *Alain*
- Antilegius, *pr. n.* Antiochus, *Du.* 1064. [anthems
- Antiphonere, *n. Lat. Gr.* a book of antiphones or
- Anvelt, *n. Sax.* an anvil, *Du.* 1165.
- Any, *adj. Sax.* either, one of two. It usually signifies one of many
- Apaid, *part. pa. Fr.* paid, satisfied
- Apaire, *v. Fr.* See Apeire
- Ape, *n. Sax.* metaphorically a fool, the monk put in the mannes hode an ape, and in his wife's eke, the monk made a fool of the man and of his wife too—Win of ape.
- Apeire, *v. Fr.* to impair, to detract from; our state it apeires—to be impaired, to go to ruin.
- Apert, *adj. Fr.* open, prive and apert, in private and in public
- Apies, for opies, *n. pl. Fr.* opiates
- Appalled, *part. pa. Fr.* made pale
- Apparaile, *v. Fr.* to prepare
- Apparence, *n. Fr.* an appearance
- Apperceive, *v. Fr.* to perceive
- Apperceivings, *n. pl.* perceptions
- Appetite, *v. Fr.* to desire, to covet
- Appose, *v. Fr.* to object to, to question. It seems to be a corruption of oppose
- Approver, *n. Fr.* an informer
- Aprentise, *n. pl. Fr.* apprentices, novices
- Aqueintable, *adj. Fr.* easy to be acquainted with
- Aquite, *v. Fr.* to pay for
- Arace, *v. Fr.* to draw away by force
- Arande, *n. Sax.* a message
- Araye, *n. Fr.* order, situation, clothing, equipage
- Araye, *v. Fr.* to dress, to dispose.
- Arblasters, *n. pl. Fr.* arbalestres, engines to cast darts, &c
- Archangel, *n.* the herb so called; a dead nettle, *Gloss. Ur.*—In the orig. it is mesange, the bird which we call a titmouse
- Archebishop, *n. Sax. Lat.* an archbishop
- Archedeken, *n. Sax. Lat.* an archdeacon
- Archediacre, *n. Fr.* Archdeacon
- Archewives, wives of a superior order
- Ardure, *n. Fr.* burning
- Arede, *v. Sax.* to interpret, *Du.* 289. See Rede
- Areise, *v. Sax.* to raise
- Average, *n. Fr.* arrear
- Aresone, *v. Fr.* arraisonner, to reason with
- Areste, *n. Fr.* arrest, constraint, delay
- Areste, *v. Fr.* to stop
- Arette, *v. Fr.* to impute to
- Argoil, *n. Fr.* potters clay
- Ariete, *pr. n.* Aries, one of the signs in the zodiac
- Aristotle, *pr. n.* a treatise on perspective under his name is mentioned by Vincent of Beauvais in the 13th century, *Spec. Histor.* l. iii. c. 84, *Extat etiam liber, qui dicitur, Perspectiva Aristotelis*
- Arivage, *n. Fr.* as arivaile
- Arivaile, *n. Fr.* arrival
- Ark, *n. Lat.* a part of the circumference of a circle
- Arme, *n.* may perhaps be put for defence, security
- Arm-grete, *adj. Sax.* as thick as a man's arm
- Armipotent, *adj. Lat.* mighty in arms
- Armles, *adj. Sax.* without an arm
- Armorike, *pr. n.* Basse Bretagne in France, called anciently Britannia Armorica
- Armure, *n. Fr.* armour
- Arn, *pl. n.* of am, *v. Sax.* are
- Arnolde of the newe town, *pr. n.* of a physician and chemist of the 13th century. See *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. *Arnaldus Villanovanus*
- Aroume, seems to signify at large; arowme, or more utter, remote. *deprope. seorsum. Prompt. Parv.* [cessively
- A'row, in a row, probably from the *Fr.* rue, suc-
- Arismetrike, *n. Lat.* arithmetic
- Arte, *v. Lat.* to constrain
- Artelries, *n. pl. Fr.* artillery
- As, *adv. Sax.* also; *omnino sic.* As fast, very fast; as swith, very quickly, immediately [say
- Ascaunce, askow, aside, sideways;—as if, as if to
- Ashen, *n. pl. Sax.* ashes
- Aflake, *v. Sax.* to slacken, to abate
- Aspe, *n. Sax.* a sort of poplar
- Aspen, *adj.* of an asp
- Aspie, *v. Fr.* to espy
- Aspre, *adj. Fr.* rough, sharp
- Asprenesse, *n.* sharpness
- Assaut, *n. Fr.* assault

- Assége, n. Fr.* siege
Asseth, n. Fr. sufficient, enough
Assise, n. Fr. situation
Assoile, v. Fr. to absolve, to answer, assoileth, imp. m. 2d perf. pl.
Assomoned, part. pa. summoned
Assure, v. Fr. to confide
Asterte, v. Sax. to escape, to release; asterte for asterted, *part. pa.*
Astoned, astonished, part. pa. Fr. confounded, astonished
Astrelabre, n. Fr. astrolabe
Astrologien, n. Fr. astrologer
Asweved, part. pa. Sax. stupified, as in a dream
Aswone, in a swoon
At, atte, prep. Sax. at after souper, as soon as supper was finished; at day, at break of day; at on, of one mind
Atake, v. Sax. to overtake—for ataken, *part. pa.*
A'thre, in three parts
Attamed, part. pa. Fr. entamé, opened, begun, tasted, felt, disgraced
Attempre, adj. Fr. temperate
Attemprely, adv. Fr. temperately
Attour, n. Fr. head-dress
Attray, atterly, adj. Sax. poisonous, pernicious
A'twinne, a'two; in two, asunder
Avale, v. Fr. to lower, to let down, to fall down
Avance, v. Fr. to advance, to profit
Avant, n. Fr. boast
Avantage, n. Fr. advantage
Avante, v. Fr. to boast
Avaunt, adv. Fr. forward
Auctoritee, n. Lat. a text of Scripture or of some respectable writer
Auctour, n. Lat. a writer of credit
Avenaunt, adj. Fr. becoming
Aventaile, n. Fr. the fore part of the armour *Sk.* the aperture for breathing in a helmet
Aventure, n. Fr. adventure
Averrois, pr. n. Ebn Roschd, an Arabian physician of the 12th century. See *D'Herbelot* in v. *Roschd.*
Avicen, pr. n. Ebn Sina, an Arabian physician of the 10th century. See *D'Herbelot* in v. *Sina*
Aught, n. Sax. any thing. It is sometimes used as an adverb; if that the childes mother were aught she, can he ought tell a merry tale or tweie?
Aught, pa. t. of owe, as ought
Aught-where, adv. Sax. any where
Augrim, a corruption of Algorithm
Augrim stones, the pebbles or counters which were anciently used in numeration
Avis, n. Fr. advise
Avisand, part. pr. observing
Avise, v. Fr. to observe; aviseth you, imp. m. 2d perf. pl.; look to yourselves, take care of yourselves
Avision, n. Fr. vision
Aumble, n. Fr. an ambling pace
Aumener, n. Fr. aumoniére, a purse
Aumere, n. aumere of filke, bourse de soy, orig. It seems to be a corruption of aumener. [ture
Auntre, v. Fr. corruption of aventure, to adven-
- Auntrous, adj.* adventurous
Aurora, the title of a Latin metrical version of several parts of the Bible by Petrus de Riga, Calon of Rheims, in the 12th century. Leyser, in his Hist. Poet. Med. Ævi. p. 692—736, has given large extracts from this work, and among others the passage which Chaucer seems to have had in his eye

Aure Jebal varios ferramenti notat ictus. Pondera l'brat in his. Con sona quæque facit. Hoc inventa modo prius est ars musica, quamvis Pythagoram dicant hanc docuisse prius.

Avouterer, avouter, n. Fr. an adulterer
Avouterie, avoutrie, n. adultery
Avow, n. Fr. vow
Auter, n. Fr. altar
Awaite, n. Fr. watch
Awaiting, part. pr. keeping watch
Awaped, part. pa. Sax. confounded, stupified
Awayward, adv. Sax. away
Awreke, v. Sax. to revenge
Axe, v. Sax. to ask
Axing, n. request
Ay, adv. Sax. ever
Ayel, n. Fr. grandfather
Ayen, adv. and prep. again
Ayenst, prep. against
Ayenward, adv. Sax. back
- B
- Ba, v.* seems to be formed from *basse, v. Fr.* to kiss
Bachelor, n. Fr. an unmarried man, a knight, one who has taken his first degree in an university
Bachelerie, n. Fr. knighthood, the bachelerie, the knight
Bade, pa. t. of bede
Badder, comp. d. of bad, adj. Sax. worse
Bagge, v. to swell, to disdain, *Sk.*; rather perhaps to squint
Baggingly, adv. seems to be the translation of *en lorgnoyant*, squintingly
Baillie, n. Fr. custody, government
Baite, v. Sax. to feed, to stop to feed
Balance, n. Fr. doubt, suspense, I dare lay in balance all that I have, I dare wager all that I have
Bale, n. Sax. mischief, sorrow
Bales, r. balais, pr. n. Fr. a sort of bastard ruby
Balkes, n. pl. Sax. the timbers of the roof
Balled, adj. smooth as a ball, bald
Bandon, n. Fr. See *Du Cange* in v. *Abandons*. To her bandon, to her disposal; a son bandon, orig.
Bane, n. Sax. destruction
Barbe, n. a hood or muffler which covered the lower part of the face and the shoulders. See *Du Cange* in v. *Barbuta*
Baren, pa. t. pl. of bere, v. Sax. bore
Bargaine, n. Fr. contention
Bargaret, n. Fr. bergerette, a sort of song

Barne, *n. Sax.* the lap
 Barne-cloth, an apron
 Barre, *n. Fr.* a bar of a door, a stripe
 Barreine, *adj. Sax.* barren
 Basilicok, *n. a.* a basilisk
 Basse, *n. Fr.* a kiss
 Basting, *part. pr.* sewing slightly
 Batailed, *part. pa. Fr.* embattled
 Bathe, for bothe
 Bathe, *v. Sax.* we should rather say to bask
 Baude, *adj. Fr.* joyous
 Bauderie, baudrie, *n.* pimping, keeping a bawdy-house
 Baudy, *adj.* dirty, with bandy cote, *Lydg. Tra. b. ix. f. 26. b.*
 Bayard, *pr. n. Fr.* originally a bay horse; a horse in general
 Bay-window, a large window, probably so called, because it occupied a whole bay, *i. e.* the space between two crossbeams
 Be, *prep. Sax.* by
 Be, for been, *part. pa. Sax.*
 Beau Semblant, *Fr.* fair appearance
 Beau Sire, *Fr.* fair Sir, a mode of address
 Bebledde, *part. pa. Sax.* covered with blood
 Beblotte, *v. Sax.* to stain
 Becke, *v. Fr.* to nod
 Beclappe, *v. Sax.* to catch
 Bedaffed, *part. pa. Sax.* made a fool of. See Dasse
 Bede, *v. Sax.* to order, to bid, to offer, to pray; to bede his necke, to offer his neck for execution
 Bedote, *v. Sax.* to make to dote, to deceive. See Dote
 Dedrede, *adj. Sax.* confined to bed
 Bedreinte, *part. pa.* drenched, thoroughly wetted
 Been, *n. pl. Sax.* bees
 Befill, for befell, *pa. t. of befall, v. Sax.*
 Beforen, beforene, *adv. and prep. Sax.* before
 Begiled, *part. pa. Fr.* beguiled
 Begon, *part. pa. of bego, v. Sax.* gone; wel begon, in a good way; wo begon, far gone in wo; worse begon, in a worse way; with gold begon, painted over with gold, *à or peintes, orig.*
 Begonne, *part. pa. of beginne, v. Sax.* begun
 Behalve, *n. Sax.* half, side or part
 Beheste, *n. Sax.* to promise
 Behete, *v. Sax.* to promise
 Behewe, *part. pa. Sax.* coloured. See Hewe
 Behighte, *v. Sax.* promise
 Behighte, *part. pa.* promised
 Behighten, *pa. t. pl.* promised
 Behove, *n. Sax.* behoof, advantage
 Bejaped, *part. pa. Sax.* tricked, laughed at
 Beknowne, *v. Sax.* to confess
 Bellamy, *Fr.* good friend
 Beleve, *n. Sax.* belief; his belcve, his creed
 Belle, *adj. fem. Fr.* fair
 Belle, *v. Sax.* to roar
 Belle chere, *Fr.* good cheer
 Belle Ifaude, *F. iii. 707,* the fair Ifaude, the mistress of Tristan; she is called Ifoude
 Belous, *n. Sax.* bellows
 Bemes, *n. pl. Sax.* trumpets
 Ben, *inf. m. Sax.* to be, *pr. t. pl. are, part. pa. been*

Benched, *part. pa.* furnished with benches
 Bende, *n. Fr.* a band or horizontal stripe
 Bending, *n.* striping, making of bands or stripes
 Bene, *n. Sax.* a bean, and al n'as wurth a bene
 Benedicite! *Lat.* an exclamation, answering to our blest us! it was often pronounced as a trisyllable, Bencite!
 Benigne, *adj. Fr.* kind
 Benime, *v. Sax.* to take away
 Benison, *n. Fr.* benediction
 Benomen, *part. pa. of benime, taken away*
 Bent, *n. Sax.* the bending or declivity of a hill
 Berained, *part. pa. Sax.* rained upon
 Berde, *n. Sax.* beard; to make any one's berde, to cheat him.
 Bere, *n. Sax.* a bear
 Bere, *v. Sax.* to bear, to carry; to bere in or on hand, to accuse falsely, to persuade falsely; to bere the belle, to carry the prize
 Bere, *n. Sax.* a hier, a pillowbear
 Bering, *n. Sax.* behaviour
 Berme, *n. Sax.* yest
 Bernard, *pr. n. L. W. 16.* St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux in the 12th century. Our author alludes to a proverbial saying concerning him, *Bernardus ipse non vidit omnia.* See Hoffman in v.
 Bernard, *pr. n.* a physician of Montpellier in the 13th century
 Berne, *n. Sax.* a barm
 Besant, *n. Fr.* a piece of gold, so called because first coined at Byzantium, now Constantinople, *Sk.*
 Beseke, *v. Sax.* to beseech
 Beset, besette, *part. pa. Sax.* placed, employed
 Besey, *part. pa. of besec, v. Sax.* beseen; evil besey, ill-beseen, of a bad appearance; richly besey, of a rich appearance
 Beshet, *part. pa. Sax.* shut up.
 Beshrewe, *v. Sax.* to curse
 Beside, *prep. Sax.* by the side of
 Besmotred, *part. pa. Sax.* smutted
 Bepet, *part. pa. Sax.* spit upon
 Bestadde, bestad, *part. pa. Sax.* situated; it is sometimes used in an ill sense for distressed
 Beste, *n. Fr.* a beast
 Besty, *adj. sup. Sax.* best
 Besy, *adj. Sax.* busy
 Bet, bette, *adv. comp.* for better
 Betake, *v. Sax.* to give, to recommend to
 Betaught, *pa. t.* recommended to
 Bete, *v. Sax.* to prepare, make ready; to bete fires, to make fires—to mend, to heal; to bete nettes, to mend nets; to bete sorwe, to heal sorrow
 Bete, *v. Fr.* to beat
 Beteche, *v.* as betake
 Beth, *imp. m. 2d pers. pl. Sax.* be ye
 Betid, betidde, *pa. t. et part. of betide, v. Sax.* happened
 Betoke, *pa. t. of betake, recommended*
 Betraised, *part. pa. Fr.* betrayed; thei have betraised thee
 Betwix, betwixen, *prep. Sax.* between
 Bewepe, *v. Sax.* to weep over
 Bewrey, bewrie, *v. Sax.* to discover

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Awayward, adv. Sax. away
Awreke, v. Sax. to revenge
Axe, v. Sax. to ask
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Ay, adv. Sax. ever
Ayel, n. Fr. grandfather
Ayen, adv. and prep. again
Ayenst, prep. against
Ayenward, adv. Sax. back

B

Ba, v. seems to be formed from *basse, v. Fr.* to kisa
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 Behalve, *n. Sax.* half, side or part
 Beheste, *n. Sax.* to promise
 Behete, *v. Sax.* to promise
 Behewe, *part. pa. Sax.* coloured. See Hewe
 Behighte, *v. Sax.* promise
 Behighte, *part. pa.* promised
 Behighthen, *pa. t. pl.* promised
 Behove, *n. Sax.* behoof, advantage
 Bejaped, *part. pa. Sax.* tricked, laughed at
 Beknowne, *v. Sax.* to confess
 Bellamy, *Fr.* good friend
 Beleve, *n. Sax.* belief; his beleve, his creed
 Belle, *adj. fem. Fr.* fair
 Belle, *v. Sax.* to roar
 Belle chere, *Fr.* good cheer
 Belle Ifaude, *F. iii.* 707, the fair Ifaude, the mistress of Tristan; she is called Ifaude
 Belous, *n. Sax.* bellows
 Bemes, *n. pl. Sax.* trumpets
 Ben, *inf. m. Sax.* to be, *pr. t. pl.* are, *part. pa.* been

Benched, *part. pa.* furnished with benches
 Bende, *n. Fr.* a band or horizontal stripe
 Bending, *n.* striping, making of bands or stripes
 Bene, *n. Sax.* a bean, and al n'as wurth a bene
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 Benime, *v. Sax.* to take away
 Benison, *n. Fr.* benediction
 Benomen, *part. pa.* of benime, taken away
 Bent, *n. Sax.* the bending or declivity of a hill
 Berained, *part. pa. Sax.* rained upon
 Berde, *n. Sax.* beard; to make any one's berde, to cheat him.
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 Bere, *v. Sax.* to bear, to carry; to bere in or on hand, to accuse falsely, to persuade falsely; to bere the belle, to carry the prize
 Bere, *n. Sax.* a hier, a pillowbear
 Bering, *n. Sax.* behaviour
 Berme, *n. Sax.* yest
 Bernard, *pr. n. L. W.* 16. St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux in the 12th century. Our author alludes to a proverbial saying concerning him, *Bernardus ipse non vidit omnia.* See Hoffman in v.
 Bernard, *pr. n.* a physician of Montpellier in the 13th century
 Berne, *n. Sax.* a barm
 Befant, *n. Fr.* a piece of gold, so called because first coined at Byzantium, now Constantinople, *Sk.*
 Beseke, *v. Sax.* to beseech
 Beset, besette, *part. pa. Sax.* placed, employed
 Besey, *part. pa.* of besee, *v. Sax.* beseen; evil besey, ill-beseen, of a bad appearance; richly besey, of a rich appearance
 Beshet, *part. pa. Sax.* shut up.
 Beshrewe, *v. Sax.* to curse
 Beside, *prep. Sax.* by the side of
 Besmotred, *part. pa. Sax.* smutted
 Bepet, *part. pa. Sax.* spit upon
 Bestadde, bestad, *part. pa. Sax.* situated; it is sometimes used in an ill sense for distressed
 Beste, *n. Fr.* a beast
 Besty, *adj. sup. Sax.* best
 Besy, *adj. Sax.* busy
 Bet, bette, *adv. comp.* for better
 Betake, *v. Sax.* to give, to recommend to
 Betaught, *pa. t.* recommended to
 Bete, *v. Sax.* to prepare, make ready; to bete fires, to make fires—to mend, to heal; to bete nettes, to mend nets; to bete sorwe, to heal sorrow
 Bete, *v. Fr.* to beat
 Beteche, *v.* as betake
 Beth, *imp. m. 2d pers. pl. Sax.* be ye
 Betid, betidde, *pa. t. et part.* of betide, *v. Sax.* happened
 Betoke, *pa. t.* of betake, recommended
 Betraised, *part. pa. Fr.* betrayed; thei have betraised thee
 Betwix, betwixen, *prep. Sax.* between
 Bewepe, *v. Sax.* to weep over
 Bewrey, bewrie, *v. Sax.* to discover

- Beye, *v. Sax.* to buy. See Abeye
 Beyete, *part pa. Sax* begotten
 Bialacoil, *pr. n. Fr.* Bel-accueil, courteous reception
 Bibbed, *part pa. Lat.* drunk
 Bible, *n. Fr.* any great book
 Bicchel bones, used in playing a particular kind of game of hazard
 Bidde, *v.* as bede
 Bie, *v. Sax* to suffer. See Abeye
 Bigine, *pr. n. Fr.* Beguine, a nun of a certain order. See *Du Gange* in *v. Beguine*
 Biker, *n. Sax.* a quarrel
 Bilder, *n. Sax.* a builder; the bilder oke, the oak used in building
 Bill, *n.* a letter
 Bimene, *v. Sax.* to bemoan
 Bint, for bindeth
 Birde for bride, *n. Sax.*—hir chere was simple as birde in bour, *i. e.* as bride in chamber—*simple fut comme une espousee*, orig.
 Bismare, *n. Sax.* abusive speech; and bold, and abiding, bismares to suffer
 Bit, for biddeth
 Bitore, *n. Fr.* a bittern
 Bitrent, *part pa.* twisted, carried round; perhaps from the *Sax. circumdare*
 Biwopen, *part pa.* of bewepe, drowned in tears.
 Blancmanger, *n. Fr.* seems to have been a very different dish in the time of Chaucer, from that which is now called by the same name. There is a receipt for making it in *ms. Harl.* one of the ingredients is the brawne of a capon teased small
 Blandise, *v. Fr.* to flatter
 Blanche fevere. See *Cotgrave* in *v. Fieures blanches*; the agues wherewith maidens that have the greenlickness are troubled; and hence *il a les fieures blanches*, either he is in love or sick of wantonness
 Ble, *n. Sax.* colour
 Blee, *pr. n.* a forest in Kent. *Ur.*
 Bleine, *n. Sax.* a pustule
 Blend, *v. Sax.* to blind, to deceive
 Blend, *pa. t.* of blend
 Blent, *pa. t.* of blenche, *v. Sax.* shrinked, started, aside
 Blered, *part pa. Sax.* in its literal sense is used to describe a particular disorder of the eye, attended with foreness and dimness of sight; but more commonly, in Chaucer, a man's eye is said to be blered, metaphorically, when he is any way imposed upon
 Bleve, *v. Sax.* to stay
 Elin, *v. Sax.* to cease
 Blisse, *v. Sax.* to bless
 Blive, believe, *adv. Sax.* quickly
 Blofme, *n. Sax.* blossom, *v.* to blossom
 Blofmy, *adj.* full of blossoms
 Bob-up-and-down, *pr. n.* of a town in the road to Canterbury: it is not marked in the common maps
 Bobance, *n. Fr.* boasting
 Boche, *n. Fr.* bosse, a swelling, a wen or boil
 Bode, boden, *part pa.* of bede, *v. Sax.* bidden, commanded
 Bode, *pa. t.* of bide, *v. Sax.* remained
 Bode, *n. Sax.* a stay or delay, an omen
 Bodekin, *n. Sax.* a dagger
 Boece, *pr. n.* Boethius. His most popular work, *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, was translated by Chaucer certainly before 1381, and probably much earlier; the reflections on predestination (of which there is no trace in the *Filostrato*) are almost entirely taken from *Bo. v. pr. 3.*
 Boiste, *n. Fr.* a box
 Boistous, *adj. Sax.* boisterous, rough,
 Boistously, *adv.* roughly
 Bokeler, *n. Fr.* a buckler
 Bokeling, *part pr. Fr.* buckling
 Boket, *n. Sax.* a bucket
 Bolas, *n.* bullace, a sort of plumb or floe
 Bole armoniac, Armenian earth, *Fr. Gr.*
 Bollen, *part pa.* of bodge, *v. Sax.* swollen
 Bolt, *n. Sax.* an arrow, bolt-upright, straight as an arrow
 Bone, *n. Sax.* a boon, petition, he bade hem all a bone, he made a request to them all.
 Boras, *n. Fr.* borax
 Bord, *n. Fr.* a border; the side of a ship; over bord
 Borde, *n. Sax.* a table
 Bordel, *n. Fr.* a brothel—bordel-women, whores
 Bordellers, *n. pl.* keepers of bawdyhouses
 Borel, *n. Fr.* bureau, coarse cloth of a brown colour. See *Du Gange* in *v. Burellus*
 Borel, *adj.* made of plain coarse stuff—borel folk, borel men, laymen.
 Borwe, *n. Sax.* a pledge; hath laid to borwe; hath pledged; have here my feith to borwe; have here my faith for a pledge; Seint John to borwe; St. John being my security.
 Bosard, *n. Fr.* a buzzard, a species of hawk unfit for sporting
 Boffe, *n. Fr.* a protuberance
 Bost, *n. Sax.* pride, boasting
 Bost, *adv.* aloud; he cracked bost
 Bote, *n. Sax.* remedy, help, profit
 Bote, *v. Sax.* to help
 Bote, *pa. t.* of bite, *v. Sax.* bit
 Boteles, *adj. Sax.* bootless, remediless
 Botel, bottelle, *n. Fr.* bottle
 Boterilie, *n. Sax.* a butterfly
 Bothe, *adj. Sax.* two together; our bothe labour, the labour of us two together; *nostrum amborum labor*
 Bothe, *conj.* is generally used to copulate two members of a sentence, but sometimes more.

And rent adoun bothe wall, and rafter—
 To whom bothe heven, and erthe, and see,
 is sene.

So the Greeks sometimes used *Ἀμφότερον*. *Od. O. 73.*
Ἀμφότερον κνυδός τε καὶ ἀγλαΐη, καὶ οὐκία.

 Bothum, *n. Fr.* bouton, a bud, particularly of a rose
 Bougeron, *n. Fr.* a Sodomite
 Boughton-under-blee, *pr. n.* of a town in Kent
 Bouke, *n. Sax.* the body
 Boulte, *v. Sax.* to sift, to separate the flour of wheat from the bran

Boun, *adj. Sax.* ready; and bade hem all to be bowne

Bountee, *n. Fr.* goodness

Bourde, *n. Fr.* a jest,

Bourde, *v. Fr.* to jest,

Bourdon, *n. Fr.* a staff,

Boure, *n. Sax.* a house, a chamber

Bowe, *n. Sax.* a bow; a dogge for the bowe; a dog used in shooting.

Boxe, *n.* a blow

Bracer, *n. Fr.* armour for the arm

Bradwardin, *pr. n.* Thomas Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1349. His book *De Causa Dei*, to which our author alludes, is in print. See Tanner in *v. Bradwardinus*

Braide, *n. Sax.* a start

Braide, *v. Sax.* to awake, to start. See Abraide. Out of his wit he braide, he ran out of his senses; to take off

Braket, *n. Brit.* bragod, a sweet drink made of the wort of ale, honey, and spice: it is still in use in Wales. Richards in *v. Bragod*

Brasil, *n.* a wood used in dying to give a red colour. See Huetiana, p. 268. In the inventory of the effects of Henry V. Rot. Parl. H. VI. m. 20, is the following article, *II Graundes peces du Bracile, pris vis. viiij.*

Bratt, *n. Sax.* a coarse mantle

Brech, *n. Sax.* breeches

Brede, *n. Sax.* breadth; in brede, abroad

Breme, *adj. Sax.* furious

Brenne, *v. Sax.* to burn—Brent, *pa. t. & part.* burnt

Brenningly, *adv. Sax.* hotly

Breres, *n. pl. Fr.* briars

Breste, *v. Sax.* to burst

Bret-ful, *adj.* the sense is much more clear than the etymology.

Bribe, *n. Fr.* properly what is given to a beggar; what is given to an extortioner or cheat,

Briben, *inf. m. Fr.* to beg, or perhaps to steal.—See Rot. Parl. 22 E. IV. n. 30, have stolen and bribed signetts, (cygnets.) And so in P. P. 115, b. a bribour seems to signify a thief, as bribors, pilors, and pikeharneis, are classed together; and still more plainly in Lydg. Tra. 152;

Who saveth a thefe whan the rope is knet—
With some safe turne the bribour will him quite.

See also ancient Scottish Poems, p. 171, st. vii. l. 3
Briboures. Upon second thoughts I believe that I was wrong in adopting this word from ms. C. 1, and that we should rather read, with other mss.;

Certaine he knew of briberies mo.

Bridale, *n. Sax.* a marriage feast

Briddes, *n. pl. Sax.* birds

Brige, *n. Fr.* contention

Brike, *n. Sax.* breach, ruin

Brimme, *adj.* See Breme

Brocage, *n.* a treaty by a broker or agent

Broche, originally the tongue of a buckle or clasp; and from thence the buckle or clasp itself.

Broided, *part. pa. Fr.* braided, woven

Brokking, *part. pr.* throbbing, quavering

Bromeholme, *pr. n.* a priory in Norfolk

Bronde, *n. Fr.* a torch

Brosten, *part. pa.* of breste

Brotel, *adj. Sax.* brittle

Brotelnesse, *n.* brittlenesse

Brotherhed, *n. Sax.* brotherly affection

Brouded, *part. pa. Fr.* brodé embroidered

Brouken, *inf. m. Sax.* to brook, enjoy, use

Buckes horne, a buck's horn; to blow the buckes horne is put for any useless employment.

Buffette, *n. Fr.* a blow

Bugle-horn, *n.* a drinking vessel made of horn.—

Gloss. *Ur.* derives it from *bucula cornu*; the gloss. to Anc. Scott. Po. explains bowgle to mean a buffalo. I have been told that in some parts of the north a bull is now called a boogle.

Bumble, *v. Sax.* to make a humming noise; it is used to describe the noise made by a bittern

Burdoun, *n. Fr.* bourdon, a humming noise, the bass in musick

Buriels, *n. pl. Sax.* burying places

Burned, *part. pa. Fr.* burnished

Burnel the alle. The story supposes that the priest's son, when he was to be ordained, directed his servant to call him at cockcrowing, and that the cock whose leg he had formerly broken having overheard this, purposely refrained from crowing at his usual time, by which artifice the young man was suffered to sleep till the ordination was over.

Burnette, *n. Fr.* brunette, cloth dyed of a brown colour. See Du Cange in *v. Burnetum*.

Busk, a bush

Butte, but, *adv. & conj. Sax.* but, sed—unless, *nisi*, I ne'ere but lost, *non effem nisi perditam*—only, which that am but lorne.

But, *prep. Sax.* without, gloss. *Ur.* I cannot say that I have myself observed this preposition in Chaucer, but I may have overlooked it. The Saxons used it very frequently; and how long the Scottish writers have laid it aside I am doubtful. It occurs repeatedly in Bp. Douglas; but spot or fault, p. 3 l. 53; poete but pere, p. 9. l. 19; but and ben, p. 123, l. 40, without and within; *but an and binnan*, originally, I suppose, *bi utan and bi innan*. By and with are often synonymous.

Buxome, *adj. Sax.* obedient, civil

Buxumly, *adv. Sax.* obediently

By, *prep. Sax.* has sometimes the signification of in; by the morwe, in the morning or daytime; by his life, in his lifetime. It is sometimes used adverbially; by and by, near hard by.—By and by, *sigillatim*, *Prompt. Parv.* these were his wordes by and by, *i. e.* severally, distinctly; and so perhaps this phrase should be understood in the passages above quoted.

Byforne. See Beforne

Dyleve, *v. Sax.* to stay

Byraft, *part. pa.* of byreve, *v. Sax.* bereeved, taken away
Byword, *n. Sax.* a proverb

C.

Cacche, *v.* to catch
Cadence, *n. Fr.* a species of poetical composition
Cairrud, *pr. n.* of a city in Bretagne
Caitif, *n. & adj. Fr.* *chetif*, a wretch, wretched
Calcination, *n. Fr.* a chemical process by which bodies are reduced to a calx
Calculated, *pa. t. Fr.* calculated
Caleweis, probably miswritten; the original has *la poire du caillonel*. Cotgrave says that *caillonet* is the name of a very sweet pear
Calidone, *pr. n.* it should be Lacedonie
Caliochia, *pr. n.* We should rather read Calypso, with the two Bodl. mss. for Calypso.
Calle, *n. Fr.* a species of cap
Camaille, *n. Fr.* a camel
Cameline, *n. Fr.* a stuff made of camel's hair
Camuse, *adj. Fr.* flat
Can, *v. Sax.* to know. See Conne
Cananee *adj. Fr.* Cananean
Cane, *pr. n.* Cana in Galilee
Canel, *n. Fr.* canal, channel
Canelle, *n. Fr.* cinnamon
Canevas, *n. Fr.* canvas
Canon, the title of Avicenne's great work. See *D'Herbelot* in *v. Canon*
Cantel, *n. Sax.* a fragment
Capel, *n. Lat.* a horse
Capitaine, *n. Fr.* a captain
Capitolie, *n. Lat.* the Capitol at Rome
Cappe, *n. Lat.* a carp or hood; to set a man's cap, to make a fool of him.
Captif, *adj. Fr.* captive
Cardiacle, *n. Fr. Gr.* a pain about the heart
Carectes, *n. pl. Lat. Gr.* characters
Carfe, *pa. t.* of carve, *v. Sax.* cut
Carle, *n. Sax.* a churl, a hardy country fellow
Carmes, *n. pl. Fr.* Carmelite friars
Carole, *n. Fr.* a sort of dance
Carole, *v. Fr.* to dance, in caroling, in dancing
Carpe, *v.* to talk; by carping of tongue, by speech
Carraine, *n. Fr.* a carrion, dead or putrified flesh
Carrike, *n. Fr.* a large ship
Carte, *n. Sax.* a chariot
Carter, *n. Sax.* a charioteer
Cas, *n. Fr.* *cas*, chance, upon *cas*, by chance
Cas, *n. Fr.* *casse*, a case, quiver
Cassiodore, *pr. n.* Cassiodorus, a Roman senator and consul, several of his works are extant. See *Fabric. Bibl. Lat. and Bibl. Med. Æt.*
Cast, *n. Sax.* a contrivance
Caste, *v.* to throw, to contrive
Casteloigne, *pr. n.* Catalonia in Spain
Casuel, *adj. Fr.* accidental
Catapuce, *n. Fr.* a species of spurge
Catel, *n. Fr.* goods, valuable things of all sorts
Caterwawed. To gon a caterwawed seems to signify the same as to go a caterwawing, or caterwawling, as it has been called by later writers.

Caught, *pa. t. & part.* of catch
Cavilatioun, *n. Fr.* cavil
Cecile, Cecilie, *pr. n.* Cecilia
Ceise, cese, are misprinted for seise, *v. Fr.* to seize, to lay hold of.
Celerer, *n. Lat. Celeyarius*, the officer in a monastery who had the care of the provisions
Celle, *n. Lat.* a religious house, it seems to be put for a man's head
Celsitude, *n. Fr.* highness
Censer, *n. Fr.* an incense pot
Censing, *part. pr. Fr.* fumigating with incense
Centaurie, *pr. n.* of an herb
Cercle, *v. Fr.* to surround
Cercles, *n. pl. Fr.* circles
Cerial, *adj. Fr.* belonging to the species of oak called *cerrus*, *Lat. cerra*, *Ital. cerre*
Certain, *adj. Fr.* is used sometimes as a substantive; of unces a certain, a certain of gold, *i. e.* a certain number of ounces, a certain quantity of gold
Certain, *certes, adv.* certainly
Ceruse, *n. Fr.* whitelead
Cesed, *part. pa.* for seised, is used in a legal sense; to that he be cesed therewith, till that he be possessed thereof, till he have seisin thereof
Cesse, *v. Fr.* to cease
Chace, *v. Fr.* to chase, to pursue,
Chafe, *v. Fr.* to grow warm or angry
Chaffare, *n. Sax.* merchandise
Chaffare, *v. Sax.* to merchandise
Chaire, *n. Fr.* a chair; the chair or pulpit of a professor or preacher.
Chalons, blankets, or coverlets, probably so called from being made at Chalons
Chamberere, *n. Fr.* a chambermaid
Champartie, *n. Fr.* a share of land, a partnership in power. Lydgate has the same expression, *Tra. 139, b. viii. 17.*
Clantepleure, *n. Fr.* a sort of proverbial expression for singing and weeping successively. See *Lydg. Tra. stan.* the last, where he says that his book is

Lyke chantepleure, now singing now weping.

In *ms. Harl. 4333*, is a ballad which turns upon this expression: it begins *Moult vaut mieux pleure chante que ne fait chante pleure*
Chanterie, *n. Fr.* an endowment for the payment of a priest to sing mass agreeably to the appointment of the founder. There were thirty-five of these chanteries established at St. Paul's, which were served by fifty-four priests, *Dugd. Hist. pref. p. 41.*
Chapman, *Sax.* a merchant or trader
Chapman, *n. Sax.* the condition of a chapman
Char, *n. Fr.* a chariot
Charbucle, *n. Fr.* a carbuncle
Charge, *n. Fr.* a load, burthen, business of weight; it n'ere no charge; it were no harm: of which there is no charge, from which there is no consequence to be expected; of that no charge, no matter for that
Charge, *v. Fr.* to weigh, to incline on account of

- weight—which chargeth not to say, which it is of no importance to say
- Chargeant, *part. pr.* burthenfome
- Charmereffe, *n. Fr.* an enchantress
- Chastelaine, *n. Fr.* the wife of a chastelain or lord of a castle
- Chastie, *v. Fr.* to chastise
- Chaunteclere, *pr. n.* of a cock
- Checkere, *n. Fr.* a chessboard
- Chees, *pa. t.* of chese, *v. Sax.* chose
- Cheffis, we should read cheses. The orig. has fromages
- Cheke, a term at chess, to give notice to the opposite party that his king, if not removed or guarded by the interposition of some other piece, will be made prisoner: it is derived originally from the Persian *šāb*, *i. e.* king, and means, take care of your king. See Hyde, Hist. Shahilud, p. 3, 4.
- Chekelatoun, a robe of state
- Chekemate, or simply mate, is a term used at chess when the king is actually made prisoner, and the game consequently finished. The Persian phrase is *šāb māt*, *i. e.* the king is conquered. See Hyde, Hist. Shahilud, p. 152
- Chelaundre, *n. Fr.* a goldfinch
- Chepe, *v. Sax.* to cheapen, to buy
- Chepe, *n.* cheapness
- Chepe, *pr. n.* Cheapside in London
- Cherche, *n. Sax.* a church
- Chere, *n. Fr.* countenance, appearance, entertainment, good cheer
- Cherice, *v. Fr.* to cherish
- Cherifance, *n. Fr.* comfort
- Cherl, *n. Sax.* a man of mean birth and condition
- Cherisk, *adj.* illiberal
- Ches, *n. Fr.* the game of chess
- Chese, *v. Sax.* to choose
- Chese, for cheseth
- Cheste, *n. Lat.* a coffin
- Cheste, *n.* debate
- Chesteine, *n. Fr.* the chesnut tree, the chesnut fruit
- Chevachie, *n. Fr.* an expedition
- Chevalrie, *n. Fr.* knighthood, the manners, exercises, and valiant exploits, of a knight
- Chevalrous, *adj.* valiant
- Cheve, *v. Fr.* to come to an agreement or conclusion; yvel mote he cheve, ill may he end
- Chevesaile, *n. Fr.* a necklace
- Chevetain, *n. Fr.* chieftain
- Chevisance, *n. Fr.* an agreement for borrowing of money
- Chiche, *adj. Fr.* niggardly, sparing
- Chidereffe, *n. Sax.* a female scold
- Chidester, *n. Sax.* a female scold
- Chiertee, *n. Fr.* tenderness, affection
- Chike, *n. Sax.* a chicken
- Chimbe, *n. Sax.* the prominent part of the staves beyond the head of a barrel
- Chimbe, *v.* to sound in consonance like bells
- Chimeny, *n. Fr.* a chimney
- Chinche, *adj.* as chiche
- Chincherie, *n.* niggardliness
- Chirche, *n. Sax.* a church
- Chirchereve, *n. Sax.* a churchwarden
- Chirchhawe, *n. Sax.* a churchyard
- Chirk, *v. Sax.* to chirp as a sparrow
- Chirking, *n.* a disagreeable sound
- Chit, for chideth
- Chivachee, *n.* as chevachie
- Chiver, *v. Sax.* to shiver
- Cierges, *n. pl. Fr.* wax tapers
- Cipioun, *pr. n.* Scipio
- Cipris, *pr. n.* Venus
- Circes, *pr. n.* for Circe
- Citce, *n. Fr.* a city
- Citole, *n. Fr.* a musical instrument. Sir John Hawkins, in his very curious Hist. of Musick, v. ii. p. 106, *n.* supposes it to have been a sort of dulcimer, and that the name is a corruption of the *Lat. cistella*. Beside the passage which he has quoted from Gower, Conf. Am. 178, it is mentioned again in fol. 189, among the instruments which sowned lowe. See also Du Cange in v. *Citola*, and *M. de la Ravalierre, Poësies du Roy de Navarre*, t. i. p. 248
- Citrin, *adj. Fr.* of a pale yellow or citron colour
- Citration, *n.* a chymical term. *Arnoldus in Rosario*, ms. l. i. c. 5; "*Citrinacio nihil aliud est quam completa albedinis digestio, nec albedo est aliud quam nigredinis ablatio.*" Gloss. Carpent. in v.
- Clamben, *pa. t. pl.* of climb, *v. Sax.*
- Clapers, *n. pl. Fr.* rabbit-burrows,
- Clappe, *v. Sax.* to knock repeatedly, to talk fast
- Clapping, *n.* noisy talking
- Clapsed, clasped
- Clarré, *n. Fr.* wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it is clear; it was otherwise called piment, as appears from the title of the following receipt in the *Medulla Chirurgie Rolandi*, ms. Bodl. 761, fol. 86; "*Clarettum bonum, sive pigmentum.—Accipe nucem moschatam, cariosilos, gingebras, macis, cinamomum, galangum; quæ omnia in pulverem redacta distempera cum bono cum tertiâ parte mellis; post cola per sacculum, et da ad bibendum. Et nota, quod illud item potest fieri de cerevisiâ,*"
- Clatternden, *pa. t. pl.* of clatter, *v. Sax.*
- Clause, *n. Fr.* an end or conclusion
- Claw, *v. Sax.* to stroke, he clawed him on the back, he stroked him on the back to encourage him; to claw on the gall, signifies the same as to rub on a sore place
- Cled, for clad
- Clenesse, *n. Sax.* purity
- Clepe, *v. Sax.* to call, to name
- Clergie, *n. Fr.* the clerical profession
- Clergial, *adj.* learned
- Clergion, *n.* a young clerk
- Clerk, *n. Fr.* a person in holy orders, a man of learning, a student at the university
- Cleves, *n. pl. Sax.* rocks. See Cliffe
- Cliffe, *n. Sax.* a rock
- Clifte, *n. Sax.* a cleft
- Cliket, *n. Fr.* a key
- Cunke, *v. Fr.* to ring, *neut.* to tinkle

- Clippe, *v. Sax.* to cut hair, to embrace
 Clipfy, *adj.* as if eclipsed
 Clobbered, *adj. Sax.* like a club
 Cloistre, *n. Fr.* a cloister, an enclosure
 Clomben, *pa. t. pl.* of climb, *v. Sax.*
 Clofer, *n. Fr.* an enclosure
 Clote-lefe, a leaf of the burdock, or clotebur
 Clotered, *part. pa. Sax.* clotted
 Cloue-gilofre, *Fr.* a clove-tree or the fruit of it
 Cloutes, *n. pl. Sax.* small pieces
 Clum. This word seems to be formed from the *Sax.*
v. cluraian, muffitare murmurare, to express the
 mumbling noise which is made by a congrega-
 tion in accompanying prayers which they can-
 not perfectly repeat
 Coagulat, *part. pa. Lat.* curdled
 Cokes bones, a corruption of a familiar oath
 Cod, *n. Sax.* a bag
 Cofre, *n. Fr.* a chest
 Cogge, *n. Sax.* a cockboat. See *Du Cange* in *v.*
Cago
 Coilons, *n. pl. Fr.* testicles
 Coine, *n. Fr.* a piece of money, a quince
 Coint, *adj. Fr.* neat, trim
 Coke, *n. Lat.* a cook
 Cokeney, *n.* a cook
 Cokewold, *n.* a cuckold. How this word has been
 formed is difficult to say, but probably it has
 some relation to the *Fr. cocu*. In the best mss. of
 The Canterbury Tales, it is constantly spelled as
 above, and is always, I believe, to be pronoun-
 ced as a trisyllable. The author of The Re-
 medy of Love, ver. 288, *seq.* pretends that the
 true orthography of this word is cockold, accor-
 ding to a most absurd etymology which he has
 there given of it; an additional proof (if any
 were wanted) that The Remedy of Love was
 not written by Chaucer
 Col, *n. a.* a common name for a dog
 Cold, *v. Sax.* to grow cold
 Coler, *n. Fr.* a collar
 Colered, *part. pa.* collared, wearing collars
 Collation, *n. Fr.* a conference
 Collinges, *n. pl. Fr.* embraces round the neck
 Coltish, *adj. Sax.* playful as a colt
 Columbine, *adj. Lat.* belonging to a dove, dove-
 like
 Combre-world, *n.* an incumbrance to the world
 Combult, *adj. Lat.* burnt, a term in astrology when
 a planet is not more than 8° 30' distant from
 the sun.
 Come, for cometh
 Commensal, *n. Fr.* a companion at table
 Commune, *n. Fr.* commonalty
 Communes, *n. pl.* commoners, common people
 Compaignable, *adj. Fr.* sociable
 Compame, for compagne
 Compas, *n. Fr.* a compass a circle; the Trine
 compas, the Trinity; an appellation borrowed,
 as it seems, from the common emblem of that
 mystery, a circle circumscribing a triangle—con-
 trivance
 Compasment, *n.* } contrivance
 Compassing, *n.* }
 Compass, *v.* to contrive, he compassed his thoughts
 he contrived in his thought
 Compenable, *adj.* as compaignable
 Compere, *n. Fr.* a gossip, a near friend
 Complin, *n. Fr.* complie, even-song, the last ser-
 vice of the day, singing in general
 Compowned, *part. pa.* composed, put together
 Compte, *n. Fr.* account
 Concete, *n. Fr.* conception, apprehension
 Condescende, *v. Fr.* to yield
 Condise, *n. pl. Fr.* conduits
 Confecture, *n. Fr.* composition
 Confuse, *adj. Fr.* confounded, he became so con-
 fuse, he conneth not loke
 Conjecte, *v. Fr.* to project
 Consaunce, *n. Fr.* understanding
 Conjure, *v. Fr.* to adjure
 Conne, *v. Sax.* to know, to be able; I shal not conne
 answeare; I shall not know how—or be able, to
 answer; thou shalt never—Con, knowen, thou
 shalt be never able to know—to conne thank,
 to be pleased or obliged, *sçavoir gré, Fr.* to conne
 maugre, to be displeased, *sçavoir mal gré, orig.*
 Conseil, *n. Fr.* counsel
 Consentant, *part. pr. Fr.* consentant of this cursed-
 nesse, consenting to *t. c.*
 Conserve, *v. Fr.* to preserve
 Consistory, *n. Fr.* signifies usually an ecclesiasti-
 cal court, pontus, any court of justice
 Constablerie, *n. Fr.* a ward or division of a castle
 under the care of a constable. *Du Cange* in *v.*
Constabularius castri
 Conteke, *n. Sax.* contention
 Contenance, *n. Fr.* appearance, pretence
 Contract, *part. pa. Lat.* contracted
 Contrariauntes, *part. pr.* is used in the plural num-
 ber, according to the French custom, opposing,
 contradicting
 Contrarie, *v. Fr.* to contradict
 Contrarious, *adj. Fr.* opposite, perverse
 Contrary, *n. Fr.* adversary
 Contrefete, *v. Fr.* to counterfeit, imitate
 Controve, *v. Fr.* to invent
 Contubernial, *adj. Lat.* familiar
 Contune, for continue. This is one of those li-
 cences, for the sake of rhyme, which universal
 custom can alone justify. Our Author seems
 to have been ashamed of it, as I do not recollect
 to have met with it in The Canterbury Tales.
 Lydgate has been less scrupulous. See *Trag.* 2.
 b. 14. b. 24. b.
 Cope, *n. Fr.* cape, a cloak
 Coppe, *n. Sax.* the top of any thing
 Corage, *a. Fr.* heart, inclination, spirit, courage
 Corbettes, *n. pl. Fr.* niches for statues
 Cordeth, for accordeth
 Cordewane, *n. Fr.* cordouan, Spanish leather so cal-
 led from Corduba
 Cordileres, *n. pl. Fr.* Cordeliers, an order of friars
 so called from their wearing a cord instead of a
 Corinne, *pr. n.* [girdle
 Cornewaile, *pr. n.* Cornouaille in Bretagne
 Corniculere, *n. Lat.* an officer in the Roman go-
 vernment. See *Pitisc. Len. ant. Rom.* in *v. Cor-
 nicularius*

Bornmuse, *n. Fr.* a bagpipe
Corny, *adj. Sax.* strong of the corn or malt
Coroune, *n. Fr.* a crown or garland
Corps, *n. Fr.* body
Corpus, *n. Lat.* body, *corpus Domini*, God's body ;
corpus Madrian
Corrige, *v. Fr.* to correct
Corrumpable, *adj. Fr.* corruptible
Corrumpe, *v. Fr.* to corrupt
Corse, *v. ax.* to curse
Corseint, *n. Fr.* a holy body, a saint, the corfaynt
 and the kirke
Corven, *part. pa.* of carve, *v. Sax.* cut
Cofin, *n. Fr.* a cousin or kinsman : it is sometimes
 used adjectively, allied, related
Cofinage, *n. Fr.* kindred
Coftage, *n. Fr.* cost, expence
Coftie, *v. Fr.* to go by the coast
Coftlewe, *adj.* costly
Coftrell, *n.* a drinking vessel. See *Du Gange*, in *v.*
Castrellus
Cote, *n. Sax.* a cottage
Cote, *n. Fr.* a coat, cote-armure, a coat worn over
 armour, upon which the armorial ensigns of the
 wearer were usually embroidered
Cotidien, *n. Fr.* daily ; it is used as a substantive
 for a quotidian ague
Couche, *v. Fr.* to lay
Couched, *part. pa.* laid, couched with perles, laid
 or trimmed with pearls
Coud, *coude*, *pa. t.* of *conne*, knew, was able
Coveite, *v. Fr.* to covet
Covenable, *adj. Fr.* convenient, fuitable
Coverchiefs, *n. pl. Fr.* headclothes
Covercle, *n. Fr.* a potlid
Covert, *adj. Fr.* secret, covered
Covine, *n. Fr.* secret contrivances
Coulpe, *n. Fr.* a fault
Count, *v. Fr.* to account, to esteem
Counterpeife, *n. Fr.* a counterpoise, a weight which
 balances another
Counterpeife, *v. Fr.* to counterpoise
Counterplete, *v. Fr.* to plead against
Counterwaite, *v. Fr.* to watch against
Countour, *n. Fr.* *comptoir*, a countinghouse *compteur*,
 an arithmetician, *Du. 435.*
Countretaille, *n. Fr.* a tally answering exactly to
 another, hence Echo is said to answer at the coun-
 tretaille
Coure, *v. Fr.* to sit crouching like a brooding
 hen
Courtepy, a short cloke of coarse cloth
Court-man, a courtier, *homme de cour*, *Fr.*
Couth, *couthe*, *pa. t.* of *conne*, knew, was able
part. pa. known
Cowardise, *n. Fr.* want of courage. As to the ety-
 mology of the *adj.* from which this word has
 been formed, I think the opinion of Twysden
 and Somner [*Gloss. ad X. Script. v. Fridwite*]
 much the most probable, who derive it from the
 barb. *Lat. culum vertere*, to turn tail, to run a-
 way. See *Du Gange* in *v. Culverta* and *Culver-*
tagium, who rejects the opinion above mention-
 ed, but without suggesting any thing so plausi-
 ble. Culvert (as it is written in the oldest and

best French mss. that I have seen) might easily
 be corrupted, according to the French mode of
 pronunciation, into *couart* and *coward*—I have
 somewhere seen the French language seriously
 charged with indelicacy for its frequent and
 wanton use of the word *cul* in composition ; nor
 can the charge be said to be groundless. Beside
 the numerous instances which will occur to eve-
 ry body, I suspect that this monosyllable makes
 part of a common and solemn term in our law,
 imported originally from France *Culprist* seems to
 have been a vulgar name for a prisoner, a per-
 son taken by that part which is most exposed in
 running away. Holinshed has expressed the
 same idea more delicately, vol. iii. p. 842. "The
 "prentises were caught by the backs, and had
 "to prison" And so it is expressed in Ancient
 Scottish Poems, p. 182, ver. 15—Yet Deid
 [Death] sal tak him be the bak
Coye, *v. Fr.* to quiet, to soothe
Craftesman, *n. Sax.* a man of skill
Crake, *v. Fr.* to crack [ing
Crake, *crakel*, *v. Sax.* to quaver hoarsely in sing-
Crampish, *v. Fr.* to contract violently, as the cramp
 does, *An. 170.*
Cratching, *n. ax.* scratching
Crased, *part. pa. Fr.* *ecrasé* broken
Creance, *n. Fr.* faith, belief
Creance, *v. Fr.* to borrow money
Create, *part. pa. Lat.* crinced, circularly formed,
 perhaps from the Island, *kringe*, *cirino*, *gyro*
Crepil, *n. ax.* a cripple
Crevasse, *n. Fr.* a chink or crevice
Criande, *part. pr.* of *crie*, *n. Fr.* crying
Crips, *F. iii.* as *crispe*
Crislippus, *pr. n.* I find the title of a work in Mont-
 faucon, *ibid. Bibl.* p. 513. to which Chaucer
 may possibly allude ; *Chryssippi discipuli Euthymii*,
in Joannem encomium—and again, p. 1314. *Chry-*
ssippi Presbyteri laudatio, *S. Joannis Baptiste* It is
 not unlikely that a panygerist on the Baptist
 might be led by his rage against Herodias to say
 some harsh things of women in general
Crispe, *adj. Lat.* curled
Croce, *n. Sax.* a cross
Crois, *n. Fr.* a cross
Cromes, *n. pl. Sax.* crumbs
Crommed, *part. pa. Sax.* stuffed, crammed [Killian
Crone, *n. Sax.* an old woman ; *kronie*, *ovis vetula*.
Crope, *copen*, *part. pa.* of *crepe*, *v. Sax.* crept
Croppes, *n. pl. Sax.* the extremities of the shoots
 of vegetables ; now in the crop, now at the
 top ; *crope* and *rote*, root and branch ; the
 whole of a thing
Crosselet, *n. Fr.* a crucible
Crouche, *v. Sax.* to sign with the cross,
Croude, *v. Sax.* to shove together
Crouke, *n. Sax.* an earthen pitcher
Croun, *n. Fr.* signifies head
Croupe, *n. Fr.* the ridge of the back
Crowes feet, the wrinkles which spread from the
 outer corner of the eyes : Spenser describes this
 mark of old age in the same manner, *eccl. 12* ;

And by mine eie the crow his claw doth wright.

Crowned, *part. pa.* wearing a crown; crowned malice, sovereign malice.
 Crull, *adj. Sax.* curled
 Cucurbite, *n. Lat.* a gourd, a vessel shaped like a gourd, used in distillation
 Culpons, *n. pl. Fr.* shreds, logs
 Culver, *n. Sax.* a dove
 Cuppe, *n. Fr.* a cup; withouten cuppe he drank all his penance, he took large draughts of grief; he made no use of a cup, but drank out of the pot
 Curacion, *n. Fr.* cure, healing
 Cure, *n. Fr.* care; I do no cure, I take no care
 Curfew-time, according to the Conqueror's edict, is said to have been 8 h. p. m. Walsingham, speaking of an event on the 2d of September 1311, mentions 9 h. as the *hora ignitegii*. It probably varied with the seasons of the year
 Curious, *adj. Fr.* careful
 Curteis, *adj. Fr.* courteous
 Customer, *adj. Fr.* accustomed

D.

Dasse, *n. Sax.* a fool; thou dotest, dasse, quod she, dull are thy wittes
 Dagge, *n.* a slip or shred, pierce plough, 6. b.
 Dagged, *part. pa.* cut into slips
 Dagging, *n.* flitting, cutting into slips
 Dagon, *n.* a slip or piece
 Damascene, *pr. n.* the country about Damascus
 Damascene, *pr. n.* Joannes Mesac Damascenus, an Arabian physician in the 8th and 9th century. See *Fabric. Bibl. Gr. t. xiii. p. 256.*
 Dame, *n. Fr. Lat. domina*, mistress, lady, mother
 Dampne, *v. Fr.* to condemn
 Dan, *n. Fr. Lat. dominus*, lord, was a title commonly given to monks. It is also prefixed by Chaucer to the names of other persons of all sorts; Dan Arcite, Dan Burnell, Dan Caton
 Dance, *n. Fr.* the old dance, the old game. The French have the same phrase, *elle seait assez de la vieille Danse*. Colgrave
 Danger, *n. Fr.* a dangerous situation: in danger, coyness, sparingness, with danger, sparingly.
 Dangerous, *adj.* difficult, sparingly
 Dante, *pr. n.* See Gloss. in v. Lavender.
 Dapple-gray, the colour which is called in Fr. *pommelé*
 Dare, *v. Sax.* to stare
 Dares, *pr. n.* of a supposed historian of the Trojan war, *Du 1070*
 Darreine, *v. Fr.* desrener, *Lat. derationare*, to contest
 Dart, *n. Sax.* a spear or javelin; the dart is sette up for virginitee. There is an allusion to the same custom in *Lydg. Tr. 26*;

And oft it happeneth he that hath best ron
 Doth not the spere like his desert possede.

Dasen, *pr. t. pl.* of dase, *v. Sax.* grow dim-sighted
 Daunt, *v. Fr.* to conquer, that ne with love may daunted be, orig. *qui par amours ne soit domptez*

Dawe, *v. Sax.* to dawn
 Dawning, *n. Sax.* daybreak
 Dawes, *n. pl.* for dayes
 Daye, *n. Sax.* day, time, at my day, at the day appointed to me; to graunt him dayes of the remenant, to permit him to pay the remainder at certain days by instalments
 Deaurat, *part. pa. Lat.* gilded
 Debate, *v. Fr.* to fight
 Debonaire, *adj. Fr.* courteous, gentle
 Decoped, *part. pa. Fr.* cut down
 Decorata, *pr. n.* Decoratus
 Dede, *v. Sax.* to grow dead; *part. pa.* dead
 Dedly, *adj. Sax.* devoted to death
 Deduit, *n. Fr.* pleasure
 Defait, *defaited, part. pa. Fr.* wasted
 Defame, *n. Fr.* infamy
 Defame, *v. Fr.* to make infamous
 Defaute, *n. Fr.* want defautes, *pl.* defects
 Defende, *v. Fr.* to forbid, to ransom
 Defence, *n. Fr.* prohibition
 Definishe, *v. Fr.* to define, to make a definition of,
 Degree, *n. Fr.* a stair, or set of steps, rank in life
 Deiden, *part. t. pl.* of deye, *v. Sax.* died
 Deine, for deien, *inf. m.* of deye, *v. Sax.* to die
 Deinous, *adj. Fr.* disdainful
 Deintee, *n. Fr.* value, a thing of value; hath deintee, values highly; told no deintee of, set no value upon; it was deintee, it was a valuable thing
 Deinteous, *adj.* choice, valuable
 Deis, *n. Fr.* a wooden floor
 Del, *n. Sax.* a part; never a del, not a bit; every del, every part
 Dele, *v. Sax.* to divide
 Delibere, *v. Fr.* to deliberate
 Delicacie, *n. Fr.* pleasure
 Delices, *n. pl. Fr.* delights
 Delie, *adj. Fr.* delié, thin, slender
 Delit, *n. Fr.* delight
 Delitable, *adj. Fr.* delectable
 Deliver, *adj. Fr.* nimble, *Conf. Am. 177, b.*
 Deliverly, *adv.* quickly
 Deliverness, *n. Fr.* agility
 Delve, *v. Sax.* to dig
 Delavy, *n. Lat.* deluge
 Demaine, *v. Fr.* to manage
 Demaine, *n. Fr.* management
 Deme, *v. Sax.* to judge
 Demoniak, *n. Fr.* one posselt by a devil
 Dent, *n. Sax.* a stroke. See Dint
 Denwere, *n.* doubt, *Sé.* This interpretation suits well enough with the only passage in which I have found this word; but I should be glad to see some other instance of the use of it.
 De par dieux jeo assente, in God's name I agree.
 Depart, *v. Fr.* to part, to distribute
 Depeint, *part. pa. Fr.* painted
 Dequace, *v.* to shake down, *q?*
 Dere, *v. Sax.* to hurt
 Dere, *adj. Sax.* dear
 Dereling, *n. Sax.* darling
 Dereworth, *adj. Sax.* precious, valued at a high rate

- Derne, *adj. Sax.* secret
 Derre, *comp* of dere
 Des, *F. iii.* 270, as deis
 Descensorie, *n. Fr.* a vessel used in chemistry for the extraction of oils *per descensum*
 Descriven, *inf. m. Fr.* to describe
 Desirous, *adj. Fr.* eager
 Desolat, *part. pa. Lat.* abandoned, distressed
 Despite, *n. Fr.* malicious anger
 Despitous, *adj.* angry to excess
 Despitously, *adv.* angrily
 Despoile, *v. Fr.* to undress
 Destreine, *v. Fr.* to vex, to constrain
 Destrer, *n. Fr.* a war horse, *Lat.* dextrarius
 Destrie, destruire, *v. Fr.* to destroy
 Determinat, *part. pa. Lat.* fixed, determined
 Detteles, *adj.* free from debt
 Deve, *adj. Sax.* deaf
 Devining, *n. Fr.* divination
 Devise, *n. Fr.* direction
 Devise, *v. Fr.* to direct, to order, to relate; at point devise; a point devisé, *Fr.* with the greatest exactness
 Devoir, *n. Fr.* duty; wele thei stode and did ther devere
 Dey, *n.* probably originally meant a day-labourer in general, though it may since have been used to denote particularly a superintendent of a dayerie. See *Du Cange*, in *v. Daeria, Dayeria, Dagascaldi*
 Deye, *v. Sax.* to dye
 Deyer, *n. Sax.* a dyer
 Diapred, *part. pa. Fr.* diversified with flourishes, &c.
 Diche, *v. Sax.* to dig, to surround with a ditch
 Dide, for died
 Dide, *pa. t. of do, v. Sax.* diden, *pa. t. pl.*
 Die, *v. Sax.* to tinge
 Dicte, *n. Fr.* daily food
 Diffame, *n. Fr.* bad reputation. See Defame
 Digestible, *adj. Lat.* easy to be digested
 Digestives, *n. pl. Fr.* things to help digestion
 Dight, *v. Sax.* to dispose, to dress
 Digne, *adj. Fr.* worthy, proud, disdainful
 Dike, *v. Sax.* to dig, to make ditches
 Dilatation, *n. Fr.* enlargement [thunder
 Dint, *n. Sax.* as dent; thonder-dint, a stroke of
 Dioscorides, *pr. n. of a Greek writer on plants,* whose work is extant
 Difarray, *n. Fr.* disorder
 Disavaunce, *v. Fr.* to drive back
 Disaventure, *n. Fr.* misfortune
 Disblame, *v. Fr.* to clear from blame
 Discomfiture, *n. Fr.* defeat
 Discomfort, *n. Fr.* displeasure
 Discomforten, *v. Fr.* to discourage
 Discoverte, *adj. Fr.* at discoverte, uncovered; a descouvert
 Disdeinous, *adj. Fr.* disdainful
 Disencrese, *n. Fr.* diminution
 Disencrese, *v. neut. Fr.* to decrease
 Disfigure, *n. Fr.* deformity
 Disherited, *part. pa. Fr.* disinherited, stripped of possessions
 Dishevele, *part. pa. Fr.* with hair hanging loose, *deschevelé*
 Disjoint, *n. Fr.* a difficult situation
 Disobeisant, *part. pr. Fr.* disobedient
 Disordeined, *part. pa. Fr.* disorderly
 Disordinate, *adj. Lat.* disorderly
 Disordinaunce, *n. Fr.* irregularity
 Disparage, *n. Fr.* a disparagement
 Dispence, *n. Fr.* expense
 Disperance, *n. Fr.* despair
 Dispitous, *adj.* angry to excess. See Despitous
 Displeasance, *n. Fr.* displeasure
 Dispone, *v. Lat.* to dispose
 Disport, *n. Fr.* deport, sport, diversion
 Disport, *v.* to divert
 Dispreising, *part. pa. Fr.* undervaluing
 Disputison, *n. Fr.* dispute; the clergie of the south made a disputesoun
 Disrulily, *adv.* irregularly
 Dissimule, *v. Fr.* to dissemble
 Dissimulings, *n. pl. Fr.* dissemblings
 Dissoned, *part. pa. Fr.* dissonant
 Distaine, *v. Fr.* to discolour, to take away the colour
 Distinct, *v. Lat.* to distinguish
 Distinguished, *part. pa. Fr.* distinguished
 Distourbled, *p. t. Fr.* disturbed
 Distreine, *v. Fr.* to constrain. See Destreine
 Distrouble, *v. Fr.* to disturb
 Disturne, *v. Fr.* to turn aside
 Dite, *v. Fr.* to dictate, to write
 Dites, *n. pl. Fr.* sayings, ditties
 Ditus, *pr. n. Dictys Cretensis*
 Diverse, *adj. Fr.* different
 Diverse, *v.* to diversify
 Divine, *n.* for divinity
 Divinistre, *n. Fr.* a divine
 Do, *v.* do, for don, *part. p.*
 Doand, *part. pr.* doing
 Dogerel, *adj.* derived, I suppose, from dog, so that rime-dogerel may be understood to mean what in French may be called *rime de chien*. See *Cotgrave* in *v. Chien*; *chose de chien*, a paltry thing, a trifle, trash, trumpery
 Dogge for the bowe, a dog used in shooting
 Doke, *n. Sax.* a duck
 Dole, *n. Sax.* as del
 Dole, *n. Fr.* grief, mourning
 Dolven, *part. pa. of delve, v. Sax.* buried
 Dombe, *adj. Sax.* dumb
 Dome, *n. Sax.* judgment, opinion
 Domesman, *n. Sax.* a judge
 Donet, *n.* a grammar, the elements of any art, from Ælius Donatus, a Roman grammarian, whose Introduction to the Latin language [*inter Gramm. Vet. Putsch.* p. 1735.] was commonly read in schools; then drave I me among drapers my donet to lerne, *Pierce Plough*, 23. b.
 Donmow, *pr. n.* See *Pierce Plough*, 44. b.
 Donne, don, *adj. Sax.* of a brown or dun colour
 Dormant, *part. pr. Fr.* fixed, ready—*Les vaisseaux qui là dormoint à l'ancre, Froissart*, v. iii. c. 52
 Dortour, *n. Fr.* a dormitory, or common sleeping-room
 Dosein, *n. Fr.* a dozen
 Desser, *n. Fr.* a basket to be carried on the back

Dote, *v. Sax.* to be foolish through age or otherwise

Doth, *imp. m. 2d per. pl.* of do, do ye

Douced, may perhaps be a corruption of doucete, which is the name of a musical instrument in a poem of Lydgate's, *ms. Bodl. Fairf. 16.*

Ther were trumpes and trumpetes,
Lowde shallys and doucetes.

Doughtren, *n. pl. Sax.* daughters

Doutance, *n. Fr.* doubt

Doute, *v. Fr.* to fear

Douteles, douteles, *adv.* without doubt

Doutous, *adj.* doubtful

D'outre mere, *Fr.* from beyond sea, *Du. 253.*

Dowaire, *n. Fr.* dower

Dradde, drad, *p. t. & part.* of drede, *v. Sax.* feared

Draf, *n. Sax.* things thrown away as unfit for man's food

Draf-sack, a sack full of draff

Drafty, *adj. Sax.* of no more value than draff

Dragges, *n. pl. Fr.* drugs

Drede, *n. Sax.* fear, doubt; withouten drede, without doubt; out of drede, out of doubt

Drede, *v. Sax.* to fear, dred, *pa. t.* for drad

Dredeful, *adj.* timorous

Dredeles, *adv.* without doubt

Dreint, *pa. t. & part.* of drenche, drowned

Drenche, *v. Sax.* to drown

Drenche, *v. neut. Sax.* to be drowned

Drerinesse, *n. Sax.* sorrow

Drery, *adj. Sax.* sorrowful

Dresse, *v. Fr.* to address, apply

Dretche, *v. act. Sax.* to vex, to trouble

Dretched, *part. pa.* oppressed, troubled, *Conf. Am. 79*

Dretche, *v. neut. Sax.* to delay, *Conf. Am. 178*

Dretching, *n.* delay

Drie, *v. Sax.* to suffer

Drife, *v. Sax.* to drive

Drinkeles, *adj. Sax.* without drink

Dronkelew, *adj. Sax.* given to drink, *Pierce Plough 41*

Dronken, *part. pa.* of drink, *v. Sax.* drunk

Drough, *pa. t.* of draw, *v. Sax.* drew

Drovy, *adj. Sax.* dirty

Druerie, *n. Fr.* courtship, gallantry, a mistress. See *Du Cange* in *v. Drudaria*.—The reader may perhaps be not displeased to see the following description of a drut or lover, by Guillem Acs-mar, a Provençal poet, *ms. Crofts, fol. 219.*

Ben paoc ama drut, qi non es gelos,
Et paoc ama, qi non est airos,
Et paoc ama, qi non es solettis,
Et paoc ama, qi non fa tracios;
Mais vaut d amor qi ben est enveios
Un dolz plorar non fait qatorze ris.
Quant eu li quier merce en genoillos,
E la mi colpa et mi met ochaissos,
Et l aigua ni cur avel per mer lo vis,
Et ela ni fai un regard ameros,
Et eu li bais la bucha els ols amdos,
Adonc ni par un ioi de paradis.

Drugge, *v. Sax.* to drag

Dubbed, *part. pa. Sax.* created a knight; the phrase is derived from the stroke (with a sword or otherwise), which was always a principal ceremony at the creation of a knight; at dubban, Island, signifies to strike this stroke in French was called *la colée*. See *L'Ordene de Chevalerie par Hue de Tabarie, ver. 244, seq.* published by M. Barbazan and *Du Cange* in *v. Alapa Militaria*

Duette, *n. Fr.* duty, what is due to any one

Dulle, *v. act. Sax.* to make dull

Dulle, *v. neut. Sax.* to grow dull

Dun is in the mire. See Ray's Proverbial Similes, p. 319, as dull as Dun in the mire. I suppose Dan was a nickname given to the ass from his colour, as well as Burnell

Dure, *v. Fr.* to endure

Durelle, *n. Fr.* hardship, severity

Dusked, *pa. t. Sax.* grew dark or dim

Dutee, as duette

Dwale, *n. Sax.* a sleeping potion

Dwellings, *n. pl. Sax.* delays; moras, orig.

Dwined, *part. pa. Sax.* waited

E.

Eared, *part. pa.* ploughed. See Ere

Ebraike, *adj.* Hebrew

Ecclesiast, *n.* an ecclesiastical person, the book of Ecclesiastes or Ecclesiasticus

Eche, *adj. Sax.* ælce, each one, every one, of any number

Eche, *v. Sax.* to add, to add to, to encrease

Edippe, *pr. n.* Œdipus

Effect, *n. Fr.* substance

Eft, *adv. Sax.* again

Eftfone, eftfones, *adv. Sax.* soon after, presently

Egalitee, *n. Fr.* equality

Eger, egre, *adj. Fr.* sharp

Egge, *v. Sax.* to incite

Eggement, *n. Sax.* incitement

Egging, *n.* as eggement

Egreinoine, *n. Fr.* agrimony

Eire, for air

Eisel, *n. Sax.* vinegar

Elat, *part. pa. Lat.* elated

Eldē, *n. Sax.* old age

Elde, *v. Sax.* to make old, *v. neut. to grow old*

Elenge, *adj.* strange, *Ur.* It sometimes seems to signify dull, cheerless, as in *Pierce Plough, III, b.* heavy-chered I yede, and elenge in herte.

Elengeneffe, *n.* in the orig. soucy, care, trouble

Elfe, *n. Sax.* a witch, a faery

Elf-quene, *n.* queen of elves or faeries

Eli, *pr. n.* seems to be put for Elie. See *I Kings, chap. 19*

Elie, *pr. n.* Elijah. The Carmelites pretend that Elijah was the founder of their order

Elisee, *pr. n.* Elisha, the disciple of Elijah

Elles, *adv. Sax.* else; elles what, any thing else; elles wher, elsewhere

Elvish, *adj. Sax.* faery-like, fantastick; it sometimes seems to signify shy, reserved

Embelise, *v. Fr.* to beautify

- Embolde**, *v. Fr.* to make bold
Emboyssment, *n. Fr.* ambush
Embrouded, *part. pa. Fr.* embroidered
Eme, *n. Sax.* uncle
Emforth, *prep. Sax.* even with; emforth my might, even with my might, with all my power; emforth my wit, to the utmost of my understanding: it is a corruption of evenforth, which occurs at length in *Pierce Plough*, 66, b. evenforth with thyselfe
Empeire, *v. Fr.* to impair, hurt
Emperice, *n. Fr.* emperers
Emplastre, *v. Fr.* to plaster over
Emplie, *v.* to infold, to involve; *implicat*, orig.
Empoisoner, *n. Fr.* a poisoner
Empresse, *v. neut. Fr.* to crowd
Emprise, *n. Fr.* undertaking
Empte, *v. Sax.* to empty
Embattelled, *part. pa. Fr.* indented like a battlement
Enbibing, *part. pr. Lat.* imbibing
Enboscd, *part. pa. Fr.* *embosqué*, sheltered in a wood, *Du.* 353
Enbossed, *part. pa. Fr.* *embossé*, raised
Enbrace, *v. Fr.* to take hold of
Enbraude, *v. Fr.* to embroider
Encense, *n. Fr.* incense
Encense, *v. Fr.* to burn incense, to burn incense to
Enchaufing, *n. Fr.* heat
Encheson, *n. Fr.* cause, occasion
Encorporing, *part. pr. Fr.* incorporating
Endelong, *prep. Sax.* along, *adv.* lengthways
Endetted, *part. pa. Fr.* indebted
Endite, *v. Fr.* to dictate, relate
Endoute, *v. Fr.* to doubt, to fear
Endrie, *v. Sax.* to suffer
Enee, *pr. n. Æneas*
Eneidos, *pr. n. Virgils Æneis*
Enfamined, *part. pa. Fr.* hungry
Enfecte, *v. Fr.* to infect, *part. pa.* infected
Enforce, *v. Fr.* to strengthen
Enforced, *part. pa.* constrained by force
Enfortune, *v. Fr.* to endow with a certain fortune
Engendrure, *n. Fr.* generation
Engined, *part. pa. Fr.* racked, tortured
Engluting, rather enluting, stopping with clay
Engregge, *v. Fr.* to aggravate
Engreve, *v. Fr.* to hurt
Enhaunse, *v. Fr.* to raise
Enhaunfed, *part. pa.* raised
Enhort, *v. Fr.* to exhort
Enlaced, *part. pa. Fr.* entangled
Enlangoured, *part. pa. Fr.* faded with langour
Enleven, *num. Sax.* eleven
Enlumine, *v. Fr.* to illuminate
Enoint, *part. pa. Fr.* anointed
Enseled, *part. pa. Fr.* sealed up, kept secret
Enspire, *v. Fr.* to inspire
Ensure, *v. Fr.* to assure
Entaile, *n. Fr.* shape
Entailed, *part. pa. Fr.* carved
Entalente, *v. Fr.* to excite
Entend, *v. Fr.* to attend
Entendement, *n. Fr.* understanding
Entente, *n. Fr.* intention
Ententif, *adj. Fr.* attentive
Enterchangeden, *pa. t. pl. Fr.* exchanged
Entermedled, *part. pa. Fr.* intermixed
Entermete, *v. Fr.* to interpose
Enterpart, *v. Fr.* to share
Entetched, *part. pa. Fr.* *entaché*; it is applied indifferently to things and persons marked or endowed with good or bad qualities: entetched and defouled with yvel, stained and defiled with evil; the best entetched, endowed with the best qualities
Entree, *n. Fr.* entry
Entremees, *n. pl. Fr.* choice dishes served in between the courses at a feast, *Cotg.*
Entrike, *v. Fr.* to deceive, to entangle
Entuned, *part. pa. Fr.* tuned
Entunes, *n. pl. Fr.* songs, tunes, *Du.* 309.
Envenime, *v. Fr.* to poison
Enveniming, *n.* poisoning
Envie, *v. Fr.* to vie, to contend, *Du.* 406
Environ, *adv. Fr.* about, *Conf. Am.* 239, b.
Environ, *v. Fr.* to surround
Envoluped, *part. pa. Fr.* wrapt up
Envyned, stored with wine
Epistolis, *Lat.* epistles
Equipolences, *n. pl. Fr.* equivalents
Er, *adv. Sax.* before, before that
Erande, *n. Sax.* a message, an errand, *Du.* 134
Ere, *v. Fr.* to plough
Ereos, for Eros, *pr. n. Gr.* Love
Erke, *adj. Sax.* weary, sick,
Erly *adv. Sax.* early
Erme, *v. Sax.* to grieve
Ermin, *adj.* Armenian
Ernest, *n. Sax.* zeal, studious pursuit of any thing
Ernestful, *adj.* serious
Erratike, *adj. Fr.* wandering, applied to the planets
Erraunt, *part. pr. Fr.* strolling, applied to a thief
Ers, *erfe*, *n. Sax.* the fundament
Erst, *adv. superl.* of er, first, at erst, at first, for the first time; it is sometimes redundant, long erst or, long before
Ertheles, *adj. Sax.* without earth
Eschaunge, *n. Fr.* exchange
Escheve, *eschue* *v. Fr.* to shun, to decline
Esculapius, *pr. n.* a book of medicine under his name is mentioned by *Fabric. Bibl. Gr. t. i p.* 56, n.
Ese, *n. Fr.* pleasure
Ese, *v.* to accommodate
Esement, *n.* relief
Esie, *adj.* gentle, light; esie sighes, which passage Lord Surrey has copied, *Songes, &c. p. 12*, "and "easy sighes, such as folkes draw in love."
Esier, *comp. d.* lighter; of esier avail; of lighter or less value
Esilich, *adv.* gently [nus
Esperus, *pr. n.* Hesperus, a name of the planet Ve
Espiaille, *n. Fr.* spying, private watching
Espirituell, *adj. Fr.* spiritual, heavenly
Essoine, *n. Fr.* a legal excuse
Estat, *estate*, *n. Fr.* state, condition, administration of government

Estatelich, *adj.* stately
 Estres, *n. pl. Fr.* the inward parts of a building
 Eterne, *adv. Lat.* everlasting
 Etthe, *adj. Sax.* easy
 Evangiles, *n. pl. Fr.* gospels
 Even, *adj. Sax.* equal; an even Cristen, a fellow Christian
 Evenlike, *adj. Sax.* equal
 Evenlike, *adv.* equally
 Ever, *adv. Sax.* always; ever in on, continually in the same manner; ever lenger the more, where this elliptical phrase is expressed at length.
 Everich, *adj. Sax.* every one of many, each of two
 Ew, *n. Sax.* yew
 Exaltat, *part. pa. Lat.* exalted
 Exametron, is explained by the context to signify a verse of six feet; it usually signifies the heroic verse, but here, I suppose, must be understood to mean the iambic, in which the ancient tragedies were commonly versified.
 Executour, *n. Fr.* executioner
 Executrice, *n. Fr.* a female executioner
 Exorcisations, *n. pl. Fr.* exorcisms, conjurations
 Expans yeres, "In this and the following verses the poet describes the Alphonfine astronomical tables by the several parts of them, wherein some technical terms occur which were used by the old astronomers, and continued by the compilers of those tables. Collect years are certain sums of years, with the motions of the heavenly bodies corresponding to them, as of 20, 40, 60, &c. disposed into tables; and expans years are the single years, with the motions of the heavenly bodies answering to them, beginning at 1, and continued on to the smallest collect sum, as 20, &c. A root or radix is any certain time taken at pleasure, from which as an era the celestial motions are to be computed. By proporcionel convenientes are meant the tables of proportional parts." *Gloss. Ur.*
 "Argument in astronomy is an arch whereby we seek another unknown arch proportional to the first." *Chambers*
 Expectaunt, *part. pa. Fr.* waiting
 Expleite, *v. Fr.* to perform
 Ey, *n. Sax.* an egg; but as it were a grypes aye, *Conf. Am. 22*
 Ey, *interj.*
 Eyen, *n. pl. Sax.* eyes
 Eyre, *for* air
 Eyrish, *adj.* aerial, belonging to the air

F.

Fable, *n. Fr.* idle discourse
 Faconde, *n. Fr.* eloquence
 Facounde, *adj.* eloquent *Du. 926.*
 Faerie, *n. Fr.* the nation of Faeries. Enchantment, the work of faeries; king of Faerie; quene of Faerie; contree of Faerie
 Fain, *adj. Sax.* glad; than was I as fayne as foule of fayre morowe, *Pierce Ploughb. 47, b.*
 Fain, *adv.* gladly

Faine, *v. Fr.* to feign, to dissemble; to swinke and travail he not faineth, he does not feign or pretend only to labour, *i. e.* he labours seriously.
 Fairehede, *n. Sax.* beauty
 Faitour, *n. Fr.* a lazy idle fellow, *Pierce Ploughb. 32 b. 33 b.* faitard, faiteor, un paresseux, *piger. Lacombe*
 Falding, a kind of coarse cloth, *Sk.* He derives it from the A. S. feald, plica: however that may be Helmoldus [*Gron. Slav. l. i. c. 1.*] speaks of *indumenta lanea* (probably coarse enough) *quæ nos appellamus faldnes*; and *fallin* in Irish, according to Lhuyd, signifies a mantle. Giraldus Cambr. [*Topog. Hibern. dist. 3. c. 10.*] describes the Irish as clothed in *phalingis lancis, vice palliorum*. Faldyng cloth, *Amphibalus. Birrus-Prompt. Parvi* Row cloth, as faldyng and other like. *Endromis Amphibalus ibid.* See *Du Gange*, in *v. Amphibalus*
 Fall, *for* fallen, *part. pa.*
 Falsen, *v. Fr.* to falsify, to deceive
 Falwe, *adj. Sax.* yellow
 Falwes, *n. pl. Sax.* harrowed lands
 Famuler, *adj. Lat.* domestic
 Fan, *n.* the quintaine, which is called a fan or van, from its turning round like a weathercock. See *Du Gange* in *v. Vana*, *Menesfrier sur les turnois, Dict. Etymol.* in *v. Quintaine*, and *Kennet's Paroch.*
 Fande, *part. t. of finde, v. Sax.* found
 Fane, *n.* a weathercock
 Fantasie, *n. Fr.* fancy
 Fantome, *n. Fr.* any false imagination; *et dirent plusieurs qu'ils avoient été en fantôme. Froissart, v. i. c. 63*
 Farce, *v. Fr.* farder, to paint
 Fardel, *n. Fr.* a burthen
 Fare, *v. Sax.* to go; to fare wel, to speed, to be happy
 Fare, *n.* seems to have been derived from the French *v. faire*, whenever it can be interpreted by the word *ado*; this hote fare; for which the wardein chidde and made fare; what amounteth all this fare? betwixt us two nedeth no strange fare; and leve this nice fare. In other instances it follows the sense of the Saxon *v. fare*, as in the compound words *welfare*, *thoroughfare*, &c.
 Farer, fare, *part. pa.*
 Fares, *for* fareth
 Faring, *part. pr.*
 Farme, *n. Sax.* food, a meal. See *Spelman* in *v. Firma*
 Farse, *v. Fr.* farcir, to stuff
 Fathe, *n.* See *Lathe*
 Faute, *n. Fr.* want
 Fawe, *adj. Sax.* glad; as fain
 Fay, *n. Fr.* faith
 Fayre, *adj. Sax.* fair
 Fayre, *adv.* fairly, gracefully
 Febleffe, *n. Fr.* weakness
 Fecche, *v. Sax.* to fetch
 Fee, *n. Sax.* money. It seems to signify inheritable possessions, in contradistinction to money or moveables

Fesse, *v. Fr.* to inſcoff, to preſent
 Feine, *v. Fr.* to feign
 Fel, *adv. Sax.* cruel, deſtructive
 Felaw, *n. Sax.* fellow, companion
 Felawſhip, *n. Sax.* company
 Felawſhippe, *v.* to accompany
 Felde, *n. Sax.* a field
 Felden, *pa. t. pl. of felle, v. Sax.* felled, made to fall
 Fele, *adj. Sax.* many
 Fele, *v. Sax.* to feel, to have ſenſe, to perceive
 Fell, *n. Sax.* ſkin
 Felonie, *n. Fr.* all ſorts of criminal violence
 Feloun, *adj. Fr.* cruel
 Feminie, *pr. n.* the country of Amazons
 Femininitee, *n. Fr.* womanhood
 Fend, *n. Sax.* an enemy, the devil
 Fendliche, *adj.* devilish
 Fenne, *n.* the name of the ſections of Avicenne's great work intituled *Canum*. See *Canon*
 Feoffed, *part. pa. Fr.* inſcoffed
 Fer, *adv. Sax.* far
 Ferre, *comp.* further
 Ferreſt, *ſuperl.* furtheſt
 Ferd, fered, *part. pa. of fere, terrified*
 Ferd, ferde, *pa. t. of fare*
 Ferden *pa. t. pl.*
 Fere, *n. Sax.* a companion, a wife, in fere, together, in company
 Fere, *for fire*
 Fere, *n. Sax.* fear
 Fere, *v. Sax.* to terrify
 Ferforth, ferforthly, *adv. Sax.* far forth
 Ferly, *adj. Sax.* ſtrange
 Fermacie, *for pharmacie, n. Fr.* a medicine
 Ferme, *n. Fr.* a farm
 Fermerere, *n. Lat. infirmarius*, the officer in a religious houſe who had the care of the infirmary, *Du Cange* in *v.*
 Ferne, *adv. Sax.* before
 Fers, *adj. Fr.* fierce
 Fers, *n. Du 654, ſeq.* the piece at cheſs next to the king, which we and other European nations call the queen, though very improperly, as Hyde has obſerved. *Pberz* or *Pberzân*, which is the Perſian name for the ſame piece, ſignifies the king's chief counſellor or general. *Hiſt. Shabilud.* p. 88, 9
 Ferthing, *n. Sax.* a farthing, any very ſmall thing; no ferthing—of greſe, not the ſmalleſt ſpot of greaſe
 Feſt, *n. Sax.* fiſt
 Feſte, *n. Fr.* feaſt
 Feſteying, *part. pr. Fr.* feaſting
 Feſtlich, *adj.* uſed to feaſts
 Fetche, *n. Sax.* a vetch
 Fete, *n. Fr.* work
 Fetife, *adj.* well made, neat
 Fetifely, *adv.* neatly, properly
 Fette, fet, *part. pa. of fecche*
 Fey, *n. Fr.* faith
 Feyre, *n. Fr.* a fair or market
 Fiaunce, *n. Fr.* truſt
 Fidel, *n. Sax.* a fiddle
 Fill, *for fell, pa. t. of fall*

Finch, *n. Sax.* a ſmall bird; to pull a finch, was a proverbial expreſſion, ſignifying to ſtrip a man by fraud of his money, &c.

If I may gripe a riche man
 I ſhall ſo pulle him, if I can,
 That he ſhall in a ſewe ſtoundes
 Leſe all his markes and his poundes.—
 Our maidens ſhall eke plucke him ſo
 That him ſhall neden fethers mo.

Withoute ſcalding they hem pulle.

Find, *v. Sax.* to find, to ſupply. Fint, *for findeth*
 Fine, fin, *n. Fr.* end
 Fine, *v. Fr.* to ceaſe
 Fine, *adj. Fr.* of fine force, of very neceſſity
 Fit, *n. Sax.* a diviſion or ſhort portion of a poem.
 See *Gloſſ. Percy* in *v.*
 Fittingeſt, *adj. ſup. Sax.* moſt fitting
 Fixe, *adj. Fr.* fixed
 Flaie, *for fley, pa. t. of flee, flew*
 Flaie, *part. pa. of flaie, v. Sax.* flaid or flead,
 Flambe, *n. Fr.* flame
 Flatour, *n. Fr.* a flatterer. *Conf. Am.* 154, b.
 Flawe, *adj.* yellow, from the *Lat. flavus*. *Gloſſ.*
Ur

Flecked, *adj.* ſpotted
 Fleckering, *part. pr.* See *Flicker*
 Flee, *v. neut. Sax.* to fly
 Fleen, *n. pl. Sax.* fleas
 Fleme, *v. Sax.* to baniſh
 Flemed, *part. pa.*
 Flemer, *n.* baniſher
 Flete, *v. Sax.* to float, to ſwim
 Flete, *for fleteth*
 Fleting, *part. pr.*
 Flicker, *v. neut. Sax.* to flutter
 Flit, *v. neut. Sax.* to fly; *elle ſuit*, orig.
 Flit, *v. act. R.* to remove
 Flitering, *part. pr.* floating, *fluitantus* orig.
 Flitted, *part. pr.* removed, ſhifted
 Flo, *n. Sax.* an arrow, Flone, *pl.*
 Flockmel, *adv. Sax.* in a flock
 Florein, *pr. n.* a ſpecies of gold coin
 Flotery, *adj. Sax.* floating
 Flotte, *v. Fr.* to float,
 Flotte, *v.* as flete
 Floures, *adj.* without flower
 Flourette, *n. Fr.* a ſmall flower
 Floyting, playing on the flute
 Foine, *v. Fr.* to make a paſs in fencing, to puſh
 Foison, *n. Fr.* abundance
 Foled, *part. pa. Sax.* foaled
 Folehardineſs, *n. Fr.* raſhneſs,
 Fole-large, *adj. penult.* fooliſhly liberal
 Folie, *n. Fr.* folly
 Folily, *adv.* fooliſhly
 Folwe, *v. Sax.* to follow
 Foly, *adj.* fooliſh
 Fond, *adj. Sax.* fooliſh
 Fond, *pa. t. of find*
 Fonde, *v. Sax.* to try
 Fong, *v. Sax.* to take
 Fonnc, *n. Sax.* a fool

- Fonne, v.** to be foolish
Font-stone, n. Sax. a font for baptizing
For, prep. Sax. pro. Lat. pour. Fr. ; it is frequently prefixed to verbs in the infinitive mood in the French manner ; for to tellen ; for to don ; *pour dire, pour faire* ; for to han ben, *pour avoir été*. It sometimes signifies against ; for percing of his herte, against, or to prevent, piercing ; for steling of the rose ; against stealing. See *Pierce Plough* ; 31. some shall sowe the sacke for sheding of the wheate, *i. e.* to prevent sheding
For, conj. Sax. quia, Lat. pour ce que, Fr. because that ; for him luste to ride so ; for she wolde virtue please ; for I teche
For, in composition, has various powers ; it is most commonly intensive of the signification of the word with which it is joined, as in *fordronken, fordry, forfered, &c.* ; sometimes privative, as in *forboden, foryete* ; and sometimes only communicative of an ill sense, as in *forfaite, forfare, forjuged, &c.*
For, Fr. and ver, Belg. have similar powers in composition
Forbere, v. Sax. to abstain
Forboden, part. pa. of forbede, v. Sax. forbidden
Forbrake, pa. t. broke off ; *abrupi, orig.*
Forbrused, part. pa. Fr. sorely bruised
Force, n. Fr. no force, no matter ; I do no force, I care not ; I do no force of your divinitee, I care not for your divinity ; no force of deth, no matter for death ; they yeve no force, they care not ; *de fruit avoir ne fait force. orig.*
Forcutte, v. Sax. to cut through
Fordo, v. Sax. to do away, to ruin
Fordon, fordo, part. pa. undone
Fordrive, (fordriven) part. pa. Sax. driven away
Fordronken, part. pa. Sax. very drunken
Fordry, adj. Sax. very dry
Fordwined, part. pa. Sax. wasted away
Fore, (foren) part. pa. of fare, v. Sax. gone
Fore, prep. Sax. is seldom used by itself ; in composition it has the power of before.
Forein, n. a jakes, *Gloss. Ur. from Sk.* ; the context seems rather to require that it should signify an outward court or garden
Foreweting, n. Sax. foreknowledge
Forewote, forewete, v. Sax. to foreknow
Forfaite, v. Fr. to misdo
Forfare, v. Sax. to fare ill
Forfered, part. pa. Sax. much afraid
Forgiste, n. Sax. forgiveness
Forgon, inf. v. Sax. to omit, to lose
Forgrowen, part. pa. Sax. overgrown
Forjuged, part. pa. Fr. wrongfully judged
Forkerve, v. Sax. to carve or cut through
Forlast, part. pa. Sax. left off entirely
Forlese, v. Sax. to lose entirely
Forlete, v. Sax. to give over, to quit
Forlore, (forloren) part. pa. Sax. utterly lost
Forloyne, n. Fr. forlonge, a term of the chase, which signifies that the game is far off, *Du. 386*
Forme, adj. Sax. first ; Adam our forme father
Formest, adj. sup. Sax. first, *Du. 890*
Formell, A. F. 371, is put for the female of any fowl, more frequently for a female eagle
Forpined, part. pa. Sax. wasted a way, torment-
ed
Forlake, v. Sax. to deny
Forshapen, part. pa. Sax. transformed
Folshronke, (forshronken) part. pa. Sax. shrunk up
Forfleuthe, forflouthe, forslugge, v. Sax. to lose through sloth
Forfongen, part. pa. Sax. tired with singing
Forster, n. Fr. a forester
Forestraught, part. pa. Sax. distracted
Forthby, adv. Sax. forward by
Forther, v. Sax. to further, to advance
Forthinke, v. Sax. to grieve, to vex
Forthought, pa. t. of forthinke
Forthren, inf. m. of forther
Forthy, conj. Sax. therefore
Fortroden, part. pa. of fortread, v. Sax. troden down
Fortuit, adj. Fr. accidental
Fortune, v. Fr. to make fortunate, to give good or bad fortune
Fortunous, adj. proceeding from fortune
Forwaked, part. pa. Sax. having waked long
Forwandred, part. pa. Sax. having wandred long
Forwelked, part. pa. Sax. much wrinkled
Forwept, part. pa. Sax. having much wept
Forwered, part. pa. Sax. worn out
Forewerie, adj. Sax. very weary
Forword, (foreword) n. Sax. a promise or covenant
Forwounded, part. pa. Sax. much wounded
Forwrapped, part. pa. wrapped up
Foryelde, v. Sax. to repay
Foryete, v. Sax. to forget
Foryetten, part. pa.
Foster, n. Fr. as foster
Fostred, part. pa. of foster, v. Sax. nourished
Fostring, n. nutriment
Fote-hot, immediately
**Fote-mantel, means, I suppose, a sort of riding-pe-
 ticoat, such as is now used by market-women**
Fother, n. Sax. a carriage-load ; an indefinite large quantity
Foudre, n. Fr. lightning
Foule, v. Sax. a bird
Found, pa. t. of find, supplied
Foundè, v. as fonde
Foundred, pa. t. of founder, v. Fr. fell down
Fowertie, num. Sax. forty
Foxerie, n. foxish manners
Fra, for fro, prep. Sax. from ; it is sometimes used adverbially, till and fra, to and fro
Fraine, v. Sax. to ask
Franknet, n. pl. Sax. spots, freckles
Franchise, n. Fr. frankness, generosity
Frank, n. a denomination of French money ; an-
 swering at present to the *livre Tournois*
Franklein, pr. n.
Fraught, v. Sax. to freight, load a ship
Fre, adj. Sax. willing, unconstrained, at liberty, li-
 beral, bountiful
Fredom, n. Sax. as franchise
Freelee, n. Fr. frailty
Fregius, for Phrygius

Fremde, fremed, *adj.* *Sax.* strange, to frend he to fremed, *Pierce Plough*, 79
 Frenetike *adj.* *Fr.* frantick
 Frenseie, *n.* *Fr.* a frenzy
 Frere, *n.* *Fr.* a frier, *Pierce Plough*, 12. a. b.
 Freshe, *v.* *Fr.* to refresh
 Fret, *n.* *Fr.* a band
 Fret, frette, *part. pa.* *Fr.* fraught, filled, or perhaps wrought in a kind of fretwork: a sort of blazon is called *fretté*; and through the fret full of falthede—we should read—a trouthe fret full of falthede
 Frete, *v.* *Sax.* to eat, devour
 Freting, *part. pr.*
 Frette, (freted) *part. pa.*
 Freyne, *v.* *Sax.* as fraine
 Frise, *pr. n.* Friezland
 Frote, *v.* *Fr.* to rub
 Frounceles, *adj.* *Fr.* without wrinkle
 Froward, *adj.* *Sax.* averse
 Fro ye, from you; ye is put for you, that fro ye may rhyme, in appearance at least, with joye and Troye
 Fructuous, *adj.* *Fr.* fruitful
 Fruiteftere, *n.* *Sax.* a female seller of fruit
 Ful-drive, *part. pa.* fully driven, completed
 Fulke, (*Fr.* folke) *n.* *Sax.* people
 Fulsumnesse, *n.* *Sax.* satiety
 Fumetere, *pr. n.* of a plant, fumitory, *fumaria*—*purgat bilem et humores adustos. Ray's Synopsis.*
 Fumositee, *n.* *Fr.* fumes arising from excessive drinking
 Fundament, *n.* *Fr.* foundation
 Furial, *adj.* *Fr.* raging
 Fusible, *adj.* *Fr.* capable of being melted
 Fy, *interj.* *Fr.* I say fy, I cry shame

G.

Gabbe, *v.* *Fr.* to talk idly, to lie; gabbe I of this? *num id mentior?*
 Gacides, is probably a misprint for *Æacides*, though I do not know what Chiron had any right to that title
 Gadling, *n.* *Sax.* an idle vagabond
 Gadred, *part. pa.* *Sax.* gathered
 Gailer, *n.* *Fr.* gaoler
 Gaillard, *adj.* *Fr.* brisk, gay
 Gaitre-beries, berries of the dog-wood tree, *cornus femina*
 Galaxie, *pr. n.* the Milky Way, a track in the heavens so called
 Gale, *v.* *Sax.* Galan Lax, signifies *canere*.
 Galfride, *pr. n.* Geoffrey of Monmouth, Geoffrey Vinfauf. See *Gaufride*
 Galice, *pr. n.* a province of Spain, the famous shrine of St. James at Compostella was in Galicia
 Galingale, *pr. n.* sweet cypress
 Gallien, Galian, *pr. n.* Galen
 Galoche, *n.* *Fr.* a shoe
 Galpe, *v.* *Sax.* to gape, to yawn
 Galping, *part. pr.* gaping, yawning
 Galwes, *n. pl.* *Sax.* the gallows

Gan, *pa. t.* of ginne, *v.* *Sax.* began
 Gannen, *pl.*
 Gar, *v.* *Sax.* to make
 Gardebrace, *n.* *Fr.* armour for the arm
 Gargate, *n.* *Fr.* the throat
 Garifoun, seems to be used as a *v.* to heal; the orig. has garison, a. n. healing, recovery
 Garnement, *n.* *Fr.* a garment
 Garner, *n.* *Fr.* a granary or storeroom
 Garnison, *n.* *Fr.* a guard or garrison
 Gastness, *n.* *Sax.* gastliness
 Gate, gatte, *pa. t.* of get, *v.* *Sax.* gat, begat
 Gate, *n.* *Sax.* a way; went her gate, went her way
 Gatifden, *pr. n.* John Gatefden, author of a medical work, entitled *Rosa Anglicana*, in the 14th century. See *Tanner* in v.
 Gaude, *n.* *Fr.* jest, gaudes, *pl.* ridiculous tricks
 Gaufride, *pr. n.*
 Gaure, *v.* to stare, for them that gaured and cast on me their sight *Lyd. Gra. b. ix. f. 22. b.*
 Gawain, *pr. n.* nephew to King Arthur by his sister, married to King Lot: so says the Brit. Hist. which goes under the name of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and I believe it will be in vain to look for any more authentick genealogist of all that family; he is there called Walganus. The *Fr.* romancers, who have built upon Geoffrey's foundations, agree in describing Gawain as a model of knightly courtesy: to this his established character our author alludes
 Gayler, *n.* *Fr.* as gailer
 Geant, *n.* *Fr.* giant; the crane the geant
 Gear, *n.* See gere
 Gende, for gent
 Genelon, *pr. n.* of one of Charlemagne's officers, who by his treachery was the cause of the defeat at Roncevaux, the death of Roland, &c. for which he was torn to pieces by horses. This at least is the account of the author who calls himself Archbishop Turpin, and of the romancers who followed him, upon whose credit the name of Genelon or Ganelon was for several centuries centuries a synonymous expression for the worst of traitors. Our Author alludes to his treachery, and to his punishment. See also *Du. 1121.*
 Gent, *adj.* *Fr.* neat, pretty
 Genterie, *n.* *Fr.* gentility
 Gentil, *adj.* *Fr.* in its original sense means welborn, of a noble family, "Il y avoit un Chevalier, Capitaine de la ville:—point gentilhomme n'estoit:—et l'avoit fait, pour sa vaillance, le Roy Edouard Chevalier," *Froissart*, v. ii. c. 77. It is commonly put for civil, liberal, gentlemanlike
 Gentileffe, *n.* *Fr.* follows the significations of gentil
 Geomancie, *n.* *Fr.* divinations by figures made on the earth
 Gere, *n.* *Sax.* all sorts of instruments; of cookery, of war, of apparel, of chemistry; in hir quaintegeres, in their strange fashions
 Gerie, gerful, changeable, probably from the *Fr.* girer, to turn round; gierful
 Gerlond, *n.* *Fr.* a garland, the name of a dog

- Gesse, *v. Sax.* to guess
 Gest, *n. Sax.* a guest
 Gestes, *n. pl. Lat.* actions, adventures
 Gestour, *n.* a relater of jests
 Get, *n. Fr.* geste, fashion, behaviour; with that false get, with that cheating contrivance
 Gethe, for goeth
 Gie, *v. Sax.* to guide
 Gigges, *n. pl.* irregular sounds produced by the wind, &c. Gigue, *Fr.* signified a musical instrument like a fiddle, and from thence a sort of light tune, *Menage* in *v.* It is probably a word of Teutonic original. See Junius
 Gilbertin, *pr. n.* an English physician of the 13th century. See *Fulbricius, Bibl. Med. Æt.* in *v.* *Gilbertus de Aquila*
 Gilt, *part. pa. Sax.* gilded, of the colour of gold
 Gilt, *n. Sax.* guilt
 Gilour, *n. Fr.* a deceiver
 Gilte-les, *adj. Sax.* free from guilt
 Giltif, *adj. Sax.* guilty, *Conf. Am.* 62, b.
 Gin, *n. Fr.* engine, contrivance
 Gingiber, *n. Fr.* ginger
 Ginne, *v. Sax.* to begin
 Gipciere, *n. Fr.* a pouch or purse
 Gipe, *n. Fr.* an upper frock or cassock
 Gipon, *n. Fr.* a short cassock
 Girde, *v. Sax.* to strike, to smite; this word is perhaps the original of gride in Spenser. See *Obs.* on *Spens.* *v. ii.* p. 62
 Girdelstede, *n. Sax.* the waist, the place of the girdle
 Girles, *n. pl. Sax.* young persons either male or female
 Girt, *part. pa.* of girde; thurgh girt, smitten through
 Gisarme, *n. Fr.* a battleax. See *Du Cange* in *Gi-sarma*
 Gise, *n. Fr.* guise, fashion; at his owen gise, in his own manner, as he would wish
 Gite, *n. Fr.* a gown
 Giterne, *n. Fr.* a guitar
 Giterning, *n.* playing on a giterne
 Glade, *v. Sax.* to make glad
 Glader, *n.* one that maketh glad
 Gladsom, *adj. Sax.* pleasant
 Glase, for glöse
 Glase, *v. Sax.* to put glass into windows, *Du.* 323
 Glasinge, *n.* glasswork, *Du.* 327
 Gle, *n. Sax.* mirth, music; glees, *pl.* musical instruments
 Glede, *n. Sax.* a burning coal; gledes, *pl.* sparks of fire
 Gleire, *n. Fr.* the white of an egg
 Glent, *pa. t.* glanced
 Gleve, *n. Fr.* glaive, a lance
 Glimsing, *n.* glimmering
 Gliteren, *par. t. pl.* of gliter, *v. Sax.*
 Glode, *pa. t.* of glide, *v. Sax.* she glode forth as an adder doth, *Conf. Am.* 105
 Glombe, *v. Sax.* to look gloomy
 Glöse, *n. Fr.* a comment or interpretation
 Glöse, *v.* to comment or interpret, to speak tenderly, to flatter
 Gloton, *n. Fr.* a glutton
 Gloweden, *pa. t. pl.* of glow, *v. Sax.*
 Gnarre, *n.* a hard knot in a tree
 Gnat, *n. Sax.* is put for any little worthless thing
 Gniding, *part. pr. Sax.* rubbing
 Gnoffe, *n.* an old cuff, a miser, *Gloss. Ur.* I know not upon what authority
 Gnowe, *pa. t.* of gnawe, *v. Sax.*
 Go, *v. Sax.* means sometimes to walk, in contradistinction to riding
 Go, (*gon*) *part. pa.*
 Gobbet, *n. Fr.* a morsel, a bit
 God, *n. Sax.* God toforne, God going before; *Dee favente*, *Goddess armes two*; *Goddess bones*, vulgar oaths. A' *Goddess half*. See *Halfe*
 Gode, good, *n. Sax.* wealth, goods
 Gode-les, *adj.* without money or goods
 Godelyhede, *n. Sax.* goodness
 Godeness, *n. Sax.* at godeness, at advantage; and so we should read where the edit. have at *gode mes*, the orig. has *en bon point*
 Godsib, *n. Sax.* a gossip, a godfather
 Gofish, *adj.* foolish, from the *Fr.* *goffe*, dull stupid
 Gold, *n.* a flower commonly called a turnsol.
 Gower says that *Leucothea* was changed

 Into a floure was named golde,
 Whiche stont governed of the sonne.
Conf. Am. 121. b.

 Gold-hewen, *adj. Sax.* of a golden hue or colour
 Goldsmithrie, *n. Sax.* goldsmiths work
 Golet, *n. Fr.* the throat or gullet
 Goliardeis, *Fr.* This jovial sect seems to have been so called from *Golias*, the real or assumed name of a man of wit toward the end of the 12th century. He wrote the *Apocalypsis Goliaz*, and other pieces, in burlesque Latin rhymes, some of which have been falsely attributed to *Walter Map*. See *Tanner's Bibl. Brit.* in *v.* *Goliardus*. In several authors of the 12th century, quoted by *Du Cange*, the *Goliardi* are classed with the *juculares et buffones*
 Gomme, *n. Fr.* gum
 Gon, *inf. m. Sax.* to go; so mote I gon, so may I fare well; so mote I ride or go, so may I fare well riding or walking, *i. e.* in all my proceedings. See *Go*.—*Gon, par. t. pl. part. pa.* gone,
 Gonfanon, *n. Fr.* a banner or standard
 Gong, *n. Sax.* a littlehouse, a jakes
 Gonne, *n.* a gun
 Gonnen, *gonne, pa. t. pl.* of ginne
 Gore, *n.* It has been suggested to me by a learned person, whom I have not the honour to know, that *gore* is a common name for a slip of cloth or linen, which is inserted in order to widen a garment in any particular place. *Gore* of a cloth, *lacinia*, *Prompt. Parv.* See also the glossary to *Kennet's Paroch. Antiq.* in *v.* *Gore*. This sense will suit very well with the context, unless we suppose that *gore* is there put for shirt, because shirts have usually gores in them; the expression would certainly be very awkward, and unlike *Chaucer's* general manner, but in this place (*The Rime of Sire Thopas*) he may be

supposed to have taken it purposely from one of those old romances which are the objects of his ridicule.

Gose, for goes, goeth

Gospellere, *n. Sax.* evangelist

Gossomer, *n.* a thin cobweb-like substance which flies about in the air

Gost, *n. Sax.* spirit, mind

Goth, *imp. d. perf. pl.* go ye

Governaille, *n. Fr.* government, steerage

Goune-cloth, cloth enough to make a gown

Gourd, *n.* a vessel to carry liquor, perhaps so called from its shape

Gower, *pr. n.* an eminent English poet, to whom Chaucer directs his *Troilus and Creseide*

Grace, *n. Fr.* favour; fory grace, harde grace, misfortune

So full of sorowe am I, sothe to sayne,
That certainly no more hard grace
May sit on me, for why? there is no space.

So Hercules, *ap. Eurip. Hg.*

Γρηω καλον εν, κ'ενετ' εσθ' οπητιδη.

The criticism of Longinus, sect. xl. is perhaps equally applicable to both passages.—With harde grace, is to be understood as spoken in a parenthesis of the cherl, misfortune attend him! See With. Save your grace, with your favour, *sauve votre grace*

Gracious, *adj. Fr.* agreeable, graceful

Grame, *n. Sax.* grief, anger; felle it to gode or grame

Grammere, *n. Fr.* grammar

Grand mercie, *Fr.* great thanks

Grane, *n. Fr.* a grain, a single seed

Grange, *n. Fr.* a farm-house

Grapinel, *n. Fr.* a grappling-iron

Gratche, is perhaps the same with graithe, if not mistaken for it. *Gloss. Ur.* See Greithe. The orig. has—*f'aourne comme beguine.*

Graunson, *pr. n.*

Grave, *v. Sax.* to carve, to engrave

Grave, (*graven*) *part. pa.* buried

Gre, *n. Fr.* pleasure, satisfaction, from *gratus*, *Lat.* to receive in gre, to take kindly; the gre, the prize.—From *gradus*, *Lat.* it signifies a step or degree

Grede, *n. Sax.* a greedy person

Grede, *v. barb. Lat.* to cry

Grein, *n. Fr.* *grein de Paris, de Paradis*, orig. grains of Paradise, a sort of spice; grain of Portingale, a sort of scarlet dye called kermes or vermilion

Greithe, *v. Sax.* to prepare, make ready

Grenehed, *n. Sax.* childishness

Grese, *n. Fr.* grease

Grete, for grede

Grette, *pa. of grete, v. Sax.* greeted, saluted

Greves, *n. pl. Sax.* groves

Grille, *adj. Fr.* horrible, grymm, gryl, and hor-ryble; *berridus*, *Prompt. Parv.*

Grint, for grindeth

Grinte, *pa. t. of grind, v. Sax.* ground; grint with his teeth, gnashed with his teeth

Grinting, *n.* grinding, gnashing

Vol. I.

Gris, *n. Fr.* a species of fur

Grisly, *adj. Sax.* dreadful

Groche, *v. Sax.* to grutch, to murmur

Groff, *adj. Sax.* flat on the ground

Groine, *n. Fr.* the snout of a swine, a hanging lip

Groine, *v.* to hang the lip in discontent

Grone, *v. Fr.* to groan, to grunt

Gront, *pa. t.* groaned

Grope, *v. Sax.* to search, to examine by feeling

Grot, *n.* a coin worth fourpence

Grounden, *part. pa.* of grind

Groyning, *n.* discontent. See Groine

Guerdon, *n. Fr.* reward, recompense

Guerdon, *v.* to reward

Guerdonles, *adj.* without reward

Guido, *pr. n.* Guido de Columpnis, Guido dalle Colonne, of Messina in Sicily, a lawyer and a poet, died about 1290. *Quadrio*, vol. li. p. 160. His history of the Trojan war, to which our Author refers, was written in Latin, and finished in 1287. I have there intimated my suspicion that he translated it, for the most part, from a French romance of Benoit de Sainte More. However that may have been, Guido's work is certainly the original from which the later writers of the middle ages have generally taken their accounts of Trojan affairs. It was translated into Italian in 1324 by Filippo Cessi, a Florentine, [*Quadrio*, vol. vi. p. 475.] A French translation is also extant, in which it is said to be "translatée, en François, *premierement du commandement du Maire de la cité de Beauvais, en nom et en honneur de Karles le Roy de France, l'an mil. ccc. quatre vingtz,*" [*ms. Reg. 16 F. ix.*] This is probably the French translation mentioned by Lydgate in the Prologue to his *Boke of Troye*, which is a mere paraphrase in verse of Guido's history, with some digressions and additions of his own. Lydgate's work was finished (as he tells us himself at the end) in 1420.

H.

Habergeon, *n. Fr.* a diminutive of hauberg, a coat of mail

Habilitee, *n. Fr.* ability

Habitacles, *n. pl. Fr.* places of habitation

Habite, *v. Fr.* to dwell

Habundant, *part. pr. Fr.* abundant

Hackenaie, *n. Fr.* an ambling horse or pad

Hacking, *n. Fr.* cutting in pieces

Hadden, *pa. t. pl.* of have

Haf, *pa. t. of heve, v. Sax.* heaved, raised

Haie, hay, *n. Fr.* a hedge

Haile, *n. Sax.* health, welfare

Hailes, *pr. n.* of an abbey in Gloucestershire

Haire, *n. Fr.* a haircloth

Hakeney, *n. Fr.* as hackenaie

Haketon, *n. Fr.* a short cassock without sleeves

Halden, for holden, *part. pa.* of hold

Halfe, *n. Sax.* a side, a part; a' Goddes half, *Du.* 370, on God's part, with God's favour; a' this halfe God, on this side of God; four halves, four sides

Hali, *pr. n.* an Arabian physician, *Fabric. Bibl. Gr. t. xiii. p. 17.*

X x

Halke, *n. Sax.* a corner
 Halpe, *pa. t.* of help, *v. Sax.*
 Hals, *n. Sax.* the neck
 Halfe, *v. Sax.* to kiss round the neck—to con-
 jure
 Halt, *pa. t.* of hold, *v. Sax.* held or kept
 Halt, for Holt, *i. e.* holdeth, *Du.* 621.
 Halte, *v. Fr.* to go lamely, *Du.* 622.
 Hame, for home, *n. Sax.*
 Hamele, *v. Sax.* to hamstring, to cut off
 Hamers, *n. pl. Sax.* hammers, *Du.* 1164.
 Han, *inf. m.* of have, *v. Sax.*
 Hanselines, appears from the context to mean a
 sort of breeches
 Happe, *n. Sax.* chance
 Happe, *v.* to happen
 Hard, *adj. Sax.* hard; harde grace, misfortune.
 See Grace. It is used adverbially
 Harde, *v. Sax.* to make hard
 Hardely, (hardily) *adv. Fr.* boldly, *adv. Sax.* cer-
 tainly
 Harding, *n. Sax.* hardening
 Harie, *v. Fr.* to hurry; to harie and drawe
 Haried, *part. pa.* hurried; *ils feroient hariez en*
grand manere. Froissart, v. i. c. 225.
 Harlot, *n.* was anciently applied to men as well as
 women
 Harlotries, *n. pl.* ribaldries
 Harneis, *n. Fr.* armour, furniture
 Harneise, *v. Fr.* to dress
 Harow, *interj.*
 Harpour, *n. Fr.* a harpour. In the act of resump-
 tion, 28 H. VI. there is a proviso in favour of
 John Turges, harpour with the queen, for the
 reversion of an annuity of 10 marks, after the
 death of William Langton minstrel
 Harwed, *p. t.* of harwe, *v. Sax.* harrassed, subdued
 Hafdardour, *n. Fr.* a player at hazard, a gamester
 Hafdardrie, *n. Fr.* gaming in general
 Haselwode. All the passages in which this word
 occurs plainly allude to the same proverbial
 saying, which appears to have been used in
 scorn or derision of any improbable hope or ex-
 pectation; why it was so used is beyond my
 reach to discover: it may be proper, however,
 to mention that in T. iii. 892, *ms. Harl.* 3943,
 reads—Haselwode is shaken—and that the pas-
 sage, T. v. 1174, is an imitation of the follow-
 ing in the *Filostato*.

Ma Pandero feco tacitamente
 Ride di cio che Troylo dicea—
 Chel si fusse sembiante faccia
 Di crederlo, e dicia, di mungibelo
Aspetta il vento questo tapinello.

Hastif, *adj. Fr.* hasty
 Hastifly, *adv.* hastily
 Hate, *v. Sax.* to be named
 Hauberk, *n. Fr.* a coat of mail
 Haunce, *v. Fr.* to raise, to enhance
 Haunt, *n. Fr.* custom, practice
 Haunte, *v. Fr.* to practise
 Hauntedden, *pa. t. pl.* practised, frequented
 Hautein, *adj. Fr.* haughty, loud, a hautein faucon,
 a highflying hawk, faulcon haultain, *Fr.*
 Haven, *inf. m.* of have, *v. Sax.*; it is more com-
 monly abbreviated into han

Havoir, for avoir, *n. Fr.* wealth
 Hawe, *n. Sax.* a hawthorn berry, a farmyard—a
 churchyard
 He, *pron. Sax.* is often prefixed in all its cases to
 proper names emphatically, according to the
 Saxon usage; he Moses, he Tityus. *He* is al-
 so frequently used for *it* in all cases
 Hed, *n. Sax.* head; on his hed, on pain of losing
 his head
 Hedde, for hidde, (hidden)
 Hegges, *n. pl. Sax.* hedges
 Heisugge, curruca, a little bird which is supposed
 to hatch the cuckoo's egg, and to be destroyed
 by the young cuckoos, *Sp.*
 Hele, *v. Sax.* helan, to hide
 Hele, *v. Sax.* hælæn, to heal, to help
 Hele, *n. Sax.* health
 Heleles, *adj.* helpless
 Helise, *pr. n.* Elysium
 Helmed, *part. pa. Fr.* armed with an helmet
 Helowis, *pr. n.* Eloisa the mistress of Abelard.—
 See a summary of their history in *Rom. de la*
Rose
 Hem, *obl. c. pl.* of he, them. See Him
 Hemself, hemselfe, hemselven. See Self
 Henchmen, *n. pl.* pages. See a note on the Mid-
 summer Night's Dream of Shakespeare, act. ii.
 sc. 2. last edit.
 Hende, hendy, *adj. Sax.* civil, courteous
 Henen, henne, hennes, hens, *adv. Sax.* hence
 Heng, *pa. t.* and *part.* of hang
 Hennesforth, *adv. Sax.* henceforth
 Hente, *v. Sax.* to take hold of, to catch
 Hent, *pa. t. & part.*
 Hepe, *n. Sax.* a heap; to hepe; together, in a
 heap—the fruit of the dogrose
 Heraud, *n. Fr.* a herald
 Herbergage, *n. Fr.* lodging
 Herbergeours, *n. pl. Fr.* providers of lodgings,
 harbingers
 Herberwe, *n. Sax.* an inn, a lodging—the place of
 the sun: it rather means, I think, a harbour—
 herber, an harbour
 Herberwe, *v. Sax.* to lodge
 Herd, hierde, *n. Sax.* a keeper—herdegromes,
 shepherd-boys
 Herdes, *n. pl.* coarse flax; herde, fibra lini, *Kilian*

That not of hempe ne heerd is was.

So this ver. is written in *ms. Hunter*; the orig.
 has only—*elle ne fut de bourras*
 Here, for hire, *pron.*
 Here, *adv. Sax.* in this place
 Here, in composition, signifies this, without in-
 cluding any idea of place; hereagaines, against
 this; herebeforn, before this
 Here, *v. Sax.* to hear—Herd, herde, *pa. t. & part.*
 Herden, *pa. t. pl.*
 Here, *n. Sax.* hair
 Heren, *adj.* made of hair
 Herking, *part. pr.* of herke, *v. Sax.* hearkening
 Hermes, *pr. n.* a chymical treatise under his name
 is extant in the *Theat. Chemic.* t. iv. See *Fabr.*
Bibl. Gr. l. i. c. 10. *Hermes Ballenus*, whether
 a different person from him just mentioned, I
 cannot tell
 Herne, *n. Sax.* a corner

- Heronere**, *n. Fr.* a hawk made to fly only at the heron
- Heronsewes**, *n. pl. Fr.* young herons
- Herte**, for hurt, *v. Sax. Du.* 883
- Herte**, *n. Sax.* heart; herteblood, heart's blood; herte-spone
- Herteles**, *adj.* without courage
- Hertly**, *adj.* hearty
- Hery**, *v. Sax.* to praise
- Herying**, *n.* praise
- Heste**, *n. Sax.* command—promise
- Het**, hette, *pa. t.* of hete, *v. Sax.* heated
- Hete**, *v. Sax.* to promise, to be called, *Du.* 200
See Highte
- Hetheneste**, *n. Sax.* country of heathens
- Hething**, *n. Sax.* contempt, all is thy hething fallen upon thee
- Heve**, *v. Sax.* to heave; to raise—*v. neut.* to labour
- Heved**, *n. Sax.* head; every virtue in my heved; so I apprehend this line should be read, instead of in me heved
- Heven-quene**, *n. Sax.* the queen of heaven, the Virgin Mary
- Hew of Lincoln**, *pr. n.*
- Hewe**, *v. Sax.* to cut—*v. neut.* he that heweth to hie, with chippes he may lese his sight; so in the *Conf. Am.*
- Full ofte he heweth up so hye,
That chyppes fallen in his eye.
- Hewe**, *n. Sax.* colour, appearance
- Hewed**, *part. pa.* coloured
- Hext**, *adj. superl. Sax.* highest; hegh, heghest
heghst, hext. In the same manner next is formed from negh
- Hidous**, *adj. Fr.* dreadful
- Hidoufly**, *adv.* terribly
- Hie**, *v. Sax.* to hasten
- Hie**, *n.* haste, diligence; in or on hie, in haste
- Hie**, highe, *adj. Sax.* high
- Hierdeste**, *n. Sax.* a shepherdes. See Herde
- Highen** is perhaps miswritten for highe
- Hight**, *n. Sax.* heighth, on hight seems to signify—aloud, in a high voice; *en haut, Fr.*
- Highte**, *v. Sax.* called
- Him**, *obl. c.* of he, is often used alone in that reciprocal sense, which is generally expressed by the addition of the *adj.* self; than hath he don his frend ne him no shame, *i. e.* nor himself; as he him laid; and clad him; and bare him.—It is also frequently put without the usual preposition; him to grete shame; to great shame of him; she falleth him to fete, she falleth at the feet of him; she swore him, she swore to him: hem and hire are used in the same manner
- Himself**, himselfe, himselfen. See Self
- Hindereft**, *superl. d.* of hind, *adv. Sax.* hindmost
- Hine**, *n. Sax.* a servant in husbandry, a hind
- Hine**, *n. Bal. Vil.* 35, should probably be hiene: the gall of an hyena was used to cure a certain disorder of the eye, *Plin. N. H. l. xxix. c. 38.*
- Hippocras**, *pr. n.* Hippocrates
- Hir**, *pron. poss. Sax.* their
- Hire**, *obl. c.* of she, *pron. Sax.* is often put for herself, and without the usual preposition. See Him
- Hire**, *pron. poss. Sax.* her
- Hireself**, hireselfe, hireselfen. See Self
- Hirs**, *pron. poss. Sax.* theirs
- Historial**, *adj. Fr.* historical
- Ho**, *interj. Fr.* commanding a cessation of any action
- Hochepot**, *a. Fr.* a mixture of various things shaken together in the same pot
- Hoker**, *n. Sax.* frowardness
- Hokerly**, *adv.* frowardly
- Hold**, *n. Sax.* a fort or castle
- Hold**, *v. Sax.* to keep; to hold in honde, to keep in suspense; to amuse in order to deceive
- Hold**, holden, *part. pa.* obliged
- Hole**, hol, *adj. Sax.* entire, whole, sound
- Holly**, *adv.* entirely, wholly
- Holour**, *n. Sax.* a whoremonger
- Holt**, *n. Sax.* a grove or forest
- Holt**, for holdeth
- Homly**, *adj. Sax.* domestic—plain, simple
- Homlinesse**, *n. Sax.* domestic management, familiarity
- Honde**, *n. Sax.* a hand; an honde-brede, an hand's breadth; withouten honde, without being pulled by any hand—Honden, *pl.*
- Honest**, *adj. Fr.* means generally, according to the French usage, creditable, honourable, becoming a person of rank
- Honestete**, honestee, *n. Fr.* virtue, decency—good manners
- Hong**, *v. Sax.* to hang
- Hont**, *n. Sax. Du.* 385, as hunt
- Hony-swete**, *adj. Sax.* sweet as honey
- Hope**, *v. Sax.* to expect
- Hoppesteres**, *n. pl. Sax.* dancers
- Hord**, *n. Sax.* treasure—a private place fit for the keeping of treasure
- Hore**, hoor, *adj. Sax.* hoary, gray
- Horowe**, *adj. Sax.* foul
- Horriblete**, *n. Fr.* horribleness
- Hors**, *n. pl. Sax.* horses
- Horse**, *adj. Sax.* hoarse, *Du.* 347.
- Horsly**, *adj.* is applied to a horse, as manly is to a man
- Hospitalers**, *n. pl. Lat.* religious persons of both sexes who attended the sick in hospitals—knights Hospitalers of different orders. See *Du Gange* in *v. Hospitalarius*
- Host**, *n. Fr.* an army
- Hostelere**, *n. Fr.* an innkeeper
- Hostelrie**, *n. Fr.* an inn or lodging-house
- Hostilements**, *n. pl.* household furniture
- Hote**, *adj. Sax.* hot
- Hote**, hoten, *part. pa.* of hete, called
- Hove**, *v. Sax.* to hover
- Hound-fish**, *n. Sax.* the dog-fish
- Houne**, *n.* for hound, thus said both here and houne, *i. e.* hare and hound, all sorts of people
- Houped**, *pa. t. Fr.* hooped or hollowed
- Houfel**, *n. Sax.* the eucharist
- Houfel**, *v.* to administer the sacrament—to benhoufeled, to receive the sacrament
- Howve**, *n. Sax.* a cap or hood
- Hulfere**, *n. Sax.* holly
- Hulfred**, *part. pa. Sax.* hidden
- Humblehede**, *n. Sax.* humble state

Humbleſſe, *n. Fr.* humility
 Humbling, *n.* a humming; *bommelen bombilari*,
bombum edere, *Kilian*; hence our humble-bee
 Hunt, *n. Sax.* a huntsman
 Hurtle, *v. Fr.* to push
 Husbandrie, *n. Sax.* thrift, economical manage-
 ment
 Husband-man, *n. Sax.* the master of the family
 Huſt, *adj. Sax.* ſilent, whiſt
 Hylde, *v. Sax.* to pour
 Hylled, *part. pa. Sax.* hidden. See Hele

I.

I, at the beginning of a word, in the common edit. and even the *ms.* of Chaucer, is often used to expreſs a corruption of the Saxon prepoſitive particle Ge, which in this edit. of *The Canterbury Tales*, is always expreſſed by y; all ſuch words therefore occurring in the Works of Chaucer not contained in this edition, ſhould be looked for either under y or under their ſecond letters

Jacobin, *pr. n.* a gray frier
 Jakke Straw, *pr. n.* the noiſe made by the followers of this rebel, to which our Author alludes, he had probably heard himſelf; it is called by *Walsingham*, p. 251; “*Clamor horrendiſſimus, non ſimilis clamoribus quos edere ſolent homines, ſed qui ultra omnem æſtimationem ſuperaret omnes clamores humanos, et maxime poſſet aſſimulari ululatus infernalium incolarum.*” Many Flemings (*Flandrenſes*) were beheaded by the rebels *cum clamore conſue- to*. *Walsingham*, *ibid.*

Jambeaux, *n. pl. Fr.* boots, armour for the legs
 Jane, *n.* a coin of (*Janua*) Genoa; it is put for any ſmall coin

Jangle, *v. Fr.* to prate, to talk much or faſt

Jangle, *n.* prate, babble

Jangler, janglour, *n.* a prater

Janglerelle, *n.* a female prater

Jape, *n. Sax.* a trick, a jeſt

Jape, *v.* to jeſt—to cheat, to laugh at

Japer, *n.* a common jeſter or buffoon

Japerie, *n.* buffoonery

Jape-worthy, *adj.* ridiculous

Ich, iche, *pron. Sax. I.* ſo the ich, ſo the iche, ſo may I proſper

Idel, *adj. Sax.* idle, fruitleſs; in idel, in vain

Idolaſtre, *n. Fr.* an idolater

Jeopard, *v.* to hazard, to put in danger

Jeopardie, *n.* danger

Jeopardiſe, *Du.* 666.

Jeremie, *pr. n.* Jeremiah

Jerome, *pr. n.* Our Author has made much uſe of a treatiſe of St. Jerome *contra Jovinianum*

Jeſtes, *n. pl.* as geſtes

Jewerie, *n. Fr.* a diſtrict inhabited by Jews

Jewiſe, *n.* judgment, puniſhment; it may have been formed by corruption either of the Lat. *judicium* or the Fr. *juſtice*

Ik, *pron. Sax. I.* See Ich

Ilion, *pr. n.* the citadel of Troy

Ilke, *adj. Sax.* ſame

Imaginatif, *adj. Fr.* ſuſpicious

Imped, *part. pa. Sax.* planted

Impes, *n. pl. Sax.* ſhoots of trees

Impetren, *pr. t. pl. Fr.* obtain by prayer

Importable, *adj. Fr.* intolerable—impoſſible

Importune, *adj. Fr.* troubleſome

Impoſſible, *adj. Fr.* uſed as a ſubſtantive

In, *prep. Sax.* upon, in with, within

Incombrous, *adj. Fr.* cumbersome

Inconſtance, *n. Fr.* inconſtancy

Inde, *adj. Fr.* azure-coloured

Indigne, *adj. Fr.* unworthy

Ineched, *part. pa. Sax.* inſerted

Inequal, *adj. Fr.* unequal

Infortunat, *adj. Lat.* unfortunate

Infortune, *n. Fr.* miſfortune

Ingot, *n.* a mould for caſting ingots

Inhabit, *part. pa. Fr.* inhabited

Inhilde, *v. Sax.* to pour in. See Hylde

Injure, *n. Fr.* injury

Inly, *adv. Sax.* inwardly, deeply, thoroughly

Inne, *prep. Sax.* in

Inne, in, *n. Sax.* a houſe, habitation, lodging

Inned, *part. pa. Sax.* lodged

Innerelte, *adj. ſup. Sax.* inmoſt

Innocent, *adj. Fr.* ignorant

Inſeled, *part. pa. Fr.* atteſted under ſeal

Inſet, *part. pa. Sax.* implanted

Interminable, *adj. Fr.* infinite

Inwitte, *n. Sax.* underſtanding

Joce, *pr. n.* or Joſſe—Sanctus Judocus was a ſaint of Ponthieu. *Vocab. Hagiol.* prefixed to Menage, *Etymol. Fr.*

Joconde, *adj. Fr.* joyous, pleaſant

Jogelour, *n. Fr.* a juggler

Joinant, *part. pr. Fr.* joining

Joine, *v. Fr.* to enjoin

Jolie Robin, the name of a dance, *de la danſe le Beau Robin*, orig.

Joliſ, *adj. Fr.* jolly, joyful

Jombre, *v.* to jumble

Jonglerie, *n.* ſhould rather be janglerie, idle talk. See Jangle

Joſſa, *interj.* ſeems to be partly formed from the Fr. *ea*, come hither

Jovis, *pr. n.* Jupiter

Journee, *n. Fr.* a day's journey, a day's work

Jouſtes, *n. pl. Fr.* juſts

Joweles, *n. pl. Fr.* jewels

Joye, *v. Fr.* to enjoy

Ipocras, *n. Fr.* wine mixed with ſpices and other ingredients, ſo named, becauſe it is ſtrained through a woollen cloth called *the ſleeve of Hippocrates*. See Clarre

Ire, *n. Fr.* anger

Irous, *adj.* paſſionate

Iſaude, *pr. n.* See Belle Iſaude—She is called *Yſeut* by Bernard da Ventador, *ms. Crofts*, fol. 67;

Tant trag pena d'amor,
 Q'anc Trifſtan l'amador
 Non ſofret maior dolor
 Per Yſeut la blonda.

And ſo in *Fabliaux*, &c. t. i. p. 242; *Yſeut la blonde*. Petrarch calls her *Iſotta*, *Trionfo d'Amore*, iii. 82. A late French writer, in who he has been pleaſed to ſtyle *Hiſtoire littéraire d*

Troubadours, [t. ii. p. 323.] having quoted a passage celebrating the love of Tristan à Isault, adds very coolly—*C'est une allusion à quelque Roman*; which is just as if a commentator upon Ovid should say of the epistle from Paris to Helen, that it alludes to some Greek story
It, pron. 3d pers. neut. gend. Sax. is used instead of he and she
Itaille, pr. n. Italy
Jubaltare, pr. n. Gibraltar
Jubbe, n. a vessel for holding ale or wine
Judicum, the book of Judges; so *Metamorphoseos* is put for the *Metamorphosis* of Ovid, and *Eneidos* for the *Æneis* of Virgil
Juge, n. Fr. a judge
Juil, pr. n. the month of July
Julian, pr. n.
Jupardie, n. as jeopardie
Jupartie, n. Fr. jeopardy
Justice, n. Fr. a judge
Justinian, pr. n. The law referred to is in the Code, l. xi. tit. 25, *De medicantibus validis*
Juvenal, pr. n. the Roman satirist

K.

Kalender, n. Lat. a calendar, a guide or director
Kalendes, n. pl. Lat. the first day of the month, the beginning of any thing
Kaynard, n. a term of reproach
Kele, v. Sax. too cool
Kembed, *kemped*, part. pa. Sax. combed
Kemelin, n. Sax. a tub
Kenelm, pr. n. See his life in all the edit. of the English Golden Legend
Kepe, n. Sax. care, attention
Kepe, v. to take care
Kerchef, n. a corruption of coverchief
Kernels, n. pl. Fr. battlements
Kers, n. Sax. watercresses; of paramours ne raught he not a kers, he cared not a rush for love: cresse is used in the same sense
Kerver, n. Sax. a carver
Kesse, v. Sax. to kiss
Keste, pa. t. kissed
Ketche, v. T. iii. as cacche
Kevere, v. Fr. to cover, it signifies to cover
Kichel, n. Sax. a little cake
Kid, *kidde*, pa. t. & part. of *kithe*, made known, discovered
Kike, v. Sax. to kick
Kin, n. Sax. kindred; by my fader kin, by my father's kindred
Kin, adj. of the same nature
Kind, n. Sax. nature
Kindly, adv. naturally
Kinrede, n. kindred
Kirtel, n. Sax. a tunick or waistcoat, in kirtels and none other wede; *qui estoient en pure cottes*, orig.
Kithe, v. Sax. to shew, to make known, ne kithe hire jalousie, nor shew to her any jealousy
Kithed, part. pa. See *Kid*
Kitte, pa. t. Sax. cut
Knakkes, n. pl. Sax. trifling tricks: the word seems to have been formed from the knocking or snapping of the fingers used by jugglers. See

Cotg. in v. *Matassiner des mains* and *Niquet*—trifling words, p. 215
Knappe, n. a short sleep, a nap
Knarry, adj. Sax. full of gnarres or knots
Knave, n. Sax. a servant, properly a boy-servant—a knave-child, a male child—this boie knave, *ce garçon*, orig.
Knedde, part. pa. of *knede*, v. Sax. kneaded
Kneen, *knene*, n. pl. Sax. knees
Knet, part. pa. as knit
Knight, n. Sax. a servant, generally a servant in war, a soldier—a dubbed knight
Knighthode, n. valour
Knit, part. pa. Sax. joined, bound—agreed
Knobbess, n. pl. Sax. excrescencies in the shape of buds or buttons. See *Knoppe*
Knoppe, n. Sax. a button—a rosebud
Knopped, part. pa. buttoned, fastened
Knotte, n. Sax. a knot: in some instances it is used in the sense of *noeud*, Fr. for the chief point or head of a matter
Knotteles, adj. Sax. without a knot, without any thing to obstruct or retard the passage
Knowe, for knee
Knowleche, v. Sax. to acknowledge
Knowleching, n. knowledge
Konning, n. as conning, cunning
Kyke, v. Sax. to look steadfastly; *kijcken*, Teut. *speculare*, Kilian

L.

Labbe, n. a blab, a great talker
Labbing, part. pr. blabbing
Laced, part. pa. Fr. tied, bound
Lacert, n. Fr. a fleshy muscle, so termed from its having a tail like a lizard
Lache, adj. Fr. sluggish
Lacheffe, n. Fr. slackness, negligence
Lad, *ladde*, pa. t. of *lede*, v. Sax. led, carried
Last, pa. t. & part. of *leve*, v. Sax. left
Laie, n. T. i. as lay
Laied, part. pa. of *lay*, v. Sax.; with *orfreys* laied, i. e. trimmed: so this word is frequently used by Hollinshed, vol. iii. p. 1317; laid with gold lace—laid on with red silk and gold lace—laid about with silver lace. See *Couched*
Laine, inf. v. Sax. to lay
Lainers, n. pl. Fr. straps or thongs
Lake, n. it is difficult to say what sort of cloth is meant; *laeken*, Belg. signifies both linen and woollen cloth, *Kilian*
Lakke, n. Sax. a fault, a disgraceful action, want
Lakke, v. to find fault, to blame
Lamben, n. pl. Sax. lambs
Langure, v. Fr. to languish
Lapidaire, a treatise on precious stones so entitled; probably a French translation of the Latin poem of Marbodius *De Gemmis*, which is frequently cited by the name of *Lapidarius*, *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. *Marbodius*
Lappe, n. Sax. a skirt or lappet of a garment
Large, adj. Fr. spacious, free, prodigal; at large, at liberty; til that was prime large, till prime was far spent
Largely, adv. fully
Las, n. Fr. a lace—a snare

Lasse, las, *adj. comp. Sax.* less
 Latche, *n.* as las
 Latered, *part. pa. Sax.* delayed
 Lathe, *n.* a barn; it is still used in Lincolnshire, *St. In. F. iii.* where the edit. have rathe and fathe, the mss. give the true reading—lathe
 Laton, *n. Fr.* a kind of mixed metal of the colour of brass
 Laude, *n. Lat.* praise
 Laudes, the service performed in the fourth or last watch of the night; “dicuntur autem laudes, quod illud officium laudem præcipue sonat divinam,” &c. *Du Cange* in *v. Laus* 2. The same service was often called Matins. *Idem* in *v. Matutini*
 Laved, *part. pa. Fr.* drawn; spoken of water taken out of a well
 Lavender, *n. Fr.* a washerwoman or laundress. In the passage of *Dante* which is here quoted, Envy is called

*La meretrice, che mai dall' ospizio
 Di Cesare non torse gli occhi putti,
 Morte commune, e delle corte vizio.*
Inf. xiii. 64.

Laverock, *n. Sax.* a lark
 Launcegay, *n.* a sort of lance
 Lancelot du Leke, an eminent knight of the Round Table, whose adventures were the subject of a romance begun by Chrestien de Troyes, one of the oldest of the romance poets, and finished by Godefrois de Leigni. See *Fauchet*, l. ii. c. 10, 11. They have been repeatedly printed in French prose, and make a considerable part of the compilation called *Mort d' Arthur*: his accomplishments as a courtier and a man of gallantry have been alluded to before. Signor Volpi, in his notes upon *Dante*, *Inf. v. 128*, has most unaccountably represented Lancelotto as *inamorato di Ginevra, moglie del Re Marco*. If there be any faith in history, Ginevra was the wife of King Arthur. The story in *Dante*, which is the occasion of Signor Volpi's note, is a curious one; it is alluded to by Petrarch, *Trionfo d' Amore*, iii. 82;

*Vedi Ginevra, Isotta, e l' altre amanti,
 E la coppia d' Arimino.*—

Launde, *n. Fr.* a plain not ploughed
 Lavoures, *n. pl. Fr.* lavers
 Laureat, *adj. Lat.* crowned with laurel
 Laureole, *n. Fr.* spurge-laurel
 Laurer, *n.* laurel
 Laus, *adj. Sax.* loose; laus, *Island. solutus*. This is the true original of that termination of adjectives so frequent in our language in les or less. *Consuetud. de Beverly*, ms. *Harl. 560*. “Hujus sacrilegii emenda non erat determinata, sed dicebatur ab Anglis Botalaus, i. e. sine emenda.” So Chaucer uses boteles, and other words of the same form, as detteles, drinkeles, gilteles, &c.
 Lawe, *adj.* for low
 Laxatif, *n. Fr.* a purging medicine
 Lay, *n. Sax.* law, religious profession
 Lay, *n. Fr.* a species of poem
 Lay, *pa. t.* of lie, or ligge layen, *pl.*

Lazar, *n. Fr.* a leper
 Leche, *n. Sax.* a physician; leche-craft, the skill of a physician
 Leche, *v.* to heal
 Lecherous, *adj.* provoking lechery
 Lechour, *n. Fr.* a lecher
 Lectorne, *n. Lat.* a reading-desk
 Leden, *n. Sax.* language
 Ledge, *v.* as allege
 Lees, *n. Fr.* a leash by which dogs are held
 Lees, *adj. Sax.* false; withouten lees, without lying, truly
 Lefe, *adj. Sax.* pleasing, agreeable; al be him lothe or lese, though it be unpleasing to him or pleasing—for lese ne lothe, for friend nor enemy; he turned not—for leve ne for lothe. It sometimes signifies pleased; I n'am not lese to gabbe, I am not pleased to prate, I take no pleasure in prating
 Lefull, *adj.* lawful
 Legge, *v. Sax.* to lay
 Legge, *v. Fr.* to eat, as alege
 Leie, *v. Sax.* to lay
 Leiser, *n. Fr.* leisure, opportunity
 Leite, *n. Sax.* light; thonder-leite, lightning
 Leke, *n. Sax.* a leak; it is put for any thing of very small value
 Lemes, *n. pl. Sax.* flames
 Lemman, *n. Sax.* a lover or gallant, a mistress
 Lendes, *n. pl. Sax.* the loins
 Lene, *adj. Sax.* lean
 Lene, *v. Sax.* to lend, to grant
 Lenger, *adv. comp. Sax.* longer
 Lente, *pa. t.* of lene
 Lenton, *n. Sax.* the season of Lent
 L'envoy, *Fr.* was a sort of postscript sent with poetical compositions, and serving either to recommend them to the attention of some particular person, or to enforce what we call the moral of them. The six last stanzas of *The Clerkes Tale* are in many mss. entitled *L'envoy de Chaucer à les mariz de notre temps*. See also the stanzas at the end of *The Complaint of the Black Knight*, and of Chaucer's *Dreme*
 Leon, *n. Lat.* a lion
 Leonine, *adj.* belonging to a lion
 Leopart, lepart, *n. Fr.* a leopard
 Leos, *n. Gr.* people
 Lepande, *part. pr.* of lepe, *v. Sax.* leaping
 Lepe, lep, for lepeeth, *3d pers. sing.*
 ———— for leped, *pa. t.*
 Lepe, *pr. n.* a town in Spain
 Lere, lerne, *v. Sax.* to learn, to teach—Lered, *p. t. & part.*
 Lere, *n. Sax.* the skin
 Lese, *n. Fr.* as lees; in lustie lese, in love's leash
 Lese, *adj. Sax.* as lees
 Lese, *v. Sax.* to lose
 Leseeth, *2d pers. pl. imp. m.* lose ye
 Lesing, *n. Sax.* a lie, a falsity
 Lesinges, *pl.*
 Lest, list, lust, *n. Sax.* pleasure
 Leste, liste, luste, *v.* to please; it is generally used as an impersonal, in the third person only, for it pleaseth or it pleased; him luste to ride so, it pleased him to ride so; wel to drink us leste, it pleased us well to drink; if you lest, if it please you; me list not play, it pleaseth me not to play

- Leste*, *adj. Sax. superl. d.* least, at the leste way, at the leste, at least
Leste, for last
Let, *v. Sax.* to leave, to omit; to leave, to permit; let thy japes be; let the Sompnour be, to cause, to hinder
Lete, *pr. n.* the river Lethe
Letgame, *n. Sax.* a hinderer of pleasure
Lette, *n.* delay, hinderance
Lettowe, *pr. n.* Lithuania
Lettred, *adj. Fr.* learned
Lettrure, *letterure*, *n. Fr.* literature
Lettuarie, *n. Fr.* an electuary
Leve, *v.* for live
Leve, *n. Sax.* desire, inclination
Leve, *adj.* dear. See *Lese*
Leve, *v. Sax.* to believe—*Leveth*, *imp. m. 2d pers. pl.*; *leveth me*, *believeth me*; *leveth* is misprinted for *leseth*
- He *leseth* more than ye may doe.
- So this verse should be written :
- Plus y pert-il que vous ne faictes. Orig.
- Leve* is also misprinted for *lene*
Leveles, *adj. Sax.* without leave
Leven, *n. Sax.* lightning
Lever, *comp. d.* of *lese*, more agreeable; it were me lever, I hadde lever, hire hadde lever
Levesell, *n.* a leafy feat, an arbour. I am by no means satisfied with the explanation here given of this word, the interpretation of it in the *Prompt. Parv.* will not help us much; "*Leve*—*cel* befor a windowe or other place, *umbraculum*."
Lewed, *lewde*, *adj. Sax.* ignorant, unlearned, lascivious
Leye, *v. Sax.* as *legge*, to lay, to lay a wager
Leyes, *pr. n.* Layas in Armenia
Leyte, *n. Sax.* flame. See *Leite*
Liard, *pr. n.* belonged originally to a horse of a gray colour
Licenciat, *n. Lat.* seems to signify that he was licensed by the Pope to hear confessions, &c. in all places, independently of the local ordinaries
Liche-wake, *n.* the custom of watching with dead bodies
Lide, *pr. n.* Lydia
Lieges, *n. pl. Fr.* subjects
Lien, *pr. t. pl.* of *lie* or *ligge*
Lien, *part. pa.* of *lie* or *ligge*, *lain*
Lies, *n. pl. Fr.* lees of wine, &c.
Lieth is misprinted for *leyeth*
Lisly, *adv. Sax.* like the life
Ligeance, *n. Fr.* allegiance
Ligge, *lie*, *v. neut. Sax.* to lie down
Ligging, *part. pr.* lying
Light, *v. Sax.* to enlighten—to make light or pleasant—*v. neut.* to descend, to alight
Ligne, *n. Fr.* lineage, lineal descent; *ligine* should probably be *lignee*, to rhyme to *compagnee*
Ligne aloes, *lignum aloes*, a very bitter drug
Like, *likem*, *v. Sax.* to compare
Like, *v. Sax.* to please; if you liketh, if it pleaseth you; it liketh hem, it pleaseth them
Likerous, *adj. Sax.* gluttonous, lascivious
- Liking*, *part. pr.* pleasing
Liking, *n.* pleasure
Limaile, *n. Fr.* filings of any metal
Lime, *v. Sax.* to smear as with birdlime
Limed, *part. pa.* caught as with birdlime
Limed, *part. pa. Fr.* polished as with a file
Limer, *n. Fr.* limier, a bloodhound, *Du.* 362, 5.
Lime-rod, a twig with birdlime
Limitation, *n. Lat.* a certain precinct allowed to a limitour
Limitour, *n.* a friar licensed to beg within a certain district
Limmes, *n. pl. Sax.* limbs
Linage, *n. Fr.* family
Linde, *n. Sax.* the limetree
Lisse, *n. Sax.* remission, abatement
Lisse, *v. neut. Sax.* to grow easy
Lissed, *part. pa.* of *lisse*, *v. Sax.* eased, relieved
Liste, *v.* See *Leste*
Listeneth, *imp. m. 3d pers. pl.* of *listen*, *v. Sax.* hearken ye
Listes, *n. pl. Fr.* lists, a place enclosed for combats, &c.
Litargo, *n. Fr.* white lead
Lite, *adj. Sax.* little
Lith, *n. Sax.* a limb
Lith, for *lieth*
Lithe, *adj. Sax.* soft, flexible, *Du.* 953.
Lithe, *v. Sax.* to soften
Lither, *adj. Sax.* wicked; [in the edit. it is *lithy*,] *luther* and *quede*. See *Quade*
Litherly, *adv. Sax.* very ill
Litling, *Sax.* very little
Livand, *part. pr. Sax.* living
Live, *n. Sax.* life; on live, in life, alive; lives creature, living creature; lives body, living body
Lodemanage, { See the statute 3 Geo. I. c. 13,
Lodesterre, { where loadmanage is used repeatedly in the sense of pilotage
Lodesmen, *n. pl. Sax.* pilots
Loft, *adv. Sax.* on loft, on high, aloft
Loge, *n. Fr.* a lodge, habitation
Logged, *part. pa. Fr.* lodged
Logging, *n.* lodging
Loke, *v. Sax.* to see, to look upon
Loken, *Loke*, *part. pa.* of *loke*, *v. Sax.* locked, shut close, *Conf. Am.* 29, his one eye anon was *loke*
Loller, *n.* a lollard
Lollius, *pr. n.* a writer from whom Chaucer professes to have translated his poem of *Troilus* and *Creseide*
Londe, *n. Sax.* land
Londenoy, a Londoner, one born in London
Lone, *n. Sax.* a loan, any thing lent
Long, *v. Sax.* to belong; longing for his art, belonging to his art, to desire
Long. See *Along*
Loos, *los*, *n. Fr.* praise; *lofes*, *pl.*
Lord, *n. Sax.* a title of honour given to monks, as well as to other persons of superiour rank; *lordes* is used in the sense of lordings
Lordings, *n. pl.* sirs, masters, a diminutive of lords
Lordship, *n. Sax.* supreme power
Lore, *n. Sax.* knowledge, doctrine, advice
Lozel, *n. Sax.* a good-for-nothing fellow. *Skinner* supposes it to be derived from the *Lat.*

lurco; and in the *Promptorium Parvulorum* *lofel*, or *lorel*, or *lurden*, is rendered *lurco*; but *lurco*, I apprehend, signifies only a glutton, which falls very short of our idea of a *lorel*: and besides, I do not believe that the word was ever sufficiently common in Latin to give rise to a derivative in English. One of Skinner's friends deduces it with much more probability from the Belg. [rather Sax.] *loren*, lost, *perditus*

Lorne, *part. pa.* of *lese*, *v.* Sax. lost, undone

Los, *n.* Sax. loss

Losed, *part. pa.* Sax. loosed

Losed, *part. pa.* Fr. praised

Lofenge, *n.* Fr. a quadrilateral figure of equal sides but unequal angles, in which the arms of women are usually painted; *lofynges* seems to signify small figures of the same form in the fret-work of a crown

Lofengeour, *n.* Fr. a flatterer

Loteby, *n.* in the orig. *campaigne*, a private companion or bedfellow; the concubines of priests are called their *lotchies*; perhaps it may be derived from the Sax. *loute*, to lurk

Loth, *adj.* Sax. disagreeable, odious

Lothier, *comp. d.* more hateful

Lothest, *superl. d.* most unwilling

Lothly, *adj.* loathsome

Love-dayes, *n. pl.* a day appointed for the amicable settlement of differences, was called a love-day

Love-drinke, *n.* Sax. a drink to excite love

Love-longing, *n.* Sax. desire of love

Lovefome, *adj.* Sax. lovely

Lough, *part. t.* of laugh, *v.* Sax. laughed

Louke. In *Pierce Ploughb.* 20, wrong is called a wicked *luske*, and I learn from Cotgrave, that *luske* is a synonymous word to *lowt*, *lorel*, &c.; so that perhaps *louke* may be still another term for an idle good-for-nothing fellow. See Cotg. in *v.* *Luske*, Eng. and in *v.* *Loricard*, *Falourdin*, Fr.

Loure, *v. neut.* Sax. to look discontented

Louring, *part. pr.*

Loute, *v.* Sax. to bow, to lurk

Low, *n.* for law

Lowlyhede, *n.* Sax. humility

Lucan, *pr. n.* the Roman poet

Luce, *n.* Lat. the fish called a pike

Lucina, *pr. n.* the moon

Lulled, *part. t.* of lull, *v.* Sax. invited to sleep

Lumbardes, *n. pl.* bankers, remitters of money

Lunarie, *pr. n.* of a herb, moonwort

Lure, *n.* Fr. a device used by falconers for calling their hawks

Lure, *v.* Fr. to bring to the lure

Lushburghes, base coins, probably first imported, as Skinner thinks, from Luxembourg.

They are mentioned in the Stat. 25. E. III. c. 2. "La monnaie appellé Lucynbourg," and in *Pierce Ploughb.* fol. 82. b.

As in Lushburgh is a luther alay, yet loketh like Sterling.

Lust, *n.* See Left

Luste, *v.* See Leste

Lustyhede, *n.* Sax. pleasure, mirth

Luxurie, *n.* Fr. lechery

Lynian, *pr. n.* a learned correspondent, to whom I am obliged for other useful hints, has suggested

to me that Fabricius, upon the authority of Ghilini, has placed the death of Joannes Lignanus in 1383, *Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. This furnishes an additional reason for believing that The Canterbury Tales were composed, or at least collected into a body, after that period

M.

Mace, *n.* Fr. a club

Machabe, *pr. n.* the books of the Maccabees

Macrobes, *pr. n.* Macrobius, *Du.* 284; the author of the commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero

Madde, *v.* Sax. to be mad

Madrian. I have found that the French have a faint called *Materne*—but Mr. Steevens, with much more probability, supposes that the precious body by which the Host swears was that of St. Mathurin. See his story in *The Golden Legende*, edit. 1527, by Winkin de Worde, 151, b.: "Than toke they the precious body, and enoynted it with moche reverence; and when they had laid it in the erth, on the morowe they came to the sepulture and found the holy body above the erth nigh unto the same sepulture, and than were they all abashed, and wist not what to do." It seems the knights who had brought him out of France had promised that if he died on his journey he should be sent back and buried "where as they had taken him," and therefore his body would not stay in the ground till it was deposited, according to promise, in France, where it afterwards worked many miracles

Mafeie, *Fr. ma fey*, by my faith

Magicien, *n.* Fr. a magician

Magike, *n.* Fr. magic; *magike*, natural

Mahownd, *pr. n.* Mahomet. See *Du Cange* in v.

Maille, *n.* Fr. a coat of mail

Mainte, *part. pa.* as meint

Maintenance, *n.* Fr. behaviour, *Du.* 834.

Maisondewe, *Fr. maisondieu*, an hospital

Maister, *n.* Fr. a skilful artist, a maister; *maister-strete*, the chief street; *maister-temple*, the chief temple; *maister-tour*, the principal tower

Maisterful, *adj.* imperious

Maisterie, *maistrie*, *n.* Fr. skill, skilful management, power, superiority

Love wol not be constreined by maistrie.

Whan maistrie cometh the god of love anon
Beteth his winges, and farewell he is gon.

I cite these elegant lines as I omitted to observe before that Spenser has inserted them in the *Faery Queen*, b. ii. c. 1, st. 25, with very little alteration, and certainly without any improvement:

Ne may love be compell'd by mastery,
For soon as mastery comes sweet love anone
Taketh his nimble wings, and soon away is gone.

A *maistrie*, a masterly operation; *un coup de maitre*, for the *maistrie*

Maistresse, *n.* Fr. mistress, governess

Maistrise, *n. Fr.* masterly workmanship
Make, *n. Sax.* a fellow, a mate, a husband, a wife; make or metche, compar. *Prompt. Parv.*
Make, *v. Sax.* to compose or make verses, to solace him sometimes as I do when I make, *Pierce Plough.* 60. to make a man's berde, to cheat him
Make, why make ye your backes! we should read—*nake*, *i. e.* make naked; *cur inertes terga nudatis?* orig.
Maked, *part. pa.* made
Makeless, *adj. Sax.* peerless, without a fellow
Making, *n.* poetry; makinges, *pl.* poetical compositions; and thou medlest with makings, *Pierce Plough.* 60.
Malapert, *adj.* pert, forward; the word seems to be evidently of French original, though I do not recollect to have seen it used by any French writer. **Appert**, *adj. Fr.* signifies expert, &c. *Cotgrave*
Male, *n. Fr.* a budget or portmanteau
Malefice, *n. Fr.* enchantment
Male-talent, *n. Fr.* ill-will
Malison, *n. Fr.* malediction, curse; I gyve it my malifoun
Malt, *pa. t.* of melt, *v. Sax.* melted
Malvesie, *pr. n.* Malmsey wine
Malure, *n. Fr.* misfortune
Manace, *n. Fr.* a threat
Manace, *v.* to threaten
Manacing, *n.* threatening
Manciple, *n.* an officer who has the care of purchasing victuals for an inn of court. The name is probably derived from the Lat. *manceps*, which signified particularly the superintendant of a public bakehouse, and from thence a baker in general. See *Du Cange* in *v. Mancps* 2. The office still subsists in several colleges as well as inns of court.
Mandement, *n. Fr.* mandate
Manere, *n. Fr.* carriage, behaviour, kind or sort; a *manere* Latin, a kind of Latin; *fwiche* a manner love-drinke, such a sort of love-potion; *fwiche* maner rime
Mangonel, *n. Fr.* an engine used to batter walls
Manie, *n. Fr. Gr.* madness
Mannish, *adj. Sax.* human, proper to the human species—masculine, proper to man as distinguished from woman; in this last sense when applied to a woman it is a strong term of reproach
Manor, *n. Fr.* dwelling, *Du.* 1004.
Manfuete, *adj. Fr.* gentle
Mantelet, *n. Fr.* a short mantle
Marcian, *pr. n.* Martianus Capella
Marcian, *adj.* martial, under the influence of Mars
Mareis, *n. Fr.* a marsh
Margarite, *n. Fr.* a pearl
Marie, *mary*, *n. Sax.* marrow; marie-bones, marrowbones
Market-beter, I am enclined to believe that this word is to be understood in a sense similar to that in which the *Fr.* phrases *Batreles rues*—and *Bateur de pavez*, are used; *Batre les rues*, to revel, jet, or swagger, up and down the streets anights; *Bateur de pavez*, a jetter abroad in the streets—a pavement-beater. See *Cot-*

grave in *v. Bateur*, *Batre*, *Pavé*; so that he was a market-beter *atte full*, may mean perhaps—he was used to swagger up and down the market when it was fullest—a circumstance which suits very well with the rest of his character:—*Market-dachar*, *circumforaneus*, *Prompt. Parv.*

Markis, *n. Fr.* a marquis

Markis, for markises, *gen. ca. sing.*; in the same manner *Peneus* is put for *Peneuses*; *Theus* for *Theuses*; *Venus* for *Venuses*; *Ceres* for *Cereses*; *Melibeus* for *Melibeuses*; Perhaps it might have been proper to add a mark of apocope to the words so abbreviated. As to the present method of expressing the genitive cases of nouns ending in *s* by adding another *s* with a mark of syncope, as *Peneus's*, *Theus's*, *Venus's*, &c. it seems absurd, whether the addition be intended to be pronounced or not. In the first case the *e* should not be cut out; in the second the *s* is quite superfluous. But the absurdity of this practice is most striking when the genitives of monosyllable nouns are thus written, an ox's horns, an ass's ears, a fish's tail, St. James's park; notwithstanding that the *e*, which is thus directed to be cut out, is constantly and necessarily to be pronounced, as if the several words were written at length, oxes, asses, fishes, Jameses

Markiseffe, *n. Fr.* the wife of a marquis

Marte, *pr. n.* Mars

Martire, *n. Fr.* martyrdom, torment

Martire, *v. Fr.* to torment

Mary, *Marie*, *pr. n.* a vulgar oath; by Mary

Mase, *n.* a wild fancy

Mase, *v. neut.* to doubt, to be confounded

Masednesse, *n.* astonishment, confusion

Maselin, *n.* rather mazerin, a drinking-cup. See *Du Cange* in *v. Mazer*

Mate, *part. pa.* of mate, *v. Fr.* dejected, struck dead; so feble and mate, *Conf. Am.* 127, b.

Mature, for *matere*, *n. Fr.* matter

Maugre, *malgre*, *Fr.* in spite of; *maugre* all thy might; *maugre* thin eyen; *maugre* hire hed—The original of this expression appears more plainly in the following passages, I drede thou canst me grete *maugre*

Car je cuide, que me scavez

Malgré.

Orig.

Malgre his, with his ill will, against his will; *malgré lui.*

Mavis, *n. Sax.* a thrush

Mavis is probably a mistake for *muis*, *n. pl. Fr.* the orig. has *cent muys de froment*; the Paris muid contains something more than five quarters English

Maumet, *n.* an idol

Maumetrie, *n.* the religion of Mahomet; idolatry

Mawe, *n. Sax.* the stomach

Maximian, *pr. n.* the author of six elegies which have been frequently printed under the name of Gallus: he is said by Fabricius [*Bibl. Lat.* t. i. p. 297, ed. Patav.] to have lived under the Emperor Anastasius, q. I. or II. ? A translation or rather abridgment of these elegies in English verse is in ms. *Harl.* 2253.

May, *v. Sax.* to be able, physically, morally. See Mowe

May, *n. Sax.* a virgin; of Mary, moder and may, a young woman

Maydenhed, *n. Sax.* virginity

Meaneliche, *adj. Sax.* moderate; *mediocribus*, orig.

Mebles, *n. pl. Fr.* moveable goods

Mede, *n. Sax.* reward, a meadow

Mede, methe, meth, *n. barb. Lat.* mead, a liquor made of honey

Medle, *v. Fr.* to mix

Medlee, *adj.* of a mixed stuff or colour

Meinie, *n. Fr.* household attendants, an army—*Harlewaynes meyne*. This obscure phrase, I think, may be understood to relate to a particular set of ghostly apparitions which were used to run about the country at night, and were called in French *La mesnie de Hellequin* or *Hellequin*. The fullest account that I have seen of them is in *L'histoire de Richard sans peur, Duc de Normandie, qui fut fils de Robert le Diable*. In one of his rides he meets with three black knights whom he engages: "Et quand les Chevaliers veirent le ju mal party pour eux ils monterent a cheval et s'enfuyrent;—et Richard—chevaucha apres eux; et ainsi qu'il chevauchoit il appercent une dance de gens noirs qui s'entretenoyent. Adonc luy souvint de la mesnie de Hellequin, dont il avoit autres foys ouy parler." The title of the next chapter (4.) is *Cy devise de la mesnie de Hellequin et qui il estoit*. He is there said to have been a knight who, having spent all his substance in the wars of Charles Martel against the Saracens, lived afterwards by pillage. "Adonc il avint qu'il mourut et fut en danger d'estre damne, mais Dieu luy fit pardon, pource que il avoit bataille contre les Sarrazins et exaulce la foy. Si fut condamne de Dieu que pour un tems de termine luy et ceux de son lignage seroient penitence et yroient toute la nuit parmy la terre, pour leurs penitences faire et endurer plusieurs maux et calamitez." The belief of such apparitions was certainly of great antiquity in Normandy, as they are mentioned by Ordericus Vitalis under the title of *familia Herleebini*, in a most extraordinary story related by him, l. viii. p. 695, and. 1091; and I suspect that in a passage quoted by Du Cange in *v. Herlinini*, from *Petr. Blesens*, ep. 14, we should read *Herlikini* instead of *Herlinini*.—Gervase of Tilbery, who wrote in 1211, mentions another set of apparitions which were called *familia Arturi*. *Of. Imper. Dec. ii. c. 12*; "In sylvis Britanniae majoris aut minoris consimilia contigisse referuntur, narrantibus nemorum custodibus, quos forestarios—vulgus nominat, se alternis diebus circa horam meridianam, et in primo noctium conticinio sub plenilunio lunâ lucente, sæpissime videre militum copiam ventantium et canum et cornuum strepitum, qui scissitantibus se de societate et familiâ Arturi esse affirmant." He had just said that Arthur, not long before, had been seen in a palace, *miro opere constructo*, in a most delicious valley in the neighbourhood of Mount Aetna,

where he had resided ever since the time of his supposed death, *vulneribus quotannis recrudescentibus*.

Meint, *part. pa.* of menge, *v. Sax.* mixed, mingled

Meke, *adj. Sax.* meek, humble

Meke, *v.* to become meek

Meles, *n. pl. Sax.* meals, dinners, &c. *Du.* 612.

Mele-tide, *n. Sax.* dinner-time

Melle, *v. Fr.* to meddle

Melle, *n.* for mille

Memorie, *n. Fr.* remembrance; to be drawn to memorie; to be recorded;

And for to drawe into memorye
Her names bothe and her historye.

Conf. Am. f. 96.

Memorie, *v.* to remember

Mendians, *n. pl. Fr.* friars of the begging orders

Mene, *v. Sax.* to mean, to intend

Mene, *n. Fr.* moyen, a mean or instrument; where the orig. has *mezzano*, a procurer. *Menes*, *pl.*

Mene, *adj.* middle

Menivere, *n. Fr.* a sort of fur

Mercenrike, *pr. n.* the kingdom of Mercia

Mercia, *pr. n.* Marfayas is probably meant, but our poet, I know not upon what authority, has turned him into a female

Merciabile, *adj. Fr.* merciful

Meritorie, *adj. Fr.* meritorious

Merke, *n. Sax.* a mark, an image; all the merke of Adam, all the images of Adam, all mankind

Merke, *adj. Sax.* dark

Merlion, *n. Fr.* *emerillon*, a merlin, a sort of hawk

Mervaille, *n. Fr.* wonder, marvel

Mery, *adj. Sax.* merry, pleasant

Mes, at gode mes, should probably be at godeness; the orig. has *en bon point*. See Gode-ness

Mese, *n.* for messe

Mesel, *n. Fr.* a leper

Meselrie, *n. Fr.* leprosy

Messager, *n. Fr.* a messenger

Messagerie, *pr. n.* a fictitious attendant in the temple of Venus; Boccace calls her *Ruffiania*, *Theaida*, b. vii.

Messe, *n. Fr.* the service of the mass

Meste, *adj. Sax. superl. d.* as moste

Mesurable, *adj. Fr.* moderate

Mesure, *n. Fr.* moderation

Metamorphoseos, *Metamorphose*, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. See *Judicum*

Mete, *adj. Sax.* fitting, convenient

Mete, *n. Sax.* meat; during the metes space, during the time of eating

Mete-borde, *n. Sax.* an eating-table

Metely, *adj.* proportionable

Mete, *v. Sax.* to meet, to dream

Mette, met, *pa. t.* dreamed; I mette, me mette, I dreamed

Meticiens, *n. pl.* writers in verse

Mevable, *adj. Fr.* moveable

Mewe, *n. Fr.* a cage for hawks while they mew or change their feathers, a cage in general, or any sort of confinement; in mew, in secret

Mewet, *adj. Fr.* mute; in mewet, dumbly, speaking inwardly

- Micher, *n.* a thief, *lieries* orig. *mychin* or *pryvely* *stelyn* *smale* things; *furripio*, *Prompt. Parv.*
 Might, *pa. t.* of *may*, *v. Sax.* was able, mighten, *pl.*
 Might, *part. pa.* if godely had he might, if he had been able with propriety
 Might, *n. Sax.* power, strength
 Milkfop, *n.* an effeminate fellow
 Milne-stones, *n. pl. Sax.* millstones
 Minde, *n. Sax.* remembrance, *Conf. Am.* 148, as the bokes maken minde
 Mine, *v. Fr.* to penetrate
 Ministralles, *n. pl. Fr.* minstrels
 Ministres, *n. pl. Fr.* officers of justice, ministers, minstrels
 Minoreffe, *n.* a nun under the rule of St. Clare, *Du Gange* in *v. Minorissa*. It is not clear, however, why Chaucer has likened Hate to a sister of this order; his original gave him no authority
 Minour, *n. Fr.* a miner
 Minstralcie, *n. Fr.* music, musical instruments
 Mirrour, *n. Fr.* a lookingglass
 Mirtheles, *adj. Sax.* without mirth
 Mis, *adv.* ill, amiss; it is often to be supplied to a second verb, having been expressed in composition with a former; if that I mispeke or say; that hire misdoth or saith; there is nothing misfaide nor do, *Du.* 528
 Mis, *n.* a wrong
 Mis-accompted, *part. pa.* misreckoned
 Mis-aventure, *n.* misfortune
 Mis-avise, *v.* to advise wrongly
 Mis-boden, *part. pa.* of *mis-bede*, injured
 Mis-borne, *part. pa.* of *mis-bere*, misbehaved
 Mischance, *n. Fr.* misfortune; with *mischance*. See *With*
 Mischese, *n. Fr.* misfortune
 Miscoveting, *n.* should probably be *miscompting*; *mescompter*, orig.
 Mis-departe, *v.* to distribute, wrongly
 Misericorde, *n. Fr.* mercy, pity
 Mis-ese, *n.* uneasiness
 Mis-foryave, *pa. t.* of *mis-foryave*, misgave
 Mis-gied, *part. pa.* of *mis-gie*, misguided
 Mis-gon, *Mis-go*, *part. pa.* of *mis-go*, gone wrong
 Mis-happing, *part. pr.* falling amiss
 Mis-lede, *v.* to conduct amiss
 Mis-lived, *part. pa.* having lived to a bad purpose
 Mis-metre, *v.* to spoil the metre of verses by writing or reading them ill
 Mis-sate, *pa. t.* of *mis-sit*, misbecame
 Mis-sayde, *part. pa.* of *mis-saye*, ill-spoken of
 Mis-sayer, *n.* an evil speaker
 Misse, *v. Sax.* to fail
 Misse-metre, *v.* See *Mis-metre*
 Mistake, *v.* to take a wrong part, to transgress; *mesprendre*, orig.
 Mistere, *n. Fr.* trade, occupation—condition of life; what mistere men ye ben, what kind of men ye are—need
 Mistihede, *n. Sax.* darkness
 Mistily, *adv. Sax.* darkly
 Mistrust, *v.* for mistrust
 Mis-waie, *n.* a wrong way
 Mis-went, *part. pa.* of *mis-wende*, gone amiss
 Mis-write, *v.* to write wrong
 Mitaine, *n. Fr.* a glove
 Mitche, *n. Fr.* a manchet, a loaf of fine bread
 Mite, *n. Sax.* a small worm
 Mixen, *n. Sax.* a dunghill
 Mo, for me
 Mo, for more, *adj. comp. adv. comp.*
 Mochel, moche, *adj. Sax.* great in quantity, in number, in degree—*adv.* much, greatly
 Moder, modre, *n. Sax.* mother—the matrix or principal plate of the astrolabe, *Astr.*
 Moison, *n. Fr.* harvest, growth
 Moist, moisty, *adj. Fr.* new
 Mokel, *n.* may perhaps signify size, magnitude, as *Michel* seems to be used in that sense in *Pierce Plough.* 89, b. of one *Michel* and *might*
 Molestie, *n. Fr.* trouble
 Molte, *pa. t.* of *melte*, *v. Sax.* melted, *part. pa.*
 Monche, *v.* to chew
 Mone, *n. Sax.* the moon—lamentation
 Moneste, *v. Fr.* to admonish
 Monious, *n. pl. Fr.* coiners: in the orig. it is *faulx monnoyeurs*
 Monstre, *n. Fr.* a monster or prodigy—a pattern
 Mood, *n. Sax.* anger
 Morcels, *n. pl. Fr.* morsels
 More, *adj. comp. Sax.* greater in quantity, in number and degree—*adv. comp.* it is usually joined to adjectives and adverbs to express the *comp. deg.*
 Mormal, *n.* a cancer or gangrene
 Morter, *n. Fr.* a sort of waxlight
 Mirtific, *v. Fr.* to kill, (speaking of quicksilver)
 Mortrewes, *n.* Lord Bacon, in his *Nat. Hist.* c. 48, speaks of a mortress made with the brawn of capons stamped and strained. He joins it with the cullice (*coulis*) of cocks. It seems to have been a rich broth or soup, in the preparation of which the flesh was stamped or beat in a mortar, from whence it probably derived its name, *une mortreuse*, though I cannot say that I have ever met with the French word
 Morwe, *n. Sax.* the morning; in the morning of the following day—To-morwe, I believe, always means the following day, and it includes the whole day; to-morwe at night
 Morwening, *n. Sax.* the morning, *morweninges*, *pl.*
 Mosel, *n. Fr.* the muzzle, mouth of a beast
 Moste, *adj. superl. Sax.* greatest in quantity, in number, in degree—*adv. superl.* it is usually joined to adjectives and adverbs to express the superlative degree
 Most, *v. Sax.* must; *Mosten*, *pl.*
 Mote, *v. Sax.* must, may; *Moten*, *pl.*
 Mote, *n. Sax.* an atom
 Mothes, *n. pl. Sax.* moths
 Motif, *n. Fr.* a motive, incitement
 Mought, *pa. t.* of *mowe*, *v. Sax.* might
 Moule, *v. Sax.* to grow mouldy
 Mouled, *part. pa.*
 Moun, for mowen, *pr. t. pl.* of *mowe*, *v. Sax.* may
 Mountance, *n. Fr.* amount in value; in quantity; not full the mountance of a mile, *Conf. Am.* 187.
 Mourdant, *n. Fr.* the tongue of a buckle
 Mowe, *v. Sax.* may, to be able. *Mowen*, *pl.*—it is sometimes used in the *inf. m.* which thou

shalt not mowe suffre, which thou shalt not be able to endure—to mowen suche a knight done live or die, to be able to make such a knight to live or die—the should not con ne mow attaine, the should not know nor be able to attain
 Mowe, *n. Fr.* a distortion of the mouth; what do I than but laugh and make a mowe? *Lydg. Tra.* 137.
 Mowing, *n. ability.* In the following passage it seems to be used as a *gerund*; that shrewes weren dispoiled of mowing to don yvel
 Much, *muchel.* See Miche
 Muckre, *v. Sax.* to heap
 Mue, *v. Fr.* to change
 Muet, *adj. Fr.* dumb, mute
 Mullok, *n. Sax.* dung, rubbish
 Multiplication, *n. Fr.* the art of making gold and silver
 Multiplie, *v. Fr.* to make gold and silver
 Musard, *n. Fr.* a musier or dreamer
 Muse, *v. Fr.* to gaze
 Myself, myselve, myselven. See Self

N.

Na, for no
 N'adde, for ne hadde, had not
 Naile, *n. Sax.* a nail; by nailes, by Goddes nailes, an oath
 Nakere, *n.* a kind of brazen drum used in the cavalry. See *Du Gange* in *v. Nacara*
 Nale, *n. Sax.* an alehouse. But I am the less inclined to adopt Skinner's explanation of this word, because I observe that ale alone is commonly put for an alehouse, and I cannot find that nale is ever used, except where it follows the preposition *atte*. In the passage in *Pierce Plough.* 32, b. the *Cotton* ms. *Vesp. B.* xvi. has at the ale; and so in *Pierce Plough.* 26, b. with idle tales at the ale.—Robert of Brunne's translation of *Manuel des Pechés*, ms. *Bodl.* 2313, fol. 1;

In gaymes, in festys, and at the ale.

fol. 38. Or yf thou leddest any man to the ale. I suspect therefore that nale, in those few passages in which it is found, should be considered as merely a corruption which has arisen from the mispronunciation and consequent miswriting of *atte nale* for *atten ale*. A similar corruption seems to have taken place in the name of that celebrated personage in our law Mr. John A-Noke, whose original appellation, I believe, was John Atten Oke, as that of his constant antagonist was John Atte Stile *sim.* Atte Stile is a name in *Pierce Plough.* 23, b. and there are many others of the same form, as Atte-cliff, Atte-ley, Atte-well, Atte-wood, &c. That the letter *n* is apt to pass from the end of one word to the beginning of another, we have an instance in *newt*, which has certainly been formed, by corruption, from an *ewt* or *est*; and perhaps *nedder*, *n. Sax.* may have been formed in the same way from an *adder*: the word in the Teutonic is *adder*, as we write it now, without the initial *n*. The same corrup-

tions have happened in other languages. See the notes of Signor Redi upon his *Basco in Toscana*, p. 133, 4, 5, 182, 3.
 N'am, for ne am, am not
 Name, *pa. t.* of nime, *v. Sax.* took
 Nappe, *v. Sax.* to sleep. See Knap
 Narcotickes, *n. pl. Fr. Gr.* drugs causing sleep
 Narwe, *adj. Sax.* close, narrow; whan they hem narwe avise, when they closely consider their conduct
 Nas, for ne was, was not
 Naso, *pr. n. P.* Ovidius Naso. See Ovid
 Nat, *adv. Sax.* not
 Natal, *adj. Lat.* presiding over nativity
 Nathelesse, *natheles*, *adv. Sax.* not the less, nevertheless
 Nation, *n. Fr.* nation—family
 Naught, *nought*, *n. Sax.* nothing
 —, *adv.* not, not at all, it may more properly perhaps be considered as a noun used adverbially. See Nothing
 Nay, *adj. Sax.* it seems to be used sometimes as a noun; it is no nay, it cannot be denied
 Nay, *v.* to deny
 Ne, *adv. Sax.* not; ne had he ben holpen, had he not been helped
 Ne, *conj. Sax.* nor
 Nece, *n. Fr.* a niece—a cousin
 Neceffaire, *adj. Fr.* necessary
 Nede, *n. Sax.* need, necessity
 Nede, *v.* is generally used as an impersonal; it nedeth thee nought teche; nedeth him no dwale; neded no more to hem to go ne rid
 Nedeful, *adj.* distressed, indigent
 Nedely, *adv.* necessarily
 Nedes, *nede*, *adv.* necessarily; it is usually joined with *must*
 Nedder, *n. Sax.* an adder; Neders, *pl.*
 Neighe, *adj. Sax.* nigh
 Neighe, *v.* to approach, to come near
 Nekke, *n. Sax.* the neck; nekke-bone
 Nempne, *v. Sax.* to name
 Ner, *adv. Sax.* near
 Nere, *comp. d.* nigher; never the nere, never the nigher; nere and nere, nigher and nigher; ferre ne nere, later nor earlier
 N'ere, for ne were, were not; n'ere it, were it not; n'ere the friendship
 Nerfe, *n. Fr.* nerve, sinew
 Neshe, *adj. Sax.* soft, tender; Nesch and hard
 Nete, *n. Sax.* neat cattle
 Nether, *adj. comp. Sax.* lower
 Nettle in dock out. See Raket
 Neven, *v. Sax.* to name
 Nevew, *n. Fr.* a nephew—a grandson
 Newe, *adj. Sax.* new, fresh
 Newe, *adv.* newly; newe and newe, again and again; all newe; of newe, newly, lately; all new, anew, afresh
 Newe, *v.* to renew
 Newed, *part. pa.* renewed
 Newefangel, *adj.* desirous of new things
 Newefangelnesse, *n.* inconstancy
 Nexte, *superl. d.* nighest; it generally signifies the nighest, following, but sometimes the nighest preceding
 N'hath, for ne hath, hath not
 Nice, *adj. Fr.* foolish

Nicetee, *n.* folly; do his nicetee; so the French
use faire folie
 Niffles, *n. pl.* trifles
 Nigard, *n.* a stingy fellow
 Nigardie, *n.* stinginess
 Nightertale, night-time
 Night-spel, *n. Sax.* a night-charm
 N'ill, for ne will, will not
 N'is, for ne is, is not
 N'iste, for ne wiste, knew not, *sing.*; n'isten, for
 ne wisten, knew not, *pl.*
 Nobledest, *pa. t. 2nd pers. sing.* of noble, *v. Fr.* en-
 nobledest
 Nobleffe, *n. Fr.* dignity, splendour
 Nobley, *n.* as nobleffe
 Nocked, *part. pa.* notched
 Noie, *n. Fr.* hurt, trouble
 Noie, *v.* to hurt, to trouble
 Noife, *v. Fr.* to make a noise
 N'olde, for ne wolde, would not
 Nombre, *n. Fr.* number
 Nomen, nome, *part. pa.* of nime, *v. Sax.* taken
 Nompere, *n.* an arbitrator. See the passage quot-
 ed above in *v. Lovedaie*. The sense of this
 word is established by the *Prompt. Parv.* nowm-
 per or owwper, Arbiter, Sequester. If the
 etymology of it were as clear, we might be able
 to determine which of the two methods of
 writing it is the best; custom has long declared
 for the latter. The modern word is umpire;
 and in *Pierce Plough*, 25, b. the edit. read—an
 umper, but the *Cotton ms. Vesp. B. xvi.* has—a
 numper. I cannot find that any such word is
 used, in the same sense, in any other of the Go-
 thic or romance languages: it has been sup-
 posed by some to be a corruption of *un pere*,
Fr. which I can hardly believe; and perhaps
 the reader will be as backward to admit of a
 derivation of it from the *Fr. nonpai*, an odd or
 third person, which an arbitrator generally is.
 This however is the most probable etymology
 that has occurred to me, and I see that the
 compiler of the statutes for the University of
 Oxford (whoever he was) had the same idea,
 for he expresses the word umpire in his Latin
 by *impar*, tit. xv. § 14. *Index, impar, aut arbi-*
trator, in quacunque causa electus
 Non, *adj. Sax.* not one, none
 Non, *adv. Fr.* not; absent or non; whether ye
 wol or non
 None, *n. Fr.* the ninth hour of the natural day,
 nine o'clock in the morning; the hour of din-
 ner
 Nones, for the nones
 Nonne, *n. Fr.* a nun
 Norice, *n. Fr.* a nurse; in other passages, it is
 printed by mistake for norie, *n.* a foster-child,
alumnus
 Nortelrie, *n.* nurture, education
 Nofethirles, *n. pl. Sax.* nostrils
 N'ot, for ne wot, know not
 Notabilitiee, *n. Fr.* a thing worthy of observa-
 tion
 Note, *n. Sax.* need, business
 Note, *n. Fr.* a musical note; to cry by note, to
 cry aloud, in a high tone
 Notemuge, *n.* nutmeg
 Notes, *n. pl. Sax.* nuts

Not-hed, a head like a nut
 Nother, *conj. Sax.* nor, neither
 N'other, *adj. Sax.* for ne other; neither n'other,
 nor ong nor other; he n'is in neither n'other
 habite; *neutro est habitu*, orig.
 Nothing, *adv. Sax.* not, not at all
 Nouches, *n. pl.* It is probable, I think, that
nouche is the true word, and that *ouche* has been
 introduced by a corruption the reverse of that
 which has been taken notice of in *Nale*. See
Du Cange in *v. Nochia* and *Nusea*, and *Schiller*,
Gloss. Teut. in *v. Nuosci*, from whence it ap-
 pears that *nuschin*, *Teut.* signifies *fibula*, a clasp
 or buckle. As these were some of the most
 useful instruments of dress they were probably
 some of the first that were ornamented with
 jewels, by which means the name by degrees
 may have been extended so as to include sever-
 al other sorts of jewels; the same thing may
 have happened in the case of the word *broche*,
 [see above] which indeed seems originally to
 have been a French expression for *nouche*
 Nought, *n. & adv. Sax.* See Naught
 Nouth, *adv. Sax.* now
 Novelfries, *n. pl. Fr.* novelties
 Now, *adv. Sax.* now and now, once and again;
 now adayes, in these days
 Nowel, *n. Fr.* Christmas
 Noyfaunce, *n. Fr.* offence, trespass

O

O, for ho. See Ho
 O, *adj.* for on, one; in the curious old ballad on
 the battle of Lewes, [*Anc. Poet. v. ii. p. 4. l. 10.*]
 oferling should be written, I believe, o ferling,
i. e. one farthing
 Obeysance, *n. Fr.* obedience; obeying
 Obeysant, *part. pr. Fr.* obedient; obeying
 Obsequies, *n. pl. Fr.* funeral rites
 Observance, *n. Fr.* respect
 Observe, *v. Fr.* to respect, to pay regard to
 Occident, *n. Fr.* the west
 Octavien, *pr. n.* I do not suppose that Augustus
 is meant, but rather the fabulous emperor
 who is the subject of a romance entitled *Octa-*
vian Imperator, *ms. Cotton, Calig. ii.* See *Percy's*
Catalogue, n. 18. The same Octavian, I appre-
 hend, was celebrated in a piece of Arras hang-
 ings which made part of the furniture of Hen-
 ry V. and is thus described in the inventory,
Rot. Parl. 2. Hen. VI. Item 1 autre pece d'arras
D or q comence en l'eflorie, Le Octavien Roy de
Rome
 Ocy, ocy, the nightingale's note
 Oerthrow, for overthrow, *part. pa. Sax.* over-
 thrown
 Oetus, *pr. n. Æetes*
 Of, *adv. Sax.* off
 Offended, *part. pa. Fr.* hurt
 Offensioun, *n.* offence, damage
 Offertorie, *n. Fr.* a part of the mass
 Offring, *n. Fr.* offering at mass
 Oft, ofte, *adv. Sax.* often: often-sith, often-
 times
 Oinement, *n. Fr.* ointment
 Olifaunt, *n. Fr.* elephant

Oliveres, *n. pl. Fr.* olive-trees
 Omer, *pr. n.* Homer
 On, *prep. Sax.* in; on live, in life, alive; on twelve, in twelve; on hunting; on hawking. See A, *prep.*—upon; on to see, to look upon. Licurgus daughter, fairer on to sene—so this line is written in *ms. Bodl.*
 On, *adj. Sax.* one; after on, alike; they were at on, they were agreed; ever in on, continually; I mine on, I single, I by myself; and thus I went widewher walking mine one; non saw but he one; all him one
 Onde, *n. Sax.* zeal, malice; ny the and onde
 Oned, *part. pa. Sax.* made one, united
 Ones, *pl. of on*; we three ben alle ones, we three are all one
 Ones, *adv. Sax.* once; at ones, at once, at the same time
 Onhed, *n. Sax.* unity
 Only, *adv. Sax.* al only, solely
 Ony, *adj. Sax.* any
 Open-ers, *n. Sax.* the fruit of the medlar tree
 Open-heded, *adj.* bareheaded
 Opie, *n. Fr.* opium
 Oppresse, *v. Fr.* to ravish
 Oppressed, *part. pa.*
 Oppression, *n.* rape
 Or, *adv. Sax.* er, before
 Oratorie, *n. Fr.* a chapel, a closet
 Ordal, *n. Sax.* judicial trial. See *Kilian in v. Oordeel*, and *Hickes Dissert. Epist. p. 149*. It is possible however that Chaucer may have used this word in its more confined sense, for a trial by fire or water, without considering whether such trials were practised at Troy.
 Orde, *n. Sax.* a point
 Ordered, *part. pa.* ordained in holy orders
 Orders four, the four orders of mendicant friars
 Ordinance, *n. Fr.* orderly, disposition
 Ordinat, *part. pa.* orderly, regular
 Ore, *n. Sax.* grace, favour
 Orrwell, *pr. n.* a seaport in Essex
 Orfrays, *n. Fr.* gold embroidery. See *Du Gange in v. Aurifrigia*
 Orient, *n. Fr.* the east
 Origenes, *pr. n.* In the list of Chaucer's Works he says of himself, that

 He made also, gon is a grete while,
 Origenes upon the Maudelaine—

 meaning, I suppose, a translation into prose or verse of the homily *de Mariâ Magdalena*, which has been commonly, though falsely, attributed to Origen. V. *Opp. Origenis*, t. ii. p. 291, ed. Paris, 1604. I cannot believe that the poem entitled The Lamentation of Marie Magdaleine, which is in all the editions of Chaucer, is really that work of his; it can hardly be considered as a translation or even imitation of the homily, and the composition, in every respect, is infinitely meaner than the worst of his genuine pieces
 Orifont, *n. Fr.* the horizon
 Orloge, *n. Fr.* a clock or dial
 Orpiment, *pr. n.* a mineral so called
 Other, *adj. Sax.* alter, *Lat.* the other of two; others, *gen. ca.*

Other, *adj. Sax.* alius, *Lat.*
 Other, *conj. Sax.* or either
 Ouche. See Nouché
 Over, *prep. Sax.* above; over all, in every case, on every side
 Over, *adj. Sax.* upper
 Overest, *superl. d.* uppermost
 Over-gret, *adj. Sax.* too great
 Over-ladde, *part. pa.* overborn; do not the people oppresse nor overlede, *Lydg. Tra.*
 Over-live, *v. Sax.* to outlive
 Over-merily, *adv. Sax.* too merrily
 Over-moche, *adj. Sax.* too great
 Over-nome, *part. pa.* of over-time, *v. Sax.* overtaken
 Over-spradde, *part. t. Sax.* overspread
 Overté, *adj. Fr.* open
 Overthrew, *part. t. of overthrow, v. neut. Sax.* fell down
 Overthrowing, *part. pr. Sax.* falling headlong; by overthrowing way, *præcipiti viâ*, orig.; and therefore clepeth Cassiodore poverté the moder of ruine, that is to say, the moder of overthrowing or falling down
 Over-thwart, *adv. Sax.* across, over against
 Over-timeliche, *adv. Sax.* too early
 Ovide, *pr. n.* Our Author seems to have been well acquainted with the best part of Ovid's works; most of the histories in his *Legende of Good Women* are taken from the *Epistolæ Heroidum* or the *Metamorphoses*; that of *Lucece* shews that he had read the *Fasti*
 Ought, *n. Sax.* any thing, *adv.* See Aught. The difference has arisen merely from the different usages of writing *a* or *o* for *one*
 Ought, *part. t. of owe*
 Oughten, oughte. From hence, as it seems, has been formed a new verb ought, which is very commonly used in the present tense for owe in both numbers. Ought is also used as an *imperf.* in the *pr.* and *part. t.*; wel ought us werke, wel behoveth it us to work; hem oughte have gret repentance, it behoved them to have great repentance
 Ounding, *n. Fr.* waving, imitating waves
 Oures, *pr. poss. Sax.* ours
 Out, *interj. Sax.* away
 Out, *adv. Sax.* out and out, throughout
 Outhees, *n. Lat. barb.* outcry; and born to London brigge full hie with outheys
 Outrage, *n. Fr.* violence
 Outraie, *v. Fr.* to fly out, to be outrageous
 Out-rede, *v. Sax.* to surpass in counsel
 Outrely, *adv. Fr.* utterly
 Out-renne, *v. Sax.* to outrun
 Outstraught, *part. t. of outstretch, v. Sax.* stretched out
 Out-taken, *part. pa.* taken out, excepted; out-taken Crist on loft, Crist in heaven being excepted; out-take Carleon that was in Arthure tyme
 Owe, *v. Sax.* debeo; owen, *pl.*
 Owen, owne, *part. pa.*
 Owhere, *adv. Sax.* any where
 Owndie, *adj. Fr.* waving
 Oxenforde, *pr. n.* Oxford
 Oyse, *pr. n.* a river in Picardy

P.

Pace, *v. Fr.* to pass away, to surpass
 Page, *n. Fr.* a boy-child, a boy-servant
 Paie, *n. Fr.* liking, satisfaction
 Paie, *v. Fr.* to please, to satisfy, to pay; paide, *part. pa.* pleased, payed
 Paillet, *n. Fr.* a couch, (properly of straw)
 Paindemaine, *n. Fr.* a sort of bread
 Paire, *v. Fr.* to impair; if I speke ought to paire her loos, *i. e.* to impair their credit or reputation; so this line is written in edit. 1542, and *ms. Hunter*
 Palamedes, *pr. n.* not the son of Nauplius, one of the Grecian commanders at the war of Troy, but a knight of the Round Table, called Palomides in *Mort d'Arthur*, the unsuccessful rival of Tristan, for the love of *la Belle Isoude*. See *Mort d'Arthur*, b. ii. which seems to be compiled chiefly from the *Roman de Tristan*
 Palasins, *n. pl. Fr.* ladies palasins, ladies of the court; in the orig. *palatines*. See *Du Cange* in *v. Palatini*
 Palatie, *pr. n. Palatia* in *Anatolia. Sp.*
 Pale, *n.* a perpendicular stripe in heraldry
 Pale, *v. Fr.* to make pale
 Paleis, *n. Fr.* a palace
 Palfreis, *n. pl. Fr.* horses for the road, where stedes are horses for battle; ne large palfrey esy for the nones
 Paling, *n. Fr.* imitating pales
 Palladion, *n. Gr.* the image of Pallas at Troy
 Palled, *part. pa. Fr.* made pale
 Palmeres, *n. pl.* pilgrims to foreign parts
 Palmerie, *pr. n.* Palmyra in Syria
 Pamphilus, *pr. n.*
 Pampred, *part. pa.* pampered, made plump. See *Jun. Etymol.* who derives it from the *Fr. pampre*, a vine branch full of leaves
 Pan, *pr. n.* the Heathen deity
 Pan, *n. Sax.* the skull, the head
 Panter, *n. Fr.* a net
 Papelard, *n. Fr.* a hypocrite
 Papelardie, *n. Fr.* hypocrisy
 Paper-white, *adj.* white as paper
 Par, *prep. Fr.* par amour, with love; par compagne, for company; par chance, by chance; par cuere, by heart, *memoriter*
 Paraboles, *n. pl. Fr.* parables, the Proverbs of Solomon
 Parage, *n. Fr.* kindred
 Paraille, *n. Fr.* apparel
 Paramour, paramours, *n. Fr.* love, gallantry, a lover of either sex
 Paraventure, *adv. Fr.* haply, by chance
 Paraunter, corruption of paraventure
 Parcae, *n. pl. Lat.* the Fates
 Parcel-mele, *adv.* by parcels or parts
 Parde, pardiaux, a common French oath, which most of the personages in Chaucer express very frequently in English, with as little ceremony as the Greeks used their *μη Δία*, and with as little meaning too [cics
 Pardoner, *n. Fr.* a seller of pardons or indulgen-

Parements, *n. pl. Fr.* ornamental furniture or clothes
 Parentele, *n. Fr.* kindred
 Parfay, *Fr. par foy*, by my faith
 Parfei, as parfay
 Parfit, *adj. Fr.* perfect
 Parfitly, *adv.* perfectly
 Parfourme, *v. Fr.* to perform
 Parishens, *n. pl. Fr.* parishioners
 Paritorie, *n. Fr. Lat.* the herb parie taria, or pellitory of the wall
 Parlement, *n. Fr.* an assembly for consultation, a consultation
 Parten, *inf. m. Fr.* to take part
 Partie, *n. Fr.* a part, a party in a dispute
 Parvis, *n. Fr.* a portico before a church, *Du Cange* in *v. Paradisus* 1. It appears that books were commonly sold *au Parvis devant Notre Dame* at Paris. At London the *Parvis* was frequented by Serjeants at Law. See *Fortescue de Laud. leg. Ang. c. li.* "Post meridiem curiæ non tenentur; sed placitantes tunc se divertunt ad Pervium et alibi, consulentes cum Servientibus ad Legem et aliis consiliariis suis." There is a difference of opinion where the parvis at London, to which the lawyers resorted, was situated; Somner supposes it to have been in Old-Palace-yard, before Westminster-hall, *Gloss. in X Script. v. Triforium*; but others, with more probability, think it was what Dugdale calls The Pervyse of Pawles. When the Serjeants had dined in any of the inns of court, St. Paul's lay much more conveniently for an afternoon consultation than Westminster-hall
 Pas, *n. Fr.* a footpace; his horse—on which he rode a pas ful softly [sentence
 Pafs, *v. Fr.* to surpass, to excel, to judge, to pass
 Passant, passing, *part. pr.* excelling [ter nosser
 Patren, *inf. m.* to pray, properly to repeat the *Pavade*, *n.* a weapon of offence
 Paumes, *n. pl. Fr.* the palms of the hands
 Pax, to kisse the pax: for an account of this ceremony, see *Du Cange* in *v.*
 Payen, *adj. Fr.* Pagan
 Paynes, *n. pl.* Heathens
 Payfaunce, *n.* pausing or stopping, *Gloss. Ur. q.?*
 Pecunial, *adj.* pecuniary, paid in money
 Pees, *n. Fr.* peace; when used as an interjection, it signifies the same as hold thy pees, be silent
 Peine, *n. Fr.* penalty; up peine of deth. See Up.—Grief, torment, labour
 Peine, *v. Fr.* to torture, to put to pain; she peined hire, she took great pains
 Peise, *v. Fr.* to poise, to weigh
 Pell, *n.* a house, a cell, *Sp.* and *Sk. f.* a palace, *Gloss. Ur. q.?*
 Pellet, *n. Fr.* pelotte, a ball
 Penance, *n. Fr.* repentance, pains to be undergone by way of satisfaction for sin, pain, sorrow
 Penant, *n. Fr.* a person doing penance
 Pencell, *n. Fr.* pennoncel, a small streamer
 Penible, *adj.* industrious, pains-taking
 Penitencer, *n. Fr.* a priest who enjoins penance in extraordinary cases
 Penmark, *pr. n.* a place in Bretagne

- Penner, *n.* a pencease. In the inventory of the goods of Henry V. *Rot. Parl.* 2 H. VI. n. 15, m. 13, is the following article, *Un penner' et 1 ynkborn d' arg.' dorrez*; and again, m. 29, *1 pennere et 1 corne covert du velvet bloy*
- Penon, *n.* *Fr.* a streamer or ensign
- Pens, *n. pl.* *Sax.* pennies
- Pensell, *n.* as pencell
- Pensifched, *n.* pensiveness
- Peper, *n.* *Lat.* pepper; to brewe peper, seems to be an expression for the preparation of a hot pungent liquor which should burn the throats of the drinkers; in the orig. it is—*dames le brasse-ront tel poivre*
- Peple, *n.* *Fr.* people
- Peplish, *adj.* vulgar
- Perche, *n.* *Fr.* a perch for birds
- Percel, *adv.* parcel
- Perda, as *pardé*
- Pere, *v.* to appear
- Pere, *n.* *Fr.* a peer, an equal
- Peregal, *adj.* equal
- Peregrine, *adj.* *Fr.* wandering
- Pereles, *adj.* without an equal
- Perjenete, *n.* a young pear
- Pernasa, *pr. n.* Mount Parnassus
- Perrie, *n.* *Fr.* jewels, precious stones
- Perfaunt, *part. pa.* *Fr.* piercing
- Perse, *pr. n.* Persia
- Perse, *adj.* *Fr.* sky coloured, of a blewish gray
- Perselee, *n.* *Sax. Lat.* parsley
- Perfone, *n.* *barb. Lat.* a man, generally a man of dignity, a parson or rector of a church
- Pertelote, *pr. n.* of a hen
- Perturbe, *v.* *Fr.* to trouble
- Perturbing, *n.* disturbance
- Pervinke, *n.* *Sax. Lat.* the herb periwinkle
- Pery, *n.* *Fr.* a pear tree
- Pese, *n.* *Fr.* as pees
- Peson, *n. pl.* *Sax.* peas
- Pesible, *adj.* peaceable
- Peter Alfonse, Piers Alfonse
- Petrark, *pr. n.* Our author has inserted a translation of the 102d sonnet of Petrarch into his *Troilus and Creseide*; it is not in the *Filostrato*: there seems to be no sufficient reason for believing that Chaucer had ever seen Petrarch.
- Peytrell, *n.* *Fr.* the breastplate of a horse
- Phisike, *n.* *Fr.* medicine
- Phisiologus, *pr. n.* There was a larger work with the same title in prose, which is frequently quoted by Vincent of Beauvais
- Phiton, *pr. n.* the serpent Python
- Phitoneffe, *n.* *barb. Lat.* a witch
- Pie, *n.* *Fr.* a magpie, a prating gossip or tell-tale
- Pierrie, *n.* *Fr.* jewels, precious stones
- Piggesnie. The Romans used *oculus* as a term of endearment; and perhaps Piggesnie, in vulgar language, only means *oculus*, the eyes of that animal being remarkably small
- Pight, *pa. t.* of pike, *v.* *Sax.* pitched
- Pike, *v.* *Sax.* to pitch, to pick, as a hawk does his feathers, to steal, to peep
- Pike, *n.* *Sax.* a fish so called
- Pikerel, *n.* *Sax.* a young pike
- Pilche, *n.* *Sax.* a coat or cloak of skins, *Prov.* 4; *toga pellicea*, *Junius* in v.
- Piler, *n.* *Fr.* a pillar
- Pille, *v.* *Fr.* piller, to rob, to plunder
- Pilled, rather piled, *part. pa.* *Fr.* *pelé*, bald
- Pillours, *n. pl.* *Fr.* plunderers
- Pilwe, *n.* *Sax.* a pillow
- Pilwe-bere, *n.* *Sax.* the covering of a pillow
- Piment, *n.* *barb. Lat.* spiced wine, wine mixed with honey
- Pinche, *v.* *Fr.* to squeeze; ther coude no wight pinche at his writing, no one could lay hold of any flaw in his writings
- Pine, *n.* *Sax.* pain, grief
- Pine, *v.* *Sax.* to torment
- Pined, *part. pa.* tortured
- Pipe, *v.* *Sax.* to play on a pipe; to pipe in an ivy lefe, is put for any useles employment, as is now said of a disappointed man, He may go whistle. See Buckes horn
- Pistell, *n.* *Sax. Lat.* an epistle, a short lesson
- Pitance, *n.* *Fr.* a mess of victuals; it properly means an extraordinary allowance of victuals given to monasticks, in addition to their usual commons. See *Du Cange* in v. *Piclantia*
- Pith, *n.* *Sax.* marrow, strength
- Pitous, *adj.* *Fr.* merciful, compassionate, exciting compassion
- Pitoufly, *adv.* pitifully
- Plage, *n.* *Lat.* the plague
- Plages, *n. pl.* *Lat.* the divisions of the globe; the plagies of the north, the northern regions
- Plain, *n.* *Fr.* a plain
- Plain, *adj.* simple, clear; it is often used as an adverb
- Plain, *v.* to make plain
- Plaine, *v.* *Fr.* to complain
- Plainliche, *adv.* plainly
- Plat, platte, *adj.* *Fr.* flat, plain, the flat of a sword; it is often used as an adverb; all plat, *i. e.* flatly; full plat and eke ful plain
- Plate, *n.* a flat piece of metal; a brest-plate, armour for the breast; a pair of plates, armour for the breast and back
- Play, *n.* *Sax.* sport, pleasure
- Play, *v.* to sport, to take pleasure, to act upon a stage, to play upon musical instruments, to lead a pilgrimage, to withdraw upon pretence of going on a pilgrimage
- Ple, *n.* *Fr.* an argument or pleading
- Plein, *adj.* *Fr.* full, perfect
- Plenere, *adj.* *Fr.* complete
- Plesance, *n.* *Fr.* pleasure
- Plesinges, *n. pl.* pleasures
- Plete, *v.* *Fr.* to plead
- Pleting, *n.* pleading
- Plie, *v.* *Fr.* to bend or mold
- Plight, *n.* condition
- Plight, *pa. t.* & *part.* of pluck, *v.* *Sax.* pulled, plucked
- Plighte, *v.* *Sax.* to engage, to promise
- Plighte, *pa. t.* plighthen, *pl.*
- Plite, *v.* to plait or fold. See Plie
- Plite, *n.* condition, form. See plight
- Plungy, *adj.* *Fr.* wet, rainy

Poileis, *adj. Fr.* of Apulia, anciently called Poile.
Willamie's dogter Conversane in Poyle to wyve be nome

Point, *n. Fr.* the principal business, a stop or full point; in good point, in good case or condition; at point devise, with the greatest exactness; at point to brest, in point for to braft, ready to burst

Pointel, *n. Fr.* a style or pencil for writing

Pointen, *inf. m. v. Fr.* to prick with any thing pointed

Poke, *n. Fr.* a pocket, a bag. See Pouche

Poke, *v. Fr.* to thrust

Polive, *n.* a pulley

Pollax, *n. Sax.* a halberd, *bipennis. Prompt. Parv.*

Pomel, *n. Fr.* any ball or round thing, the top of the head

Pomelee, *adj. Fr.* spotted with round spots like apples, dappled; pomelee gris, of a dapple-gray colour

Popelot, *n.* This word may either be considered as a diminutive from pouple, a puppet, or as a corruption of papelot, a butterfly

Popet, *n. Fr.* a puppet

Popingay, *n.* a parrot; *papegaut, Fr. papegaye, Belg. papagallo, Ital.*

Popped, *adj. Fr.* nicely dressed

Popper, *n.* joly poper, a bodkin, according to *Sp.* and *Sk.* who however produce no authority for such interpretation. The name seems to be fitter for a pistol

Pore, *v.* to look earnestly, poren, *pr. t. pl.*

Pore, *adj.* for poure

Porisme, *n. Gr.* is used in the sense of—a coronary, a theorem deduced from another

Porphurie, *pr. n.* of a species of marble, porphyry

Port, *n. Fr.* carriage, behaviour

Portecolise, *n. Fr.* a falling gate, a porteullis

Portor, *n.* a breviary, *Du Gange in v. Portiforium*

Pose, *n.* a rheum or defluention obstructing the voice, *catarris, corisa, Prompt. Parv.*

Pose, *v. Fr.* to suppose; I pose I had sinned so

Posse, *v. Fr.* to push

Possed, *part. pa.*

Possessioners, *n pl. Lat.* an invidious name for such religious communities as were endowed with lands, &c. the mendicant orders professed to live entirely upon alms

Post, *n. Sax.* a prop or support

Posté, *n. Fr.* power

Potecary, *n. Fr.* an apothecary

Potent, *n. Fr.* a crutch, a walking-stick

Potential, *adj. Fr.* strong, powerful

Potestat, *n. Fr.* a principal magistrate

Pouche, *n. Fr.* pocket, pouch

Poudre, *n. Fr.* powder, *poudres, pl.*

Poverté, *n. Fr.* poverty; it is to be pronounced po-verte, the final *e* being considered as an *e* feminine

Poulce, *n. Fr.* the poulse

Poule, *pr. n.* St. Paul

Pounsoned, *part. pa.* punched with a bodkin

Poupe, *v.* to make a noise with a horn

Pourchace, *n. Fr.* to buy, to provide

Pourchas, *n. Fr.* acquisition, purchase

VOL. I.

Poure, *v.* as pore

Poure, *adj. Fr.* poor

Pourtraie, *v. Fr.* to draw a picture

Pourtraour, *n.* a drawer of pictures

Pourtaiture, a picture or drawing

Practike, *n. Fr.* practice

Preamble, *n. Fr.* preface

Preambulatioun, *n.* preamble

Precious, *adj. Fr.* over nice

Predestiné, *n. Fr.* predestination

Predication, *n. Fr.* preaching, a sermon

Prees, *n. Fr.* a press or crowd

Prese, preve, *n. Fr.* proof, trial; at preve, on trial; with evil prese, evil may it prove. See With [trate

Prefect, *n. Fr. Lat.* a governor or principal magis-

Preise, *n. Fr.* commendation

Preise, *v. Fr.* to commend, to value

Prentis, *n. Fr.* an apprentice

Prentishode, *n.* apprenticeship

Preparat, *part. pa. Lat.* prepared

Prés, *adv. Fr.* near, so I suspect this word is to be understood; of prés, *i. e.* at hand, close; *de prés, Fr.* or perhaps of prés may be put for in a prees. See Prees

Prese, *v. Fr.* to press or crowd

Present, *v. Fr.* to offer, to make a present of; and with the wine she gan hem to present; and smote his head of, his fader to present

Presentarie, *adj. Lat.* present

Prest, *adj. Fr.* ready

Pretend, *v. Fr.* to lay claim to

Preterit, *adj. Fr.* passed

Preve, *v. Fr.* to try, to demonstrate by trial

Preve, *v. neut.* to turn out upon trial

Prick, *n. Sax.* a point, a pointed weapon

Prick, prike, *v. Sax.* to wound, to spur a horse, to ride hard

Prickasour, *n.* a hard rider

Pricking, *n.* hard riding

Prideles, *adj. Sax.* without pride

Prie, *v.* to look curiously

Prikke, *n.* See Prick

Prime, *adj. Fr. Lat.* first; at prime temps, at the first time; at prime face, at first appearance

Prime, *n.* the first quarter of the artificial day; half way prime, prime half spent; prime large, prime far advanced

Primerole, *n. Fr.* a primrose, *Conf. Am. 148. b.*

Primetemps, *n. Fr.* spring

Pris, *n. Fr.* price, praise; it be prys, or it be blame, *Conf. Am. 165*

Privé, *adj. Fr.* private; privé and apert, private and public; privé man, a man entrusted with private business

Prively, *adv.* privately

Privetee, *n.* private business

Processe, *n. Lat.* progress

Professioun, *n. Fr.* the monastic profession

Proheme, *n. Fr. Gr.* a preface

Proine, *v. Fr.* provigner; it seems to have signified originally to take cuttings from vines, in order to plant them out; from hence it has been used for the cutting away of the superfluous shoots of all trees, which we now call pruning,

Y y

and for that operation which birds, and particularly hawks, perform upon themselves, of picking out their superfluous or damaged feathers. In allusion to this last sense, Damian is said to proine and pike himself. Gower, speaking of an eagle, says,

For there he pruneth him and piketh,
As doth an hauke, whan him wel liketh.

Conf. Am. 139.

Prole, *v.* to go about in search of a thing
Provable, *adj.* *Fr.* capable of being demonstrated
Provende, *n.* *Fr.* *præbenda*, *Lat.* a prebend, a daily or annual allowance or stipend. See *Du Cange* in *v. Præbenda*
Provendre, *n.* a prebendary
Proverbe, *n.* *Fr.* *Lat.* a prudential maxim
Proverbe, *v.* to speak proverbially
Provostry, *n.* *Fr.* the office of provost or prefect; *præfectura*
Prow, *n.* *Fr.* profit, advantage
Prowesse, *n.* *Fr.* integrity
Pruce, *pr. n.* Prussia
Pruce, *adj.* Prussian
Pruned, *pa. t.* as proined
Ptholomee, *pr. n.*
Puella and *Rubeus*, the names of two figures in geomancy, representing two constellations in heaven: *Puella* signifieth Mars retrograde, and *Rubeus* Mars direct, *Sp.*
Pulchritude, *n.* *Lat.* beauty
Pullaile, *n.* *Fr.* poultry
Pulled hen, I have been told since that a hen, whose feathers are pulled or plucked off, will not lay any eggs; if that be true, there is more force in the epithet than I apprehended
Punice, *v.* *Fr.* to punish
Pure, *adj.* *Fr.* mere, very
Pured, *part. pa.* purified
Purfiled, *part. pa.* *Fr.* worked upon the edge
Purpos, *n.* *Fr.* purpose, design, proposition in discourse
Purprise, *n.* *Fr.* an enclosure
Purveyance, *n.* *Fr.* foresight, providence, provision
Purveye, *v.* to foresee, to provide
Puterie, *n.* *Fr.* whoredom
Putours, *n. pl.* whoremongers
Pythagoras, *pr. n.*

Q.

Quad, *quade*, *adj.* *Teut.* bad; none quad, nothing evil
Quaile-pipe, *n.* a pipe used to call quails
Quaire, *n.* *Fr.* a quire of paper, a book
Quakke, *n.* seems to be put for an inarticulate noise occasioned by any obstruction in the throat
Qualme, *n.* *Sax.* sickness, the noise made by a raven
Quappe, *v.* to tremble, to quake
Quarels, *n. pl.* *Fr.* square arrows
Queint, *n.* See *Junii Etymolog.* in *v.*
Queinte, *adj.* *Fr.* strange; I made of that lefe full

queint, he made it strange, cunning, artful, trim, neat
Queinte, *pa. t.* and *part.* of quench, *v.* *Sax.* quenched
Queintise, *n.* trimness, neatness, excessive trimness, cunning
Quelle, *v.* *Sax.* to kill, to destroy
Queme, *v.* *Sax.* to please; wel me quemeth, *Conf. Am. 68*
Quene, *n.* *Sax.* a queen, a harlot
Querne, *n.* *Sax.* a handmill
Querrou, *n.* *Fr.* one that works in a stone quarry
Queste, *n.* *Fr.* a prayer or demand
Quest-mongers, *n. pl.* packers of inquests or juries
Quethe, *v.* *Sax.* to say, to declare; I quethe him quite, is a translation of an old technical term in the law *Glamo illi quietum*; the original *Fr.* has only *Je quitte*
Quik, *adj.* *Sax.* alive
Quikkeft, *superl. d.* speediest; the quikkeft strete, the most expeditious way
Quiken, *v.* *Sax.* to make alive
Quiked, *part. pa.* made alive
Quiked, *pa. t.* of the same *v.* used in a neutral sense, became alive
Quinible, *n.* is the instrument, I suppose, which is called in barb. *Lat.* *quinterna* and *quintaria*. See *Du Cange* and *Carpentier* in *v. Quinternizare*, and *Mebus, Vita d' Ambr. Camald. lyrâ, limbutâ, quintariâ, ribetâ, avênâ, tibiisque*
Quishin, *n.* *Fr.* a cushion
Quistron, *n.* a beggar, *Gloss. Ur.* I rather believe it signifies a scullion, *un garçon de cuisine*
Quite, *adj.* *Fr.* free, quiet
Quite, *v.* *Fr.* to requite, to pay for, to acquit
Quitte, *part. pa.* requitted
Quitely, *adv.* freely, at liberty
Quod, *pa. t.* of quethe, said
Quoké, *pa. t.* of quake, *v.* *Sax.* trembled, shook

R.

Ra, *n.* *Sax.* a roe deer
Racine, *n.* *Fr.* a root
Rad, *radde*, *pa. t.* of rede, *v.* *Sax.* advised, explained, *Du. 281*
Radevore, tapestry; *ras*, in *Fr.* signifies any stuff, as *ras de Châlons*, *ras de Gennes*, *ras de Vore* or *Vaur*, may be a stuff made at such a place, *Gloss. Ur.* There is a town in Languedoc called *La Vaur*, but I know not that it was ever famous for tapestry
Raffles, *n. pl.* *Fr.* plays with dice
Raste, *pa. t.* of reve, *v.* *Sax.* took away
Rage, *v.* *Fr.* to toy wantonly
Ragerie, *n.* wantonness
Ragounées, should probably be *jagonées*, as in the orig. *Fr.* the precious stones called jacinths or hyacinths
Raines, *pr. n.* the city of Rennes in Bretagne
Rake-stele, *n.* *Sax.* the handle of a rake
Rakel, *adj.* hasty, rash
Rakelness, *n.* rashness
Raket, to play racket, nettles in dock out, seems to be used as a proverbial expression, signifying to

- be inconstant; what the original of the phrase may have been, is not so clear
- Ramage, *adj.* *Fr.* wild
- Rammish, *adj.* *Sax.* rank like a ram
- Rampe, *v.* *Fr.* to climb; she rampeth in my face; she rises against me, flies in my face
- Ran, *pa. t.* of *renne*, *rannen*, *pl.*
- Rape, *adv.* quickly; speedily
- Rape, *n.* haste
- Rape, *v.* *Sax.* to take captive; to rape and *renne*, to seize and plunder. See *Renne*
- Rasis, *pr. n.* an Arabian physician of the 10th century. See *Fabric. Bibl. Gr. t. xiii. p. 46, in v. Al-bubecar*
- Raskaile, *n.* a pack of rascals
- Rated, *part. pa.* chidden
- Rathe, *adv.* *Sax.* soon, early, speedily
- Rather, *comp. d.* sooner
- Rathest, *superl. d.* soonest
- Rather, *adj.* *Sax. comp. d.* former
- Ratouns, *n. pl.* *Fr.* rats
- Raught, *pa. t.* of *ræcan*, *v.* *Sax.* reached; on his way he raught, he sprang forth on his way.
- Raught, *pa. t.* of *reccan*, *v.* *Sax.* cared, recked
- Ravens, (ravinours) *n. pl.* plunderers
- Ravine, *n.* *Fr.* rapine; fowles of raven, birds of prey
- Ravishable, *adj.* *Fr.* ravenous
- Ravishing, *part. pr.* *Fr.* rapid; with a ravishing sweep; *rapido turbine*, orig. See *Swegh*
- Raunson, *n.* *Fr.* ransom
- Rayed, *part. pr.* streaked or striped, *Du. 252*
- Real, *adj.* *Fr.* royal
- Realler, *comp. d.* more royal
- Reallich, *adv.* royally
- Realtee, *n.* royalty
- Rebekke, *pr. n.* Rebecca
- Rebekke, *n.* *Fr.* a musical instrument
- Rechased, *pa. t.* *Fr.* a term in hunting, *Du. 579*
- Recche, *rekke*, *v.* *Sax.* to care
- Reccheles, *adj.* careless
- Recchelesnesse, *n.* carelessness
- Reclaime, *v.* *Fr.* a term in falconry for bringing the hawk to the fist by a certain call
- Reclaiming, *n.* calling, in the sense of *reclaime*
- Recomfort, *v.* *Fr.* to comfort
- Record, *n.* *Fr.* witness, testimony
- Recorde, *v.* *Fr.* to remember; it sometimes seems to be used in a technical legal sense, for what is called to enter upon record in judicial proceedings
- Recreandise, *n.* *Fr.* signifies fear, cowardice, desertion of principle
- Recreant, *adj.* one who yields himself to his adversary in single combat; for the full import of these two words, see *Du Cange* in *v. Recre-dentia*
- Recure, *n.* *Fr.* recovery
- Recured, *part. pa.* *Fr.* recovered
- Redde, *red*, *pa. t.* of *rede*, *v.* *Sax.*
- Reddour, *n.* *Fr.* strength, violence
- Rede, *n.* *Sax.* advice, counsel, a reed
- Rede, *v.* *Sax.* to advise, to read, to explain, *Du. 279*
- Rede, *adj.* *Sax.* red
- Redoute, *v.* *Fr.* to fear
- Redouting, *n.* reverence
- Redresse, *v.* *Fr.* to recover, to make amends for
- Refect, *part. pa.* *Lat.* recovered
- Refiguring, *part. pa.* *Fr.* figuring again
- Refrain, *n.* *Fr.* the burden of a song
- Refraining, *n.* the singing of the burden of a song
- Refreide, *v.* *Fr.* to cool
- Refrete, *n.* the same as *refrain*, in *Ber.* it is printed corruptly *strefreit*
- Reste, *riste*, *n.* *Sax.* a chink or crevice
- Refute, *n.* *Fr.* refuge
- Regals, *n. pl.* *Fr.* royalties
- Regard, *n.* *Fr.* at regard of, with respect to, in comparison of
- Regne, *n.* *Fr.* a kingdom
- Rehete, *v.* *Fr.* rehaite; to revive, to cheer
- Reheting, *n.* according to several mss. and all the reheting of his likes fore; some mss. and most of the printed editions read *richeffe* instead of *reheting*, *Gloss. Ur.* *Richeffe*, though almost as awkward an expression as the other, is more agreeable to the corresponding passage in the *Filostrato*—
- E sospir che gli avea a gran dovicia—
- and one can hardly conceive that it could come from any hand but that of the author. I can make no sense of *reheting*; but at the same time I must allow, that it is not likely to have been inserted by way of a gloss [orig.]
- Reile, *v. neut.* to roll; *reileth* diversely; *vogatur*, *Reines.* See *Raines*
- Rejoie, *v.* *Fr.* to rejoice
- Reke, *v.* *Sax.* to exhale
- Reken, *v.* *Sax.* to reckon, to come to a reckoning
- Rekes, *n. pl.* *Sax.* ricks (of corn)
- Relaies, *n. pl.* *Fr.* fresh sets of hounds, *Du. 362*
- Relese, *n.* *Sax.* what is left
- Relees, *n.* *Fr.* release
- Religiousite, *n.* *Fr.* persons of a religious profession, the clergy
- Relike, *n.* *Fr.* a relic, *relikes*, *pl.*
- Remenant, *n.* *Fr.* a remnant, a remaining part
- Remes, *n. pl.* *Fr.* realms
- Remissails, *n. pl.* *Fr.* orts, leavings
- Remorde, *v.* *Fr.* to cause remorse, to afflict
- Remuable, *adj.* *Fr.* moveable, inconstant
- Remue, *remewe*, *remeve*, *v.* *Fr.* to remove, *Conf. Am. 164. b.*
- Remued, *pa. t.*
- Renably, *adv.* *Fr.* reasonably
- Renegade, *n.* *Fr.* an apostate from Christianity
- Renecie, *v.* *Fr.* to renounce, to abjure
- Renges, *n. pl.* *Fr.* ranks; the steps of a ladder
- Renne, *v.* *Sax.* to run, to rend
- Renomee, *n.* *Fr.* renown
- Renovelaunce, *n.* *Fr.* a renewing
- Renovelle, *v.* *Fr.* to renew
- Rent, *v.* *Sax.* to tear or rend
- Repaire, *n.* *Fr.* resort
- Repaire, *v.* *Fr.* to return
- Repentant, *part. pr.* *Fr.* repenting
- Represe, *repreve*, *n.* *Fr.* reproof [sing]
- Repression, *n.* seems to be put for power of repres-

Requere, *v. Fr.* to require
 Rere, *v. Sax.* to raise
 Rescous, *n. Fr.* rescue
 Rescowe, *v. Fr.* to rescue
 Reson, *n. Fr.* reason, proportion
 Resons, *n. pl. Fr.* discourses
 Respite, *n.* may perhaps be put for respect
 Respiten, *inf. m. Fr.* to grant a respite, to excuse
 Resport, *n.* is probably put for respect
 Reste, *n. Sax.* repose
 Reste, *v. Sax.* to repose, to cease from labour
 Retenue, *n. Fr.* retinue; at his retenue retained by him
 Rethor, *n. Fr. Lat.* an orator or rhetorician
 Reve, *n. Sax.* a steward or bailif
 Reve, *v. Sax.* to take away
 Revel, *n. Fr.* entertainment, properly during the night, sport, festivity
 Revelour, *n.* a reveller
 Revelrie, *n.* pleasure
 Revers, *adj. Fr.* contrary
 Reverse, *v. Fr.* to overturn
 Revert, *v. Fr.* to turn back
 Reveft, *v. Fr.* to clothe again
 Rew, *n.* a row or line; on a rew, in a line; all by rew. See *A'row*
 Rewake, *v. Sax.* to waken again
 Reward, *n. Fr.* regard, respect; take reward of thine own value, have regard to thine own value; in reward of, in comparison with. See *Regard*
 Rewe, *v. Sax.* to have compassion, to suffer, to have cause to repent
 Reyes, *n. pl.* dances in use among the Dutch. *Reye*, Belg. *Chorea celerior, chorea in longam seriem*, Kilian
 Reyfed, "Les Gandois firent une *rese* sur les "marches de Haynault, et dedans le pays pille-
 "rent, bruslerent, et firent moult de maux."
Mem. de la March. p. 384, where a note in the margin says, "*Reyse* en bas Alemand," signify "un voyage ou course."
 Ribaninges, *n. pl.* seems to signify borders
 Ribaude, *n.* a poor labourer; but the word generally implies profligacy of manners, as well as meanness of condition. See *Du Gange* in *v. Ribaldus*
 Ribaudrie, *n.* ribaldry, indecent words or actions
 Ribibe, *n.* a sort of musical instrument
 Ribible, *n.* a small ribibe
 Richard, *pr.* I have vindicated the character of this heroic prince from an aspersion which was first cast upon him, I find, by Mr. Rymer, in consequence of a mistaken construction of a passage in Hoveden; I am tempted to add here the beginning of a poem which, having been composed after his death, by Anselm Faydit, must stand clear of all suspicion of having been either begged or bought

For chaufaes et tot lo maior dan,
 El maior dol, las! q eu anc mais agues,
 Et zo, don dei toz temps plaigher ploran,
 M aven a dir en chantar et retraire,
 De cel q era de valorz caps et paire.
 Li reis valenz *Rizard*, reis des Engles,

Es morz; ai Deus! cals perda et cals danz es!
 Can estraing moz et qan greu per audir!
 Ben a dur cor toz hom co po sofrir.

Morz es li reis, et son passat mil an
 Qanc tan pros hom no fo ne nol vit res,
 Ne ia mais hom non et del sen senblant,
 Tan larcs, tan pros, tan ardiz, tals donaire;
 Q Alixandres lo reis, qe venqi Daire,
 No cuit qe tan dones ni tan messes,
 Ni an Charles ni Artus tan valgues,
 Q a tot lo mon sen fez, q n vol ver dir,
 Als us doptar et als altres grazir.

Mf. Crofts, fol. 111.

Richesse, *n. Fr.* wealth, riches, *pl.* riches
 Riddeled, *part. pa.* plaited, *Gloss. Ur.*
 Ridden, *part. pa.* of ride; he is ridden, they be ridden, he had ridden
 Ride, *v. Sax.* he rideth him
 Riding, *n.* probably a procession
 Rife, rive, *v. Sax.* to thrust through
 Right, *n. Sax.* a right or due; at alle rightes, at all points
 Right, *adj.* good, true
 Right, *adv.* truly, rightly, exactly, completely; it is frequently joined to adjectives, as the adverbs well and full are, to augment their force
 Rime, *n. Fr.* a composition in rhyme; hence the title of The rime of Sire Thopas. Rime-doggerel. See *Doggerel*
 Rimeyed, *part. pa. Fr.* composed in rhyme or verse
 Rimpled, *part. pa. Sax.* wrinkled
 Ring, *v. Sax.* to make to sound, *v. neut.* to sound
 Rife, *n. Sax.* small twigs of trees or bushes
 Rishe, *n. Sax.* a rush
 Rist, for riseth
 Rit, for rideth
 Rivage. See *Arivage*
 Rive, *v. neut. Sax.* to split, to fall asunder
 Riving, *part. pr. Sax.* wrinkling; *ruyffelen*, Belg. *rugare*, Kilian
 Roche, *n. Fr.* a rock; roches, *pl.*
 Rode, *n. Sax.* the cross; rode-beem; it is also called the rode-tree, from its being made of wood
 Rode, *n. Sax.* complexion
 Rody, *adj. Sax.* ruddy
 Rose, *pa. t.* of rife; roste should probably be rose
 Rogge, *v. Sax.* to shake; roggyn or mevyn, *agito*, *Prompt. Parv.*
 Roigne, *n. Fr.* a scab, mange
 Roignous, *adj. Fr.* scabby, rough
 Rokette, *n. Fr.* a loose upper garment
 Rokking, *part. pr.* of rokke or rogge, *v. neut. Sax.* shaking, trembling; roggyn or waveryn, *vacillo*, *Prompt. Parv.*
 Rombel, *n.* a rumbling noise, rumour
 Rome, *v. Sax.* to walk about
 Rondel, *n. Fr.* a rhyme or sonnet which ends as it begins, *Cotgrave*
 Rone, *pr. n.* Rouen in Normandy
 Rone, *pa. t.* of rain, *v. Sax.* rained
 Ropen, *part. pa.* of repe, *v. Sax.* reaped
 Rosalgar, red arsenic, a preparation of orpiment
Chambers in *v. Realgar*. It should rather per-

haps have been written Rysalgar, with mss. c. i., as the Latin name is *rifigallum*

Rosen, *adj.* rosy

Roser, *n.* *Fr.* a rosebush

Rose-red, *adj.* red as a rose

Rote, *n.* *Sax.* a root

Rote, a root in astrology

Rote, *n.* a musical instrument. See *Du Cange* in *v. Rota*. Notker, who lived in the 10th century, says that it was the ancient *psaltarium*, but altered in its shape, with an additional number of strings, *Schilter*, in *v. Retta*

Rote, *n.* *Fr.* practice; by rote, by heart, *par routine*, *Cotg.*

Rote, *v.* *Sax.* to rot

Roten, *part. pa.*

Rother, *n.* *Sax.* the rudder of a ship

Rought, for raught, *part. t.* of *recche*

Rouke *v.* *Sax.* to lie close; but now they rucken in her nest *Comf. Am.* 72.

Roule, *v.* *neut. Sax.* to roll, to run easily; where some copies have royle. See *Reile*

Roume, *n.* *Sax.* room, space

Roume, *adj.* wide, spacious

Roumer, *comp. d.* wider

Rouncevall, *pr. n.*

Rouncie, *n.* *barb. Lat.* a common hackney horse. See *Du Cange* in *v. Runcinus*

Roundel, *n.* *Fr.* a sort of song. See *Rondel*—a circular figure

Route, *n.* *Fr.* a company

Route, *v.* to assemble in a company

Route, *v.* *Fr.* to snore, to rear,

Routhe, *n.* *Sax.* compassion, the object of compassion

Routheles, *adj.* without compassion

Row, *n.* a line of writing. See *Rew*

Row, *adj.* *Sax.* rough,—he looked wel rowe

Rowne, *v.* *Sax.* to whisper

Rubeus. See *Puella*

Rubins, *n.* *pl.* *Fr.* rubies

Rucking, *part. pr.* of *rucke*, or *rouke*, *v.* *Sax.* lying close

Rudde, *n.* *Sax.* complexion. See *Rode*

Ruddock, *n.* *Sax.* a bird called robin red-breast

Rufus, *pr. n.* a Greek physician, of whose works some are extant. See *Fabric. Bibl. Gr.* l. iv. c. 3.

Ruggy, *adj.* rough

Russel, *pr. n.* the fox is called Dan Russel, from his red colour, I suppose

S.

Sachelles, *n.* *pl.* *Fr.* small sacks

Sacked freres, friars wearing a coarse upper garment, called *saccus*, *Mat. Paris, ad. an.* 1257; “Eodem tempore novus ordo apparuit Londini de quibusdam fratribus ignotis et non prævis, qui, quia *saccis* incedebant induti, *Fratres Saccati* vocabentur.”

Sacre, *n.* *Fr.* a sacred solemnity

Sade, *adj.* *Sax.* grave, steady, sorrowful, repentant

Sadly, *adv.* steadily, carefully; this messenger drank sadly ale and wine; this messenger applied himself to drink, ale and wine

Sadness, *n.* gravity, steadiness

Saffron, *v.* *Fr.* to tinge with saffron

Saie for seie, *part. t.* of *se* *v.* *Sax.* saw

Saile, *v.* *Fr.* to assail

Sailours, *n.* *pl.* may mean dancers, from the *Lat. Fr.* so in *Pierce Plough*, 68, for I can—neither saylen, ne saute, ne syng, to the gyterne: the lines which Chaucer has here translated are not in the best edit. of the *Rom. de la Rose*, Paris, 1735, but they are quoted by Junius, *Etym. Ling. Angl.* in *v. Timbestere*, from an edit. of 1529;

Après y eut farces joyeuses,
Et batelleurs et batelleuses,
Qui de passe passe jouoyent.
Et en l'air ung bassin ruoyent,
Puis le scavoyent bien recueillir
Sur ung doy, sans point y faillir.

where it is plain that the author is speaking of jugglers rather than dancers

Saine, for seine, *part. pa.* of *se*, *v.* *Sax.* seen

Saine, *pr. n.* the river Seine

Salade, *n.* *Fr.* a sort of armour for the breast

Salades, *n.* *pl.* *Fr.* sallads of herbs

Salewe, *salve*, *v.* *Fr.* to salute

Salued, *part. pa.*

Saluings, *n.* *pl.* salutations

Samite, *n.* *Fr. Gr.* a rich silk. See *Du Cange* in *v. Examitus*

Sanguin, *adj.* *Fr.* of a blood-red colour

Sarlinishe, should perhaps be sarfinishe, from the *Fr. sarrafinois*, a sort of fine silk used for veils. See *Du Cange* in *v. Saracenicum* and *Saracenum*. It is still called sarcenet

Sarpleres, *n.* *pl.* packages of a larger size than sacks. See *Du Cange* in *v. Sarplerium*. *Surpil-lère*, *Fr.* a piece of canvas, &c. to wrap or pack up wares in. *Cotgrave*

Saten, *part. t.* *pl.* of *sit*, *v.* *Sax.*

Satalie, *pr. n.* the ancient Attalia

Save, *n.* *Lat.* the herb sage

Sauf, *adj.* *Fr.* safe. See *Vouche*—saved or excepted

Saveté, *n.* *Fr.* safety

Saule, for soule

Savour, *v.* *neut. Fr.* to taste, to relish

Savouring, *n.* *Fr.* the sense of tasting

Savourous, *adj.* sweet, pleasant

Sausefleme, a composition, of which two of the ingredients are brimstone and quicksilver

Sautes, *n.* *pl.* *Fr.* assault

Sautrie, *n.* *Fr. Gr.* a musical string instrument. See *Rote*

Sawe, *n.* *Sax.* speech, discourse,—a proverb or wise saying

Say, for sey, *part. t.* of *se*, *v.* *Sax.* saw

Scall, *n.* *Sax.* a scale or scab

Scalled, *adj.* scabby, scurfy

Scantilone, *n.* *Fr.* a pattern, a scantling

Scarce, *adj.* *Fr.* sparing, stingy

Scariot, *pr. n.* Judas Iscariot

Scarmishe, *n. Fr.* a skirmish, a battle
 Scathe, *n. Sax.* harm, damage
 Scatheful, scatheliche, *adj.* pernicious
 Scatheles, *adj.* without harm
 Schlaundre, *n. Fr.* slander
 Selendre, *adj.* slender
 Scochons, *n. pl. Fr.* scutcheons of arms
 Seolaie, *v. Fr.* to attend school, to study
 Script, *n. Fr.* a writing
 Scriptures, *n. pl. Fr.* writings, books
 Scriven-like, like a scrivener or writing-master;
comme un scribe
 Seames, *n. pl. Sax.* seams. *future*
 Secree, *adj. Fr.* secret
 Secrenesse, *n.* privacy [rical,
 Seculer, *adj. Fr.* of the laity, in opposition, to cle-
 sede, *v. Sax.* to produce seed
 See, *n. Fr.* a seat, fees, *pl.*
 See, *v. Sax.* to see; God you see; God him see;
 may God keep you or him in his sight; God
 you save and see; to look; on to see—to look
 on—that ye wolden sometime friendly on me see;
 that ye would sometimes look friendly on me
 See, *n. Sax.* the see; the grete see. A learned
 friend has suggested to me, that the sea on the
 coast of Palestine is called The Great Sea in the
 Bible, [See *Numb.* xxxiv. 6, 7, *Josb.* xv. 12,]
 which puts the meaning of the appellation in
 this passage out of all doubt
 Sege, *n. Fr.* a siege
 Seie, sey, *pa. t. of see, v. Sax.* saw, *part. pa.* seen
 Seignorie *n. Fr.* power
 Sein, *part. pa. of see, v. Sax.* seen
 Seinde, *part. pa. of senge, v. Sax.* finged
 Seint, *n. Fr.* ceinct, a girdle
 Seintuarie, *n. Fr.* sanctuary
 Seke, *v. Sax.* to seek
 Seke, *adj. Sax.* sick
 Selden, *adv. Sax.* seldom, felden time
 Sele, *n. Fr.* a seal, feles, *pl.*
 Self, selve, *adj. Sax.* answering to the *Belg.* self, the
Fr. même, the *Lat. ipse*, and the *Gr. Αυτος*. With
 the article prefixed, it answers to the *Lat. idem*
 and the *Goth. samo*, from whence our same; in
 the selve moment, in the same moment; in the
 selve place, in the same place.—These two
 usages of the *adj. self*, when joined to a substan-
 tive, might be confirmed by the uniform practice
 of all our writers from the earliest times down to
 SHAKESPEARE, but as they are both now obsolete,
 I choose rather to take this opportunity of adding
 a few words, upon the usage of the *adj. self*,
 when joined to a pronoun, in which light only
 it appears to have been considered by Wallis,
 when he pronounced it a substantive, answering
 nearly to the Latin *persona*.—Dr. Johnson, in his
 Dictionary, has very rightly established the pri-
 mary signification of self to be that of an adjec-
 tive; but in its connexions with pronouns he
 seems rather inclined to suppose it a substantive;
 first, because it is joined to possessive or adjec-
 tive pronouns, as my, thy, her, &c.; and, se-
 condly, because it has a plural number, selves,
 contrary to the nature of the English adjective.
 —The latter reason, I think, cannot have much

weight, when it is remembered that the use of
 selves, as the plural number of self, has been in-
 troduced into our language since the time of
 Chaucer. Selven, which was originally the ac-
 cusative *ca. sing.* of self, is used by him indiffe-
 rently in both numbers; I myselfen; ye your-
 selfen; he himselfen. The former reason al-
 so will lose its force, if this shall be admitted, that
 in their combinations with self, the pronouns
 my, thy, her, our, your, are not to be consider-
 ed as possessive or adjective, but as the old o-
 blique cases of the personal pronouns, I, thou,
 she, we, ye. According to this hypothesis the
 use of these combinations, with respect to the
 pronouns, is almost always solecistical, but not
 more so than that of himself in the nominative
 case, which has long been authorised by con-
 stant custom; and it is remarkable that a sole-
 cism of the same sort has prevailed in the French
 language, in which *moi* and *toi*, the abl. cases of
je and *tu*, when combined with *même*, are used as
 ungrammatically as our my and thy have just
 been supposed to be when combined with self. *Je*
l'ai vu moi-même, I have seen it myself; *tu le ver-*
ras toi-même, thou shalt see it thyself; and so in the
 accusative case, *moi-même* is added emphatically
 to me, and *toi-même* to te.—It is probable, I
 think, that these departures from grammar in
 both languages have been made for the sake of
 fuller and more agreeable sounds. *Je-même*, *me-*
même, *tu-même*, and *te-même*, would certainly
 sound much thinner and more languid than *moi-*
même and *toi-même*; and myself, thyself, &c. are
 as clearly preferable, in point of pronunciation,
 to Iself, meself, thouself, theeself, &c. though
 not all, perhaps, in an equal degree. It should
 be observed that itself, where a change of case
 in the pronoun would not have improved the
 sound, has never undergone any altera-
 tion

Selle, *n. Fr.* celle, cell
 Selle, for sille, *n. Sax.* a door-fill or threshold
 Selve, *adj.* See Self
 Sely, *adj. Sax.* silly, simple, harmless
 Selynesse, *n. Sax.* happiness
 Semblable, *adj. Fr.* like
 Semblaunt, *n. Fr.* seeming, appearance
 Semeliche, semely, *adj. Sax.* seemly, comely
 Semelieste, *superl. d.*
 Semelyhede, *n.* seemliness, comeliness
 Semisoun, *n. Lat.* a low or broken tone
 Semicope, *n.* a half or short cloak
 Sen, sene, *inf. m. of se, part. pa.*
 Send, for sendeth [long
 Sendall, *n.* a thin silk. See *Du Cange* in *v. Cenda-*
 senek, *pr. n.* Seneca the philosopher
 Senge, *v. Sax.* to singe
 Senior, *pr. n.*
 Sentence, *n. Fr.* sense, meaning, judgment
 Septe, *pr. n.* Ceuta, formerly Septa, in Africa,
 over-against Gibraltar
 Sepulture, *n. Fr.* grave
 Serapion, *pr. n.* Joannes Serapion, an Arabian
 physician of the 11th century, *Fabric. Bibl. Gr.*
t. xiii. p. 299

- Sere, *adj. Sax.* dry
 Sergeant, *n. Fr.* a squire attendant upon a prince or nobleman, a sergeant of the lawe. His name is derived from his having been originally a servant of the king in his law business, *serviens ad legem*, just as *serviens ad arma*. The king had formerly a sergeant in every country. *Spelman* in *v. Serviens*
 Scri, *n. Fr.* series
 Sermoning, *n. Fr.* preaching
 Servage, *n. Fr.* servitude, slavery
 Servand, *part. pr.* of serve, serving
 Serve, *v. Fr.* to serve. to behave to
 Set, for setteth; for sette, *pa. t.*
 Setewale, *n. Sax.* the herb valerian
 Sethe, *v.* to boil
 Sethe, for sethed, *pa. t.*
 Sette, *v. Sax.* to place, to put; setteth him down, placeth himself on a seat; yet sette I cas, yet I put the case, or suppose—to put a value on a thing, to rate; I n'olde sette his sorrow at a myte, I would not value his sorrow—to sette a man's cappe, to make a fool of him. Sette, *pa. t.*
 Seurement, *n. Fr.* security, in a legal sense
 Seuretee, *n. Fr.* certainty, surety, in a legal sense
 Sewe, *v. Fr.* to follow
 Sewes, *n. pl. Fr.* dishes
 Seye. See Seie
 Shadde, *pa. t.* of shede, *v. Sax.* fell in drops
 Shadde, *pa. t.* of shade, *v. Sax.* shaded, covered with shade
 Shadowy, *adj. Sax.* unsubstantial
 Shaft, *n. Sax.* an arrow
 Shal, *auxil. v. Sax.* is used sometimes with an ellipsis of the infinitive mood, which ought to follow it, beth swiche as I have ben to you and shal, *i. e.* shall be; first tell me whither I shal, *i. e.* shall go; yet all is don or shal, *i. e.* shall be done
 Shale, *n. Sax.* a shell or husk; but all n'is worthe a nutte shale
 Shalmies, *n. pl.* shalms, musical string instruments, otherwise called psalteries or sautries. See Rote
 Shame, *n. Sax.* shames dethe, a death of shame, a shameful death; to York he did him lede, schames dede to deie
 Shamefast, *adj. Sax.* modest
 Shape, *n. Sax.* form, figure
 Shapelich, *adj. Sax.* fit, likely
 Shapen, shape, *part. pa.* of shape, *v. Sax.* formed, figured, prepared
 Shawe, *n. Sax.* a shade of trees, a grove
 Shefe, *n. Sax.* a bundle; a sheaf of arrows; sheves, *pl.* of corn
 Shemeld, *pr. n.* Sheffield in Yorkshire
 Sheld, *n. Sax.* a shield; sheldes, *pl.* French crowns, called in *Fr. ecus*, from their having on one side the figure of a shield
 Shemering, *n. Sax.* a glimmering
 Shend, *v. Sax.* to ruin
 Shendship, *n.* ruin, punishment
 Shene, *adj. Sax.* bright, shining
 Shent, *part. pa.* of shend
 Shepen, *n. Sax.* a stable
 Shere, *v. Sax.* to cut—to shave
 Sherte, *n. Sax.* a shirt. I hadde lever than my sherte; I would give my shirt, *i. e.* all that I have—it seems to mean the linen in which a new-born child is wrapped; that shapen was my dethe erst than my sherte.
 O fatel sustren, whiche or any clothe
 Me shapen was, my destinee me sponne—
 Sens first that day that shapen was my sherte.
 Or by the fatal fuster had my dome.—
 Alas! that I ne had brought her in my shert! it seems to be put for skirt, (or lap) which perhaps was the original word.
 Shete, *v. Sax.* to shoot
 Shetes, *n. pl. Sax.* sheets
 Shette, shet, *v. Sax.* to close or shut. Shette, shet, *pa. t.* and *part.* so was hire herte shette in hire distresse, so was her heart overwhelmed with her distress
 Shift, *v. Sax.* to divide
 Shilde, shelde, *v. Sax.* to shield; God shilde! God shield or forbid
 Shipman, *n. Sax.* a mariner, the master of a barge
 Shiver, *n. Sax.* a small slice
 Shode, *n. Sax.* the hair of a man's head
 Shode, *part. pa.* of shoe, *v. Sax.* shod, having shoes on
 Shove, *pa. t.* of shove, *v. Sax.* pushed
 Shonde, *n. Sax.* harm
 Shope, *pa. t.* of shape
 Shore, *part. pa.* of shere
 Short, *v. Sax.* to make short
 Shot, *part. pa.* of shette, shut
 Shoter, *n. Sax.* a shooter. The yew tree is called shoter, because bows are usually made of it
 Shottes, *n. pl. Sax.* arrows, darts, any thing that is shot
 Shove, showve, *v. Sax.* to push; shove, *part. pa.*
 Shrewe, *v. Sax.* to curse
 Shrewe, *n. Sax.* an ill tempered curst man or woman; shrewes, *pl.*
 Shrewed, *adj. Sax.* wicked; shreude folk
 Shrewednesse, *n. Sax.* ill-nature
 Shrift, *n. Sax.* confession
 Shriste-faders, *n. pl. Sax.* father confessors
 Shright, for shricheth, shrieketh
 Shright, *pa. t.* of shrich, *v. Sax.* shrieked
 Shrive, *v. Sax.* to make confession
 Shriven, *part. pa.* I have ben shriven this day of my curat; I have made my confession this day to my curate
 Shroude, *v. Sax.* to hide
 Shulde, *pa. t.* of shal, should; shulden, *pl.*
 Shullen, shuln, shul, *ind. m. pr. t. pl.* of shal
 Sibbe, *adj. Sax.* related, allied
 Sie, for seie, saw
 Sift, *v. Sax.* to shake in a sieve
 Sigh, for seie, saw
 Sight, *pa. t.* of sike, fighed
 Signe, *v. Fr.* to appoint
 Signifer, *n. Lat.* the zodiac
 Signifaunce, *n. Fr.* signification
 Sike, *adj. Sax.* sick: it sometimes seems to be used as a noun, for sickness
 Sike, *v. Sax.* to sigh

Sike, *n. Sax.* a sigh, likes, *pl.*
 Siker, *adj. Sax.* sure
 Sikerde, *part. pa.* of siker, *v. Sax.* assured
 Sikernesse, *n.* security
 Sikerly, *adv.* surely
 Simplesse, *n. Fr.* simplicity
 Sin, *adv. Sax.* abbrev. of sithen, since
 Sinamone, *n. Fr.* cinnamon
 Sip, *n. Sax.* drink
 Sipher, *n.* a cypher or figure of 0 in arithmetic; although a sipher in augrim have no might in signification of itselfe, yet he yeveth power in signification to other. There is another passage in *Du. ver.* 435—40. which seems to imply that in Chaucer's time the numerals commonly called Arabian, had not been long in use in this country
 Sire, *n. Fr.* Sieur, Seigneur, a respectful title given formerly to men of various descriptions, as well as to knights; Sire knight, Sire clerk, Sire monk, Sire man of lawe. It was so usually given to priests that it has crept even into acts of parliament; *Rot. Parl.* 12 and 13 E. IV. n. 14. Sir James Thekenes preste; *i. H.* VII. p. 11. Sir Oliver Langton prest; Sir Robert Naylorp prest. Hence a Sir John came to be a nickname for a priest. Sire is sometimes put for personage; and melancholy that angry Sire.—Our Sire, our husband, our goodman, as the French in their old familiar language use *notre Sire*
 Sis, *n. Fr.* the cast of six, the highest cast upon a die
 Sit, for sitteth, it sit me not to lie, it doth not become me to lie; it fyt a kynge well to be chaste, *Conf. Am.* 168. b.
 Sithe, for sithes, *n. pl. Sax.* times
 Sithen, *sith, adv. Sax.* since
 Sithes, *n. pl. Sax.* sithes
 Sitte, *v. Sax.* to sit—to become, to suit with. See Sit
 Sittand, *part. pr.*
 Sitten, *part. pa.*
 Skaffaut, *n. Fr.* a scaffold, a wooden tower
 Skaffold, *n.* a scaffold or stage
 Skie, *n. Sax.* a cloud
 Skill, *n. Sax.* reason; skilles, *pl.*
 Skilful, *adj.* reasonable
 Skinke, *v. Sax.* to pour out, to serve with drink
 Skipte, *part. t.* of skippe, *v. Sax.* leaped
 Skogan, *pr. n.*
 Skorcle, *v. Sax.* to scorch
 Skrippe, *n. Fr.* escharpe, a scrip
 Slacke, *adj. Sax.* slow
 Slain, *part. pa.* of sle
 Slake, *v. Sax.* to appease, to make slack
 Slake, *v. neut.* to fail, to desist
 Slawe, *part. pa.* of sle
 Sle, *v. Sax.* to kill, to slay
 Sleer, *n. Sax.* a killer
 Sleightly, *adv. Sax.* cunningly
 Sleight, *n. Sax.* contrivance
 Sleightes, *pl.* suche sleightes as I shall you neven—to this line should probably be written
 Slen, *pr. t. pl.* of sle, *inf. m.*
 Slep, slepe, *part. t.* of slepe, *v. Sax.* slept
 Slete, *n. Sax.* sleet, a mixture of rain and snow

Slevetesse, *adj.* seems to signify idle, unprofitable, as it does still in vulgar language
 Slider, *adj. Sax.* slippery
 Sliding, *part. pr.* uncertain, *Lydg. Tra.* 99. b. sliding fortune, *lubrica fortuna*, orig.
 Slie, *sligh, adj. Sax.* cunning
 Slike, for swilke, *adj. Sax.* such
 Slit, for slideth
 Slit, *v. Sax.* to cut through, to cleave
 Sliver, *n. Sax.* a small slice or piece
 Slo, *v. Sax.* to slay
 Slogardie, *n. Fr.* sloth
 Slomberinges, *n. pl. Sax.* slumberings
 Sloppe, *n. Sax.* a sort of breeches
 Slow, *part. t.* of slo, flew
 Slowe, *n. Sax.* a moth. In the orig. *Fr. taigne.*
 Sluggy, *adj. Sax.* sluggish
 Smalish, *adj. Sax.* diminutive of smale or small
 Smerte, *v. Sax.* to smart, to suffer pain
 Smerte, seems to be used as an *adv.* smartly, *Gloss.* v. Forthought
 Smit, for smiteth, *ind. m. 3d pers. sing.*
 Smiteth, *imp. m. 2d pers. pl.* smite ye
 Smithie, *v. Sax.* to forge as a smith
 Smitted, for smitten, *part. pa.* of smite
 Smokles, *adj. Sax.* without a smock
 Smoterlich, *adj.* means, I suppose, smutty, dirty; but the whole passage is obscure
 Snewe, *v. Sax.* to snow, to be in as great abundance as snow
 Snibbe, *v. Sax.* to snub, to reprove
 Snow-white, *adj. Sax.* white as snow
 Soden, *adj. Sax.* sudden
 Soget, *n. Fr.* subject
 Soigne, *n. Fr.* care
 Sojour, *n. Fr.* stay, abode
 Soken, *n. Sax.* toll
 Sokingly, *adv.* suckingly, gently. See Souke.
 Solas, *n. Fr.* mirth, sport
 Solein, *adj. Fr.* one, single, fullen
 Solempne, *adj. Fr.* solemn
 Solempnely, *adv.* solemnly
 Soler hall, a solere window is used for the window of a loft or garret
 Som, *adj. Sax.* some; this is all and som, this is the whole; all and some, one and all
 Somdel, *adv. Sax.* somewhat, in some measure
 Somer, *pr. n.* In the treatise on the Astrolabe, Ch. professes to make use of the kalenders of the reverent clerkes frere John Somer and frere Nicholas Lenne. The kalendar of John Somer is extant in *ms. Cotton, Vesp. E. vii.*; it is calculated for 140 years from 1367, the year of the birth of Richard II., and is said in the introduction to have been published in 1380, at the instance of Joan mother to the king. The kalendar of Nicholas Lenne or Lyne, was calculated for 76 years from 1387. *Tanner* in *v. Nicolaus Linensis*. The story there quoted from Hakluyt, of a voyage made by this Nicholas in 1369, *ad insulas septentrionales antebac Europæis incognitas*, and of a book written by him to describe those countries *a gradu 54 usque ad polum*, is a mere fable, as appears from the very authorities which Hakluyt has produced in support of it

Somme, lo! Troilus—came riding with his tenthe
somme ifere; so this line stands in the edit., but
a ms. quoted in Gloss. *Ur.* instead of tenthe has
X. and ms. I. tenteth; perhaps the original
reading was XX. With his twentyfome ifere,
according to the Saxon mode of expression,
would signify together with some twenty of his
attendants. See *Hickes Gramm. A. S.* p. 32, 3.

Somme, *n. Fr.* a sum

Sommer, *n. Sax.* summer; a sommer game

Somone, sompne, *v. Lat.* to summon

Sompnour, *n.* an officer employed to summon de-
linquents to appear in ecclesiastical courts, now
called an Apparitor

Sond, *n. Sax.* fand [Fr. *sonde*

Sond, *n.* seems to signify a sounding line, from the

Sonde, *n. Sax.* a message, Goddees sonde, what
God has sent, God's gift

Sone, *adv. Sax.* soon

Sone, *n. Sax.* a son; sones, *pl.*

Sonken, *part. pa.* of sink, *v. Sax.* sunk

Sonne, *n. Sax.* the sun

Sonnish, *adj. Sax.* like the sun

Sooty, *adj. Sax.* foul with foot

Sop, *n. Fr.* a piece of bread dipped in any sort of
liquor; he toke a soppe, *Conf. Am.* 104

Sophime, *n. Fr. Gr.* a sophism, a subtle fallacy

Sore, *v. Fr.* efforer, to soar

Sort, *n. Fr.* chance, destiny

Sorted, *pa. t.* of sort, *v. Fr.* allotted

Sorwe, *n. Sax.* sorrow

Sory, *adj. Sax.* sorrowful; sory grace, misfortune.

See Grace and With

Sote, *n. Sax.* foot

Sote, swote, *adj. Sax.* sweet

Sote, *n. Fr.* a fool

Soted, *part. pa.* Fr. fooled, besotted

Sotel, *adj. Fr.* subtle, artfully contrived

Soth, *adj. Sax.* true, certain; sother, *comp. d.*

Soth, sothly, *adv.* truly

Sothe, *n. Sax.* truth

Sothfastnesse, *n. Sax.* truth

Sotherne, *adj. Sax.* southern

Sothness, *n. Sax.* truth, reality

Soth-saw, *n.* veracity, true saying

Soudan, *n.* a sultan, any Mahometan sovereign.

See *D'Herbelot* in v. *Sotban.*

Soudanneffe, *n.* the wife of a sultan

Souded, *part. pa.* consolidated, fastened together.

sowde-metal, *consolidum.* *Prompt. Parv.*

Souveraine, *adj. Fr.* excellent in a high degree

Soverainly, *adv.* above all

Souke, *v. Fr.* to suck

Souked, *part. pa.*

Souled, *part. pa.* Sax. endued with a foul

Soun, *n. Fr.* found, noise

Soundc, *v. Sax.* to make sound, to heal, *v. neut.* to
grow sound

Soune, *v. Fr.* to found; as fer as souneth into ho-
nestee, as far as is consonant to honesty; that
souneth unto gentillesse of love, that is conso-
nant to gentleness of love

Souning, *part. pr.*

Soupe, *v. Fr.* to sup, to take the evening meal,
soupen, *pl.*

Souper, *n.* supper, the evening meal

Souple, *adj. Fr.* supple, pliant

Sourde, *v. Fr.* to rise

Sours, *n.* a rise, a rapid ascent, the source of a
stream of water

Souter, *n. Lat.* a cobbler

Sowe, *v. Lat.* to sew; it was usual, and indeed
necessary, formerly to sew letters when they
were written upon parchment; but the prac-
tice continued long after the invention of paper

Sowe, *v. Sax.* to sow [409

Sowers, *n. pl.* fores, bucks in their fourth year, *Du.*

Span-newe, *adj.* seems to signify quite new, but
why it does so I cannot pretend to say

Spannishing, *n. Fr.* *espanouissement*, the full blow
of a flower

Spare, *v. Sax.* to refrain

Spareth, *imp. m. 2d pers. pl.*

Sparande, *part. pr.* sparing, niggardly

Sparhawk, *n. Sax.* a sparrowhawk

Sparre, *n. Sax.* a wooden bar

Sparred, *part. pa.* barred, bolted

Sparthe, *n. Sax.* an ax or halberd. See *Du Cange* in
v. *Sparth, Securis, Danica*

Speces, *n. pl. Fr.* sorts or kinds

Spede, *v. Fr.* to dispatch

Spedeful, *adj.* effectual

Spektakel, *n. Fr. Lat.* a spying-glass

Spell, *n. Sax.* sport, play, tale, or history

Spence, *n. Fr.* despence, a store-room for wine or
victuals

Spere, *n. Fr.* a sphere

Spere, *n. Sax.* a spear

Spered, sperred, as sparred

Sperme, *n. Fr. Gr.* seed

Spiced. I have since met with a passage in which
spiced, applied to conscience, seems to signify
nice, scrupulous. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Mad
Lover*, act iii. when Cleanthe offers a purse the
priestess says,

Fy! no corruption—

Gle. Take it; it is yours:

Be not so spiced: it is good gold,

And goodness is no gall to the conscience.

Spices, as Speces

Spille, *v. Sax.* to waste, to throw away, to destroy,
v. n. to perish

Spire, *n.* a stake; a corruption probably of *spere*,
Sax.

Spired, *Sax.* enquired

Spitous, *adj. Fr.* *dispiteux*, angry, spiteful

Spitously, *adv.* angrily

Splaie, *v. Fr.* despoiler, to unfold

Spone, *n. Sax.* a spoon

Sponne, *pa. t.* of spinne, *v. Sax.* spun

Spore, *n. Sax.* a spur

Sporne, *v. Sax.* to strike the foot against any thing

Spousaile, *n. Fr.* marriage

Spray, *n. Sax.* a twig or sprig

Spreint, *part. pa.* of sprenge, *v. Sax.* sprinkled

Springolds, *n. pl. Fr.* *espringalle*, machines for cast-
ing stones and arrows. See *Du Cange* in v. *Mus-
chetta*

Squames, *n. pl. Lat.* scales
 Squaimous, *squeamish*
 Squier, *n. Fr.* a squire
 Squier, *v.* to attend as a squire
 Squierie, *n.* a number of squires: and alle ther
 squierie; and of his squierie gentillemen auhtene
 Stace, *pr. n.* Satus the Roman poet
 Stacke, *n. Sax.* a stack of wood, &c.
 Stacke, *pa. t.* of stick, *v. Sax.* stuck
 Staff-sling, means, I suppose, a sling fastened to a
 staff. *Lyd. Tra.* 39, b. describes David as armed

With a *staffe slynge*, voyde of plate and mayle.

Staker, *v. Sax.* to stagger
 Stalke, *v. Sax.* to step slowly; full thefely gan he
 stalke; and to the bedde he stalketh styll, *Conf.*
Am. 32

Stalkes, *n. pl. Sax.* the upright pieces of a ladder
 Stamen, *flamin, n. Fr. estamine*, a sort of woollen
 cloth

Stant, for standeth

Starfe, *pa. t.* of sterve, died

Stark, *adj. Sax.* stiff, stout

Starlinges, *n. pl.* pence of sterling money

Staunche, *v. Fr.* to stop, to satisfy

Stele, *n. Sax.* a handle

Stellifie, *v. Lat.* to make a star

Stente, *v. Sax.* to cease, to desist

Stenten, *part. pa.*

Stepe, *adj.* seems to be used in the sense of deep,
 so that eyen stepe may signify eyes sunk deep
 in the head

Stere, *v. Sax.* to stir

Stere, *n. Sax.* a young bullock; a rudder

Stereles, *adj. Sax.* without a rudder

Sterefman, *n. Sax.* a pilot

Sterne, *n. Sax.* a rudder

Sterne, *adj. Sax.* fierce, cruel

Sterre, *n. Sax.* a star

Stert, *n. Sax.* a leap; at a stert, immediately

Sterte, *pa. t.* of sterte, *v. Sax.* leaped, escaped, ran
 away

Sterting, *part. pr.* leaping, nimbly

Sterting, as sterting

Sterve, *v. Sax.* to die, to perish

Steven, *n. Sax.* voice, sound; a time of performing
 any action previously fixed by a message, order,
 summons, &c.; at unset steven, without any
 previous appointment; they setten steven, they
 appointed a time

Stewe, *n. Fr.* a small pond for fish, a small closet,
 stewes, *pl.* stews, bawdyhouses

Steye, *v. Sax.* to ascend

Steyers, *n. pl. Sax.* stairs

Stibborne, *adj.* stubborn

Stike, *v. Sax.* to stick, pierce

Stile, *n. Sax.* a set of steps to pass from one field to
 another; by stile and eke by strete, every where
 in town and country

Stillatorie, *n. Fr.* a still

Stille, *adj. Sax.* quiet

Stithe, *n. Sax.* an anvil

Stives, as Stewes

Stoble-goos, a goose fed on stubble grounds

Stocked, *part. pa.* confined

Stole, *n. Fr. Lat.* part of the ecclesiastical habit,
 worn about the neck. See *Du Gange* in *v. Stola* 2.

Stole, *n. Sax.* a stool

Stonden, *part. pa.* of stonde or stande, *v. Sax.* stood

Stont, for stondeth

Stopen, *part. pa.* of stepe, *v. Sax.* stepped, advanced

Store, *n. Fr.* to stock or furnish

Store, *n.* any thing laid up for use; hence the
 phrase to tell no store of a thing, means to con-
 sider it as of no use or importance

Storial, *adj. Fr.* historical, true

Storven, *pa. t. pl.* of sterve

Stot, *n. Sax.* probably for stod, a stallion

Stote, *n.* a species of weasel, a polecat

Stound, *n. Sax.* a moment, a short space of time, in
 a stound, on a sudden; in stound, should prob-
 ably be in a stound: the orig. *Fr.* has *tantost*.

Stoundes, *pl.* times, seasons

Stoundemele, *adv.* momentarily, every moment

Stoupen, should probably be stopen.

Stoure, *n. Sax.* fight, battle

Strake, *v. Sax.* to proceed directly; stracken, strick-
 en; tendere, *Kilian*

Strange, *adj. Fr.* foreign, uncommon; he made it
 strange, he made it a matter of difficulty or nicety

Straughte, *pa. t.* of streche, *v. Sax.* stretched, *Conf.*
Am. 184

Stre, *n. Sax.* straw

Streight, *part. pa.* of Strecche, *v. Sax.* stretched

Streine, *v. Fr.* to constrain, to press closely

Streite, *adj. Fr.* straight; streite swerd

Stremeden, *pa. t. pl.* of streme, *v. Sax.* streamed
 flowed

Stremes, *n. pl.* the rays of the sun

Strene, *n. Sax.* flock, race, progeny

Strengest-faithed, *adj.* endowed with the strongest
 faith

Strepe, *v. Fr.* to strip

Strete, *n. Sax.* a street

Strike, *n. Sax.* a line, a streak; a strike of flax

Stripe, *v. Lat.* stirps, race, kindred

Stripe, *v.* as Strophe

Strode, *pr. n.* the philosophical Strode, to whom,
 jointly with the moral Gower, Chaucer directs his
 Troilus, was probably Ralph Strode, of Merton-
 college, Oxford. A. Wood, who had made the
 antiquities of that college a particular object of
 his inquiries, says only of him, "*Radulphus*
 "*Strode*, de quo sic vetus noster catalogus. Poeta
 "fuit et versificavit librum elegiacum vocat.
 "Phantasma Rodulphi. Claruit 1370." Some
 of his logical works are said to be extant in
 print, *Venet.* 1517, 4to. *Tanner* in *v. St. odous*.

Strof, *pa. t.* of strive, *v. Fr.* strove, contended

Stronde, *n. Sax.* a shore

Strother, *pr. n.* a town in the north

Stroute, *v.* to strut

Subarbes, *n. pl. Lat.* suburbs

Subfumigation, *n. Lat.* a species of charm by smoke

Subget, *adj. Fr. Lat.* subject

Sublimatorie, *n. Fr. Lat.* a vessel used by chemists in
 sublimation, *i. e.* separating certain parts of a
 body, and driving them to the top of the vessel
 in the form of a very fine powder

Substance, *n. Fr.* the material part of a thing
 Suckiny, *n. Fr. fouguenie*, a loose frock worn over
 their other clothes by carters, &c.
 Sue, *v. Fr.* to follow
 Sueton, *pr. n.* Suetonius the Roman historian
 Suffisance, *n. Fr.* sufficiency, satisfaction
 Suffisant, *adj.* sufficient
 Sugred, *part. pa.* sweetened as with sugar
 Supplie, *v. Fr.* to supplicate
 Surcote, *n. Fr.* an upper coat or kirtle
 Surplis, *n. Fr.* a surplice
 Surquedrie, *n. Fr.* presumption, an over-weening
 conceit
 Surrie, *pr. n.* Syria
 Surfanure, *n. Fr.* a wound healed outwardly on-
 ly
 Surveance, *n. Fr.* superintendence
 Suspect, *adj. Fr.* suspected,
 Suspect, *n.* suspicion
 Suspection, *n.* suspicion
 Sustier, *n. Sax.* sister; sustren, *pl.*
 Swa, *adv. Sax.* so
 Swale, *pa. t. of swell, v. Sax.* swelled
 Swappe, *v. Sax.* to throw down—to strike off—
v. neut. to fall down
 Swart, *adj. Sax.* black, of a dark colour
 Swatte, *pa. t. of swete, v. Sax.* sweated
 Swegh, *n. Sax.* a violent motion
 Swelt, *pa. t.*
 Swelte, *v. Sax.* to die, to faint
 Swerne, for sweren, *pl. n. of swere, v. Sax.* swear
 Sweven, *n. Sax.* a dream; swevenes, *pl.* it is
 written swevenis, for the sake of the rhyme
 Swiche, *adj. Sax.* corruption of swilke, such
 Swinke, *n. Sax.* labour
 Swinke, *v.* to labour
 Swire, *n. Sax.* the neck; it is more commonly
 written swere
 Swithe, *adv. Sax.* quickly, immediately
 Swive, *v. Sax.* to perform the act of generation.
 See *Junii Etymolog.* in *v.*
 Swoloue, *n. Sax.* a whirlpool
 Swonken, *part. pa.* of swinkie
 Swough, *n. Sax.* sound, noise—a swoon

T.

Tabard. See the quotation from Speght's *Gl.*
Discourse &c. n. 6.
 Tables, *n. pl. Fr.* a game so called—Tables Tole-
 tanes, the astronomical tables composed by or-
 der of Alphonso, X. King of Castile, about the
 middle of the 13th century, were called some-
 times *Tabulæ Toletane*, from their being adapted
 to the city of Toledo
 Taboure, *v. Fr.* to drum
 Tache, *n. Fr.* a spot or blemish
 Taillager, *n. Fr.* a collector of taxes
 Taille, *n. Fr.* a tally, an account scored on a piece
 of wood
 Take, *v. Sax.* to deliver a thing to another per-
 son
 Take, for taken, *part. pa.*
 Takel, *n. Sax.* an arrow

Tale, *v. Sax.* to tell stories; and namely when
 they taken longe *Conf. Am.* 27, b.
 Tale, *n.* speech, discourse—reckoning, account;
 litel tale hath he told of any dreame; he made
 little account of any dream
 Talent, *n. Fr.* desire, affection
 Taling, *n.* story-telling
 Tane, for taken
 Tapes, *n. pl. Sax.* bands of linen
 Tapinage, *n. Fr. en tapinois*, lurking, sculking
 about
 Tapiser, *n. Fr.* a maker of tapestry
 Tapite, *v. Fr.* to cover with tapestry
 Tappe, *n. Sax.* a tap or spigot which closes that
 orifice through which the liquor is drawn out
 of a vessel
 Tapstere, *n. Sax.* a woman who has the care of
 the tap in a public house; that office formerly
 was usually executed by women. See *The Ad-
 venture of the Pardoner and the Tapstere*, in the
Continuation of The Cant. Tales
 Tare, *pa. t. of tear, v. Sax.* tore
 Targe, *n. Fr.* a sort of shield
 Tars, *n.* cloth of Tars, Tartarium, a sort of silk.
 See *Du. Cange* in *v. Tarsicus, Tartarinus*
 Tas, *n. Fr.* a heap
 Tasseled, *part. pa.* adorned with tassels
 Taste, *v. Fr.* to feel—to examine
 Tatarwaggies, *n. pl.* the orig. is—*toutes fretelées de
 crottes*, all bedaggled with dirt
 Taverner, *n. Fr.* the keeper of a tavern
 Taure, *pr. n.* the constellation Taurus
 Tawe, *n. Sax.* tow
 Teche, *v. Sax.* teach
 Tein, *n.* seems to signify a narrow thin plate of
 metal, perhaps from the *Lat. Gr. tania*.
 Temps, *n. Fr.* time
 Tene, *n. Sax.* grief, *Conf. Am.* 140
 Tene, *v.* to grieve, to afflict
 Tercelet, tercell, *n. Fr.* the male hawk, the male eagle
 Terins, *n. pl.* a sort of singing bird called in *Fr.*
tarin. See *Coigrave* in *v.*
 Termagaunt, *pr. n.*
 Terrestre, *n. Fr.* earthly
 Tery, *adj. Sax.* full of tears
 Testeres, *n. pl. Fr.* headpieces
 Testes, *n. pl. Lat.* vessels for assaying metals
 Testif, *adj. Fr.* headstrong
 Tetch, *n.* as Tache
 Tewell, *n. Fr.* a pipe or funnel
 Textuel, *adj. Fr.* ready at citing texts
 Thacke, *n. Sax.* thatch
 Thacke, *v.* to thump, to thwack
 Than, *adv. Sax. quām, Lat.*
 Thank, *n. Sax.* thankfulness, good will; in
 thanke—is taken more—

En plus grant gré, sont receus orig.

So the phrases his thanks, hir thanks, answer to
 the French *son gré, leur gré*
 Thanne, than, *adv. Sax.* then
 Thar, *v. Sax. imperf.* behoveth
 Thatte, that, *pron. dem. Sax.* used as a relative;
 thatte Seint Peter had; so this verse should be

written—that he mighte, as much as he was able, *quod potuit*.—It is sometimes put, not inelegantly, for the same, with *gris*, and that the finest of the lond, of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous; shall fall a rain, and that so wild wood

Thatte, that, *conj. Sax. quód, Lat.*

The *prep. art. Sax.* The, when prefixed to adjectives or adverbs, in the *compar. deg.* is generally to be considered as a corruption of the *ablativus ca. sing.* of the Saxon *art.* used as a pronoun. The merier, *eo latius*; the more mery, *eo latiores*. Of the same construction are the phrases—yet fare they the werse, yet fare I never the bet. When the is repeated with a second *comparative*, either *adj.* or *adv.* the first the is to be understood in the sense of the *Lat. quo*.—The more it brenneth the more it hath desire—to consume every thing—*quo magis—eo magis—*

And ay the further that she was in age
The more trewe (if that it were possible)
She was to him in love, and more penible,

Sometimes the first the is omitted, as in the phrases ever lenger the werse; ever lenger the more; for certes if a man hadde a dedly wound, ever the lenger that he taried to warishe himself the more wold it corrupt—and also the wound wold be the werse for to hele

The *v. Sax.* to thrive

Theodome, *n. Sax.* thrift, success

Thefely, *adj. Sax.* like a thief

Thennes, thenne, *adv. Sax.* thence

Thennesforth, *adv. Sax.* from thennesforth, from that time forward

Theodomas, *pr. n.*

Theophrast, *pr. n.*

Ther, *adv. Sax.* there, in that place, is frequently used in the sense of where

Ther, in composition, signifies that, without including any idea of place. See Here. Ther abouten, thereagain, therbeforne, therby, therefore, therfro, thergaine, therof, theron, therto, therwith, therwithall

Thewes, *n. pl. Sax.* manners, qualities

Thider, *adv. Sax.* thither, to that place

Thiderward, *adv. Sax.* toward that place

Thilke, *adj. Sax.* this same, that same

Thinke, *v. Sax.* to consider; it is very frequently used as an impersonal in the *pr.* and *pa. t.* in the sense of seemeth or femed; me thinketh, him thinketh, him thoughte, hir thoughte, how thinketh you? hem thoughte

Thinne, *adj. Sax.* slender, small; a thinne imagination, *tenui imagine*; a thinne suspicion, *tenui suspicione*

Thirle, *v. Sax.* to pierce through

This, *pron. demonstr. Sax.* is sometimes put for the prepositive article

Thise, *pl.*

Tho, *prep. art. pl. da. Sax.* used as a demonstrative pronoun, those

Tho, *adv. Sax.* then

Thole, *v. Sax.* to suffer, and what mischese and male ease Christ for man tholed

Thore, is put for there, for the sake of the rhyme

Thorpe, *n. Sax.* a village

Thoughten, *pa. t. pl. of thinke, v. Sax.*

Thrall, *n. Sax.* a slave or villain

Thralle, *v.* to enslave

Thrašte, *pa. t. of threste*

Thred-bare, *adj. Sax.* having the threads bare, the nap being worn away

Thremote, should be written in two words, thre mote, as in the *Bodl. mss. Mot. n. Fr.* is explained by Cotgrave to signify, among other things, the note winded by a huntsman on his horn

Threpe, *v. Sax.* to call

Threste, *v. Sax.* to thrust

Threswold, *n. Sax.* a threshold

Threte, *v. Sax.* to threaten

Threttene, *num. Sax.* thirteen

Thridde, *adj. Sax.* third

Thrie, thries, *adv. Sax.* thrice

Thrilled, for thirled, *pa. t. of thirle*

Thringe, *v. Sax.* to thrust

Thriste, *pa. t. of threste*

Thronge, *pa. t. of thringe*

Thropes, for thorpes

Throstel, *n. Sax.* a thrush

Throw, *n. Sax.* time; but a throw; but a little while; any throw, any space of time; many a throw, many times

Thrust, for thurst, *n. Sax.* thirst

Thrusty, for thursty, *adj. Sax.* thirsty

Thurgh, *prep. Sax.* through, by means of

Thurghfare, *n. Sax.* a passage

Thurghout, *prep. Sax.* throughout, quite through

Thurrock, *n. Sax.* the hold of a ship

Thwitel, *n. Sax.* a whittle, *cultellus*

Thwitten, *part. pa. chipped with a knife, whittled, bien dolé, orig.*

Tidde, *part. pa. of tide, v. Sax.* happened; thee shulde never have tidde so faire a grace, so fair a fortune should never have happened to thee

Tidife, *n.* the tidife is mentioned as an inconstant bird in the *Leg. of G. W.* ver. 154; as doth the tidife for newfanglenesse. Skinner supposes it to be the titmouse

Tickel, *adj. Sax.* uncertain

Til, *prep. Sax.* to, hire till, to her.

Timbestere, *n.* is supposed by Lye, [*Etym. Ling. Angl. in v.*] to mean the same with tombestere. The orig. French has been quoted above in *v. Sailours*, which Chaucer has thus imitated;

There was many a timbestere
And sailours, that I dare well swere
Ycouthe hir craft full parfitly.
The timbres up full subtilly
Thei casten, and hent hem full oft
Upon a finger faire and soft,
That thei ne failed never mo.

According to this description it should rather seem that a timbestere was a woman, who plaid tricks with timbres, (basons of some sort

or other) by throwing them up into the air and catching them upon a single finger; a kind of balance-mistress.

Timbres, *n. pl. Fr.* basons. See Timbestere

Tipet, *n. Sax.* a tippet

Tipped, *part. pa.* headed, covered at the tip or top

Tiptoon, *n. pl. Sax.* tiptoes, the extremities of the toes

Tire, *v. Fr.* to pluck, to feed upon in the manner of birds of prey; for loke how that a goshaue tyreth

Tissue, *n. Fr.* a riband

Tite, for tideth happeneth

Titering, *n. Sax.* courtship

Titeles, *adj. Sax.* without title

Titus Livius, *pr. n.* the Roman historian

To, *adv. Sax.* too

To, *prep. Sax.* to day, on this day; to morwe, on the morrow, the following day; to yere, in this year.—To, in composition with verbs, is generally augmentative, the helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede, *i. e.* hewe and cut to pieces; the bones they to-breste, *i. e.* break in pieces; to-brosten, to-dashed, much bruised; to-rent, rent in pieces; to-swinke, labour greatly—Sometimes the *adv.* all is added; al-to-rent; all-to-share; entirely cut to pieces; all-to-shent; entirely ruined.

Tofore, toforen, *prep. Sax.* before

Togithers, *adv. Sax.* together

Told, *pa. t. of tell, v. Sax.* accounted

Tombestere, *n. Sax.* a dancing woman

Tombesteres, *pl.*

Tomedes, should be written as two words; to mede or to medes, according to the Saxon usage, signifies for reward, in return

Tone, *n. pl. Sax.* toes

Tonne-gret, *adj.* of the circumference of a tun

Toos, *n. pl.* as Tone

Torettes, *n. pl. Fr.* rings

Torne, *v. Fr.* to turn, the devil out of his skinne him torne! may the devil turn him inside out!

Torned, *part. pa.*

Tortous, *adj. Fr.* oblique, winding

Toteler, *n.* a whisperer, *totelar, susurro, Prompt. Parv.*

Totty, *adj. Sax.* dizzy

Tough, *adj. Sax.* difficult; and maketh it full tough, and takes a great deal of pains; or make it tough, or take pains about it; and made it neither tough ne queint; made no difficulty, or strangeness;

Al be it ye make it never sa tewche,

To me your labour is in vane.

Mf. Maitland, The Mourning Maiden.

Will. Swane makis wonder tewche

Ibid. Peblis to the play. ft. 21.

Tought, *adj. Sax.* tight

Tour, *n. Fr.* a tower

Tourret, *n.* should be written tourette, as in *mf.*

Hunter, a turret or small tower

Tout, *n.* the backside

Towail, *n. Fr.* a towel

Towardses, *prep. Sax.* toward

Towel, *n.* is perhaps put for tewel, a pipe, the fundament

Trace, *n. Fr.* a track or path—a train

Trade, *pa. t. of tread, v. Sax.* trod

Tragetour, *n.* as Tregetour

Traie, *v. Fr.* to betray

[draw

Trais, *n. pl. Fr.* traits, the traces by which horses

Tramissene, *pr. n.* a kingdom in Africa

Transmewe, *v. Fr.* to transform

Trappures, *n. pl. barb. Lat.* the clothes with which horses were covered for parade. See *Du Cange* in *v. Trappatura*

Trashed, *part. pa.* betrayed

Trate, *n.* Bp. Douglas frequently uses trat for an old woman, *Æn. vii. 416, invultus sese transformat aniles*—he renders—and hir in schape transformyt of ane trat

Trave, *n. Fr.* travail, a frame in which farriers put unruly horses

Tre, *n. Sax.* a tree, wood, Cristes tre, the cross

Trechour, *n. Fr.* a cheat

Trede-foule, *n.* a treader of hens, a cock

Tregetour, *n.* a juggler

Trenchant, *part. pr. Fr.* cutting

Trental, *n. Fr.* was a service of 30 masses, which were usually celebrated upon as many different days, for the dead. *Du Cange* in *v. Trentale*

Trepeget, *n. Fr.* a military engine. See *Du Cange* in *v. Trebuchetum*

Tresse, *n. Fr.* an artificial lock or gathering of hair. See *Du Cange*, in *v. Trica, Trecia*

Tressed, *part. pa.* gathered in a tress or tresses

Tressour, *n.* an instrument used in tressing the hair, or an ornament of it when tressed. See *Du Cange* in *v. Tressorium*

Tretable, *adj. Fr.* tractable

Trete, *v. Fr.* to treat, to discourse

Tretee, *n.* treaty

Tretis, *n.* treaty

Tretis, *adj. Fr.* long and well proportioned

Trewe, *n. Fr.* a truce

Trewe, *adj. Sax.* true faithful

True-love, *n.* Mr. Steevens has very obligingly suggested to me that there is a herb called true-love, according to Gerard, in his *Herbal*, edit. 1597, p. 328, *Herba Paris*; "One berrie or "herbe truelove—at the very top whereof "come forth fower leaves directly set one "against another, in manner of a Burgunnion "cross, or a true love knot, for which cause "among the auncients it hath been called herbe "true-love" This herb, however, to the best of my remembrance, is rather too large to be carried conveniently under the tongue. A trew-love of the same or another sort is mentioned in the concluding stanza of *The Court of Love*;

Eke eche at other threw the floures bright,
The primrose, the violete, and the gold;
So than as I beheld the royal sight
My lady gan me sodenly behold,
And with a trewelove plited many a fold;

She smote me through the very heart as blive,
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

- Triacle**, *n. Fr.* corruption of *theriaque*, a remedy in general
Trice, *v. Sax.* to thrust
Trie, *adj.* tried or refined, *Gloss. Ur.*
Trill, *v. Sax.* to twirl, to turn round
 — *v. neut.* to roll, to trickle
Trine, *adj. Fr.* triple; *trine compas*, the Trinity. See *Compas*.
Trippe, *n.* evidently means a small piece of cheese; *les tripes d'un fagot*, in *Fr.* are the smallest sticks in a faggot, *Cotgrave*
Triste, *v.* for *truiste*
Triste, *n.* a post or station in hunting, *Cowell*.— This seems to be the true meaning of the word, though the etymology is not so clear
Trumpe, *n. Fr.* a trumpet
Trompour, *n.* a trumpeter
Tronchoun, *n. Fr.* a spear without a head
Tron, *n. Fr.* a throne
Trophee, *pr. n.* it occurred to me that the reference might possibly be to the original of the *Troilus* and *Creseide*, which according to *Lydgate* was called *Trophe*, but I cannot find any such passage as is here quoted in the *Filostrato*.
Trotula, *pr. n.*
Trouble, *adj. Fr.* dark, gloomy
Troubler, *comp. d.*
Trowandise, for *Truandise*
Trowe, *v. Sax.* to believe
Truandise, *n. Fr.* begging, truanding
Tulle, *v. Sax.* to allure
Tullius, *pr. n.* M. Tullius Cicero
Turkeis, *n. Fr.* a sort of precious stone
Turkeis, *adj. Fr.* Turkish
Turmentise, *n. Fr.* torment
Turves, *pl.* of turf, *n. Sax.*
Twaine, *tway, tway, tweine*, *numer. Sax.* two
Tweifold, *adj. Sax.* double
Twies, *adv. Sax.* twice
Twight, *pa. t. & part.* of twitch, *v. Sax.* pulled, plucked
Twinne, *v. Sax.* to depart from a place or thing
Twinned, *part. pa.* separated
Twire, *v.* *twireth* seems to be the translation of *sufurrat*, spoken of a bird
Twist, *n. Sax.* a twig
Twiste, *v. Sax.* to twitch, to pull hard
Twiste, *pa. t.* twitched

V.

- Valence**, *pr. n.* Valencia in Spain, *Gloss. Ur.*
Valerie, *pr. n.*
Valerie, *Valerius*, *pr. n.* Valerius Maximus
Valure, *n. Fr.* value
Varien, *inf. m. v. Fr.* to change, to alter
Varien, *variaunt*, *part. pr.* changeable
Vassalage, *n. Fr.* valour, courage
Vavafour, *n.* probably a meddling landlord
Vauntour, *n. Fr.* a boaster
Vecke, *n. Ital.* an old woman

- Veine-blode**, *n.* blood drawn from a vein
Vendable, *n. Fr.* to be sold
Venerie, *n. Fr.* hunting
Venge, *v. Fr.* to revenge
Venime, *n. Fr.* poison, venom
Ventousing, *n. Fr.* cupping
Ver, *n. Lat.* the spring
Verament, *adv. Fr.* truly
Veray, *adj. Fr.* true
Verdegrese, *n. Fr.* *verd du gris*, the rust of brass, so called from its colour, a gray green
Verdite, *n. Fr.* judgment, sentence
Verger, *n. Fr.* a garden
Vermeile, *adj. Fr.* of a vermilion colour
Vermelet, *adj.* as *Vermeile*
Vernage, a kind of wine
Vernicle, *n.* diminutive of *Veronike*, *Fr.* a copy in miniature of the picture of Christ, which is supposed to have been miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief preserved in the church of St. Peter at Rome, *Du Cange* in *v. Veronica*. *Madox*; *Form. Angl.* p. 428. *Teslam.* *Joh. de Nevill*, an. 1386. "Item Domino Archiepiscopo Eborum fratri meo, i. vestimentum rubeum de velvet cum le *Verouike* [r. *Veronike*] in granis rosarum desuper brondata, [r. *broudata*]." It was used for persons returning from pilgrimages to bring with them certain tokens of the several places which they had visited, and therefore the Pardoner, who is just arrived from Rome, is represented with a vernicle sewed upon his cappe. See *Pierce Plough*, 28, b.—

An hundred amples on hys hatte sette,
Synges of Sinay and shells of Calice*,
And many a crouch on his cloke and kayes
of Rome,
The *Vernicle* before, for men should knowe
And se by hys signes whom he sought hadde.

- Vernish**, *v. Fr.* to varnish
Verre, *n. Fr.* glass
Versifour, *n. Fr.* a maker of verses, a poet
Vertules, *adj.* without efficacy
Vertuous, *adj. Fr.* active, efficacious
Vessell, *n. Fr.* *vaisselle*, plate
Ugly, *adj. Sax.* horrid, frightful
Viage, *n. Fr.* a journey by sea or land
Vicary, *n. Lat.* a vicar
Vice, *n. Fr.* the newel or upright centre of a winding staircase
Vigile, *n. Fr.* the eve of a festival, the wake or watching of a dead body
Vigilie, *n. Lat.* as *Vigile*
Vilanie, *n. Fr.* any thing unbecoming a gentleman
Vinolent, *adj. Lat.* full of wine
Virelaye, *n. Fr.* a round freeman's song, *Cotgrave*.
 There is a particular description of a *birdlai* in the *Jardin de Plaisance*, fol. 12. where it makes the *decima sexta species rhetorice Gallicane*
Virgile, *pr. n.*
Visage, *v. Fr.* to front, to face a thing
Vise, *n.* in *ms. A.* *veze*; perhaps we should read
 * *Mss. Gales.* Perhaps it should be *Calice*.

- Uese*, a Saxon word signifying violence, impetuosity
Vitaille, *n.* *Fr.* victuals
Vitellon, *pr. n.*
Unbetide, *v.* *Sax.* to fail to happen
Unbodie, *v.* *Sax.* to leave the body
Unbokel, *v.* *Fr.* to unbuckle, to open
Unce, *n.* *Fr. Lat.* ounce
Uncommitted, *part. pa.* office uncommitted oft annoyeth
Unconning, *part. pr.* ignorant
Unconning, *n.* ignorance
Uncovenable, *adj.* inconvenient
Uncouple, *v.* to go loose, metaphor from hounds
Uncouplinge, *n.* letting loose, *Du.* 377
Uncouth, *part. pa.* unknown. See *Couth*—uncommon, not vulgar, elegant
Uncouthly, *adv.* uncommonly
Undepartable, *adj.* not capable of departing
Underfong, *v.* *Sax.* to undertake
Undergrowe, *part. pa.* undergrown, of a low stature
Underling, *n.* *Sax.* an inferior
Undermele, *n.* *Sax.* I am rather inclined to believe, that undermele signifies the time after the meal of dinner, the afternoon; *undermele postmeridies*, *Prompt. Parv.*
Undern, *n.* *Sax.* the third hour of the artificial day, nine of the clock, till it was underne hygh and more, *Conf. Am.* 103, b.
Undernome, *pa. t.* of undermine, *v.* *Sax.* took up, received
Underpight, *pa. t.* See *Pight*; he dranke and wel his girded underpight, he drank and stuffed his girdle well
Underspore, *v.* *Sax.* to raise a thing by putting a spear or pole under it
Understonde, *part. pa.* understood
Undo, *v.* *Sax.* to unfold
Undoubtous, *adj.* undoubted; *indubitata*, orig. See *Doutous* [orig.]
Uneschauble, *adj.* *Sax.* unavoidable; *inevitabili*, orig.
Unese, *n.* uneasiness
Un-eth, *un-ethes*, *adv.* *Sax.* scarcely, not easily
Unfamous, *adj.* unknown
Unfestliche, *adj.* not suitable to a feast
Ungodely, *adj.* uncivil, ungenteel; that I n'olde holde hire ungodely; orig. *que je ne tenisse à vilaine*
Ungreable, *adj.* unpleasant, disagreeable, *ingratus*, orig.
Unhele, *n.* *Sax.* misfortune
Unhide, *v.* to discover
Unjoine, *v.* to separate, to disjoin
Unkindely, *adv.* unnaturally
Unknowable, *adj.* incapable of being known; *ignorabiles*, orig.
Unletted, *part. pa.* undisturbed
Unloven, *v.* to cease loving
Unlust, *n.* dislike
Unmanhode, *n.* cowardice
Unmighty, *adj.* unable
Unperegal, *adj.* unequal, *impar*, orig.
Unpin, *v.* *Sax.* to unlock
Unpitous, *adj.* cruel; *impia*
Unplite, *v.* to unfold
Unrest, *n.* want of rest, uneasiness, trouble
Unresty, *adj.* unquiet
Unright, *n.* wrong
Unsad, *adj.* unsteady
Unscience, *n.* not science
Unfely, *adj.* unhappy
Unset, *part. pa.* not appointed
Unshette, *pa. t.* opened
Unskilfully, *adv.* *Sax.* without reason; *injuria*, orig.
Unflekke, *part. pa.* unslack
Unfleep, *part. pa.* having had no sleep
Unsoft, *adj.* hard
Unsolempne, *adj.* uncelebrated; *incelebris*, orig.
Unsperte, *part. pa.* unbolted
Unstanchable, *adj.* inexhaustible; *inexhausta*, orig.
Unstanch, *part. pa.* unsatisfied; *inexpletam*, orig.
Unfufficient, *adj.* insufficient
Unswell, *v.* to fall after swelling
Unthank, *n.* no thanks, ill will
Until, *prep.* *Sax.* to, unto
Untime, *n.* an unseasonable time
Unto, *adv.* *Sax.* until
Untretable, *adj.* not admitting any treaty, *bellum inexorabile*, orig. *Πολέμας ἀνεπικύπτου*
Untressed, *part. pa.* not tied in a tress or tresses
Untriste, for untruste, *v.* to mistrust
Untrust, *n.* distrust
Unufage, *n.* want of usage; *insolentia*, orig.
Unware, *part. pa.* unforeseen
Unweld, *adj.* unwieldy
Unwemmed, *part. pa.* unspotted
Unweting, *part. pr.* not knowing; unweting of this *Dorigen*, *Dorigen* not knowing of this
Unwetingly, *adv.* ignorantly
Unwist, *part. pa.* unknown; unwist of him, it being unknown to him, not knowing
Unwit, *n.* want of wit
Unwote, *v.* *Sax.* to be ignorant
Unwrie, *v.* to uncover
Unyolden, *part. pa.* not having yielded
Voide, *v.* *Fr.* to remove, to quit, to make empty
Voide, *v. neut.* to depart, to go away
Voided, *part. pa.* removed
Volage, *adj.* *Fr.* light, giddy
Volatile, *n.* *Fr.* wild fowls, game
Volunie, *n.* *Fr.* will
Volupere, *n.* a woman's cap, a nightcap, *volyperre*, *kercher*, *teristrum*, *Prompt. Parv.* but *theristrum* signifies, properly, a veil. See *Du Gange* in v.
Vouche, *v.* *Fr.* vouchen sauf, to vouchsafe; voucheth sauf, vouchsafe ye; as ye have made present the king vouches it save
Up, *prep.* *Sax.* upon; ther lith on up my wombe and up my hed; there lieth one upon my belly and upon my head; up peine, upon pain; up peril, upon peril
Up, *adv.* *Sax.* up on lond, up in the country; up so down, upside down; the londe was tourned up so down, *Conf. Am.* 37, 159.—But *Pandare* up, an elliptical expression, of which it is not easy to give the precise meaning
Upper, *comp. d.* higher
Uphaf, *pa. t.* of upheve, *v.* *Sax.* heaved up
Upheping, *n.* *Sax.* accumulation; *cumulum*, orig.

Upon, *adv.* he had upon a courtepy of grene, he had on a courtepy, &c. or perhaps it is an elliptical expression for he had upon him
 Uppereft, *adj. superl.* highest
 Upright, *adj. Sax.* straight; upright as a bolt, straight as an arrow: it is applied indifferently to persons lying as well as standing
 Urchon, *n.* a hedgehog
 Ure, *n. Fr.* fortune, destiny
 Ured, *adj.* fortunate; well ured
 Usage, *n. Fr.* experience, practice
 Usant, *part. pr. Fr.* using, accustomed
 Utter, *comp. d. of out, adv. Sax.* outward, more out
 Uttereste, *superl. d.* uttermost
 Utterly, *adv. Fr. oultrément,* thoroughly, entirely
 Uttren, *inf. m. of utter, v. Sax.* to publish
 Uttren, *pr. t. pl.* give out, sell

W.

Wade, *pr. n.*
 Wade, *v. Sax. Lat.* to pass through water without swimming, to pass generally
 Wafers, *n. pl.* sellers of wafers, a sort of cakes
 Wafoures, *n. pl.* wafers, a sort of cakes
 Waget. Upon the whole, I believe that a light waget should be understood to mean a light blue colour
 Waimenting, *n. Sax.* lamentation
 Waine, *n. Sax.* a wagon
 Watte, *v. Fr.* to watch
 Wake, *v. Sax.* to watch
 Walachie, *pr. n.* Walachia
 Walà wa! or wa la wa! *interj. Sax.* wo! alas! wa-la wa the while! alas the time!
 Walnete, *n. Sax.* a walnut, *i. e.* a French or foreign nut
 Walwe, *v. Sax.* to tumble about, to wallow
 Walwing, *part. pr.*
 Wan, *pa. t. of win, v. Sax.* gained
 Wane, *v. Sax.* to decrease
 Wang, *n. Sax.* a cheek-tooth
 Wanger, *n. Sax.* a support for the cheek, a pillow
 Wanhope, *n. Sax.* despair
 Wantrust, *n. Sax.* distrust
 Waped, *part. pa. Sax.* stupified
 Wardecorps, *n. Fr.* body-guard
 Wardein, *n. Fr.* a warden of a college, a guard, a keeper of a gate; wardeins, *pl.* guard, watchmen
 Warderere, perhaps a corruption of the French *garde arriere*
 Wardrope, *n. Fr. garderobe,* a house of office
 Wariangles. See *Cotgrave* in *v. Pie* and *Engonée*, where he explains the wariangle to be a small woodpecker, black and white of colour, and but half as big as the ordinary green one
 Warice, warish, *v. Fr.* to heal; *v. neut.* to recover from sickness
 Warison, *n.* seems to be put for reward; *son merite*, orig. *warison, donativum, Prompt. Parv.*
 Warne, *v. Sax.* to caution, to apprise, to refuse
 Warnestore, *v.* to furnish, to store

Warrie, *v. Sax.* to abuse, to speak evil of
 Washen, *part. pa. of wash, v. Sax.*
 Wastel-brede, cake-bread, bread made of the finest flour, from the French *gaufteau*, a cake
 Wastour, *n. Fr.* a spoiler
 Wate, *v. Sax.* to know
 Watering of Seint Thomas, a place for watering horse, I suppose, a little out of the borough of Southwark, in the road to Canterbury. The same place, I apprehend, was afterwards called St. Thomas a Waterings, probably from some chapel dedicated to that saint. It was a place of execution in Queen Elizabeth's time. *Wood, Ath. Oxon. i. 229*
 Watlynge-strete, an old street in London
 Wave, *pa. t. of weave, v. Sax.* wove
 Wawe, *n. Sax.* a wave
 Way, *n. Sax.* is often put for the time in which a certain space can be passed through; a furlong way, mile way, any short time—at the leste wey, seems to signify no more than at the leste, at least—a devil way, a twenty devil way
 Way, *adv.* away; do way, do away, put away
 Waye, *v. Sax.* to weigh, to press with weight
 Webbe, *n. Sax.* a weaver
 Wedde, *n. Sax.* a pawn or pledge; to wedde for a pawn; and leyde to wedde Normandie
 Wede, *n. Sax.* clothing, apparel; under wede seems to signify, simply, in my clothing
 Wede, *n. Sax.* a weed, an useless herb
 Wehee, a word to express the neighing of a horse
 Weive, *v. Sax.* to forsake, to decline, to refuse
 Weive, *v. neut.* to depart
 Weived, *part. pa.* departed
 Weke, *v. Sax.* to grow weak
 Weke, *adj. Sax.* weak
 Wel, *adv. Sax.* well, in a good condition; wel was the wenche with him mighte mete; wel were they that thider might twin: it is joined to other adverbs and adjectives, as full and right are, and still more frequently to verbs, in the sense of the French *bien*
 Welde, *v. Sax.* to govern, to wield
 Weldy, *adj. Sax.* active
 Wele, *adv.* for well
 Wele, *n. Sax.* wealth, prosperity
 Weleful, *adj.* productive of happiness
 Welefulness, *n. Sax.* happiness
 Welke, *pa. t. of walk, v. Sax.* walked
 Welked, *part. pa. of welke, v. Sax.* withered, mouldy
 Welkin, *n. Sax.* the sky
 Well, *n. Sax.* a spring
 Welle, *v. Sax.* to flow as from a spring
 Welmeth, seems to be put for wellet, springeth
 Welte, *pa. t. of welde, governed* wielded
 Wel-thewed, *adj. Sax.* endowed with good qualities
 Welwilly, *adj. Sax.* favourable, propitious
 Wemme, *n. Sax.* a spot, a fault
 Wenche, *n. Sax.* a young woman
 Wend, for wened *pa. t. of wene, thought, intended*
 Wende, *v. Sax.* to go
 Wende, *n. Sax.* guess, conjecture, perhaps for wene

Wene, *n. Sax.* guess, supposition; withouten wene, not by supposition, certainly
 Wene, *v. Sax.* to think, to suppose
 Went, *part. pa.* of wende, gone
 Wente, went, *pa. t.* of wende; went at borde, lived as a boarder
 Went, *n.* a way, a passage, turn in walking; in bed
 Went, for want
 Wep, *pa. t.* of wepe, *v. Sax.* wept
 Wepely, *adj. Sax.* causing tears
 Wepen, *n. Sax.* a weapon
 Werche, *n. & v.* as Werke
 Were, for weren, *ind. m. pa. t. pl.* of am, *v. Sax.* it is sometimes used for had, according to the *Fr.* custom, with reflected verbs, *thise riotoures*—were set hem in a tavern for to drinke—*s'étoient mis, étoient assis*
 Were, *subj. m. pa. t. sing.* e. g. as it were; if en of hem were; whether she were; were it; it were a game
 Were, *v. Sax.* to wear, to defend
 Were, *n. Fr.* guerre, confusion; his herte in such a were is set, *son cuer a mys en tel guerre*; and in a were gan I wexe and with myself to dispute
 Were, *n. Sax.* for catching fish
 Weren, *pa. t. pl.* of am, *v. Sax.* were
 Werke, *n. Sax.* work; werkes *pl.*
 Werke, *v. Sax.* to work
 Werne, *v.* as Warne
 Werre, *n. Fr.* war
 Werrie, *v. Fr.* to make war against
 Werse, *comp. d.* of ill, *adv. Sax.* worse
 Werse, *comp. d.* of bad, *adj. Sax.* worse
 Werste, *superl. d.* of bad, worst
 Wery, *adj. Sax.* weary
 Wesh, *pa. t.* of wash, *v. Sax.* washed
 Westren, *inf. m. v. Sax.* to tend toward the west
 Wete, *adj. Sax.* wet
 Wete, *v. Sax.* to wet
 Wete, *v. Sax.* to know
 Wether, *n. Sax.* the weather—a castrated ram
 Weting, *n. Sax.* knowledge
 Weve, *v. Sax.* to weave
 Weve, *v. Sax.* to put off, to prevent. See Weive
 Wex, *pa. t.* of waxe or wexe, *v. Sax.* waxed, grew
 Wexing, *part. pr.* increasing
 Weyeden, *pa. t. pl.* weighed. See Waye
 What, *pron. interrog. Sax.* is often used by itself as a sort of interjection; what!
 What, *pron. indef.* something, a little; what for love and for distress, partly for love and partly for distress; wete ye what? do ye know something? ne elles what? nor any thing else.—What, when joined to a *n. subst.* (either expressed or understood) is a mere *adj.* answering to *qualis*, *Lat. quel*, *Fr.* what they weren, what men they were; what so, what that, whatsoever
 Wheder, *conj. Sax.* whether
 Whelm, *v. Sax.* to sink, to depress
 Whennes, *adv. Sax.* whence
 Wher, *conj. Sax.* whether
 Wher, *adv. Sax.* where
 Wher, in composition, signifies which. See Here
 VOL. I.

and Ther—Wherfore, wherein, wherthrough, wherwith, when used interrogatively, wherof, wherwith
 Whether, *adj. Sax.* which of two
 Whette, *part. pa.* of whet, *v. Sax.* sharpened
 Whiche, *pron. rel. Sax.* who, whom, *adj.* what, what sort of
 While, *n. Sax.* time; in this mene while, in the mean time; how he might quite hire while, how he might requite her time, pains, &c. God can ful wel your while quite
 Whilere, *adv. Sax.* sometime before
 Whilke, *adj. Sax.* which
 Whilom, *adv. Sax.* once, on a time
 Whine, *v. Sax.* to utter a plaintive cry
 White, *adj. Sax.* fair, specious
 White, *v.* to grow white
 Who, *pron. interrog. Sax.*
 Whos, *gen. ca. sing.*
 Who, *pron. rel. Sax.* it is generally expressed by that
 Whos, *gen. ca. sing.*
 Who, *pron. indef.*

For wel thou wost the name as yet of her.
 Amonges the people, as who sayth halowed is

where as who sayth seems to be equivalent to as one should say: the same phrase is sometimes used to introduce a fuller explanation of a passage, as we might use—that is to say—who so, who that, whosoever
 Wide-where, *adv. Sax.* widely, far and near
 Wierdes, *n. pl. Sax.* the Fates or Destinies
 Wif, *n. Sax.* a wife, a woman
 Wifhood, *n. Sax.* the state of a wife
 Wifles, *adj. Sax.* unmarried
 Wifly, *adj. Sax.* becoming a wife
 Wight, *n. Sax.* a person, male or female, a small space of time, weight, a witch; wytych cleped nyght mare
 Wight, *adj. Sax.* active, swift; of hem that ben deliver and wight, *Conf. Am.* 177, b.
 Wightes, *n. pl.* witches
 Wike, *n.* for weke
 Wiket, *n. Fr.* a wicket
 Wikke, *adj. Sax.* wicked
 William St. Amour, a doctor of the Sorbonne in the 13th century, who took a principal part in the dispute between the university of Paris and the Dominican friars
 Willy, *adj. Sax.* favourable
 Wils, for willen, *pl. n.* of wille, *v. Sax.*
 Wilne, *v. Sax.* to desire
 Wimple, *n. Fr.* a covering for the neck; it is distinguished from a veil, which covered the head also

Wering a vaile instede of wimple,
 As nonnes don in hir abbey.

Windas, *n. Fr.* guindal, an engine to raise stones, &c.
 Winde, *v. Sax.* to turn round
 Winde, as Wende, to go
 Winne, *v. Sax.* to gain, to attain

- Wirry, *v. Sax.* to worry
 Wis, *adv. Sax.* certainly. See Y-wis
 Wife, *n. Sax.* manner
 Willy, *adv. Sax.* certainly
 Wisse, *v. Sax.* to teach, to direct; so God me wisse, so may God direct me
 Wiste, *pa. t. of wiste, v. Sax.* knew
 Wite, *v. Sax.* to know, to blame, to impute to
 wite it the ale of Southwark, impute it to the ale of Southwark; or blame the ale of Southwark for it
 Wite, *n. Sax.* blame
 With, *prep. Sax.* is used in the sense of by; was with the leon frette, was devoured by the lion; in with his thought, in with hire bosom, within his thought, within her bosom; with meschance, with meschance and with misaventure, with sorwe and with meschance; with sorwe, are phrases of the same import as God yeve him meschance, God yeve me sorwe: they are all to be considered as parenthetical curses, used with more or less seriousness; and so are the following phrases, with evil prefe, with harde grace, with sory grace
 Withholde, *v. Sax.* to stop
 Withholden, withhold, *part. pa.* retained, detained
 Withsain, *inf. m. of withsay, v. Sax.*
 Withsaye, withseye, *v.* to contradict, to deny
 Witnesse, *n. Sax.* testimony, a witness
 Witnessfully, *adj. Sax.* evidently
 Witte, *n. Sax.* understanding, capacity—to my witte; in my judgment
 Wittes, *n. pl. Sax.* the senses of man
 Wive, *n.* for wif
 Wivere, *n. Sax.* a serpent
 Wlatsom, *adj. Sax.* loathsome
 Wo, *n. Sax.* wo, sorrow—wo were us; wher me were wo, are expressions derived from the Saxon language, in which us and me were equivalent to *nobis* and *mibi*, without the addition of the *prep.* to
 Wo, *adj. Sax.* sorrowful
 Wo-begon, far gone in wo. See begon
 Wode, wood, *adj. Sax.* mad, violent; for wode, like any thing mad
 Wode, *v. Sax.* to grow mad
 Wodewale, *fr. n.* of a bird
 Wol, *v. auxil. Sax.* to will; it is used sometimes by itself, the *inf. v.* being understood, as she to water wolde, *i. e.* would dissolve into water; and to the wood he wol, *i. e.* will go, ful many a man hath he begiled er this, and wol. *i. e.* will beguile
 Wolde, *pa. t.* would, wolden, *pa. t. subj. m.* wolde God! God wolde! o that God were willing! ne wolde God! God forbid!
 Wold, *part. pa.* willed, been willing [man
 Womanhede, *n.* womanhood, the virtue of a wo-
 Wonde, *v. Sax.* wandian, to desist through fear
 Wonde, *pa. t.* may perhaps be deduced from winde, to turn, to bend,
 The yerde is bet that bowen wol and winde
 Than that that brest.
 Wonde, *pa. t.* of wone, dwelled
 Wonder, *adj. Sax.* custom, usage, habitation, a heap, an assembly
 Wone, *v. Sax.* to dwell
 Woneden, *pa. t. pl.* dwelled
 Woned, *part. pa.* wont, accustomed
 Woning, *n. Sax.* a dwelling
 Wonne, *part. pa.* of winne, *v. Sax.* won, conquered, begotten
 Wont, *part. pa.* of wone, accustomed
 Wood, *adj.* as wode
 Woodness, *n.* madness
 Wordles, *adj. Sax.* speechless
 Worldes, *gen. ca.* of world, *n. Sax.* is used in the sense of the *adj.* worldly; every worldes fore; my worldes blis
 Wort, *n. Sax.* a cabbage, new beer in a state of fermentation
 Worth, *v. Sax.* to be, to go, wo worthe! unhapy be, or wo be to! to climb, to mount
 Wost, for wotest, knowest
 Wote, wot, *v. Sax.* to know, wot, *pa. t.* knew
 Wowe, (rather woe) *v. Sax.* to woo
 Woxe, *pa. t.* of waxe, or wexe, *v. Sax.* grew
 Woxen, *part. pa.* grown
 Wraie, *v. Sax.* to betray, discover
 Wrathen, *inf. m. v. Sax.* to make angry
 Wrawe, *adj. Sax.* peevish, angry; wrawe, froward, ungoodly
 Wrawnness, *n.* peevishness
 Wray, as wraie
 Wreche, *n. Sax.* revenge
 Wrenches, *n. pl. Sax.* frauds, stratagems
 Wrest, *v. Sax.* to twist; the nightingale with so great might hire voice began out wrest—to turn forcibly
 Wrethen, *part. pa.* of writhe—wrethen in fere, twisted together; in Urry's edit. it is printed—within in fere
 Wreye, *v.* as wraie
 Wrie, *v. Sax.* to cover, to turn, to incline
 Wright, *n. Sax.* a workman
 Wrine, for wrien, *inf. m.* of wrie [ture
 Wring, *v. Sax.* to squeeze so as to express moisture
 Writhe, *v. Sax.* to twist, to turn aside,
 Writhing, *n.* a turning
 Wronge, *part. pa.* of wring; his bondes wronge: later writers have used the same expression of distress
 Wrote, *v. Sax.* to dig with the snout as swine do; or like a worm that wroteth in a tree
 Wrought, *part. pa.* of worke, *v. Sax.* made

Y.

Y, at the beginning of many words, especially verbs and participles, is merely a corruption of the Saxon ge, which has remained uncorrupted in the other collateral branches of the Gothic language; what the power of it may have been originally, it is impossible, perhaps, now to determine: in Chaucer it does not appear to have any effect upon the sense of a word, so that there seems to be no necessity for inserting in a glossary such words as yblessed, ygranted, &c. which differ not in signification from blessed, granted, &c. Some, however, of this sort are

- inserted, which may serve at least to shew more clearly the extent of this practice in Chaucer's time. Several other words are shortly explained under this letter, of which a more full explanation may be found under their respective second letters
- Ya, *adv. Sax.* yea; it is used emphatically with both; ya bothe yonge and olde; ye both faire and good
- Yaf, *pa. t. of yave, v. Sax.* gave
- Yalte, for yelte; yalte him, yieldeth himself
- Yare, *adj. Sax.* ready
- Yate, *n. Sax.* a gate
- Yave, *pa. t. of yeve, v.* gave
- Y-be, *part. pa.* been
- Y-beried, *part. pa.* buried
- Y-bete, *v. a.* to beat, stamp, imprint
- Y-blent, *part. pa.* of blend, blinded
- Y-blent, *part. pa.* of blenche, shrunk, started aside
- Y-blint, *part. pa.* blinded
- Y-bore, *part. pa.* of bere, born, carried
- Y-bourded, *part. pa.* jested
- Y-brent, *part. pa.* of brenne, burned
- Y-chaped, *part. pa.* furnished with chapes, from *chappe, Fr.*
- Y-clouted, *part. pa.* wrapped in clouts or rags
- Y-corven, *part. pa.* cut. See Corven
- Y-coupled, *part. pa.*
- Y-crafed, *part. pa.* broken
- Y-deled, *part. pa.* distributed
- Y-dight, *part. pa.* adorned
- Y-do, *part. pa.* done, finished
- Y-drawe, *part. pa.* drawn
- Ye, *adv. Sax.* as Ya; ye wis, yea certainly
- Yeddinges, would seem to mean story-telling
- Yede, *part. pa.* of yede, *v. Sax.* went
- Yeste, *n. Sax.* a gift; yestes, *pl.*
- Yelde, *v. Sax.* to yield, to give, to pay; God yelde you! God reward you!
- Yelleden, *pa. t. pl. of yelle, v. Sax.*
- Yelpe, *v. Sax.* to prate, to boast
- Yelte, for yeldeth
- Yeman, *n. Sax.* a servant of middling rank; a bailiff—Yemen, *pl.*
- Yemanrie, *n.* the rank of yeoman
- Yerde, *n. Sax.* a rod or staff, sod, earth
- Yere, for yeres, *n. pl. Sax.* years
- Yerne, *adj. Sax.* brisk, eager
- Yerne, *adv.* briskly, eagerly, early, soon, immediately
- Yerne, *v.* to desire, to seek eagerly
- Yerning, *n.* activity, diligence
- Yeten, *part. pa.* gotten
- Yeve, *v. Sax.* to give
- Yeven, yeve, *part. pa.* given
- Y-falle, *part. pa.* fallen
- Y-feined, *part. pa.* lordes hestes may not ben y-feined, the commands of sovereigns may not be executed with a feigned pretended zeal, they must be executed strictly and fully
- Y-fette, *part. pa.* fetched
- Y-fonden, *part. pa.* found
- Y-fostered, *part. pa.* educated
- Y-freten, *part. pa.* devoured
- Y-geten, *part. pa.* gotten
- Y-glofed, *part. pa.* flattered
- Y-glued, *part. pa.* glewed, fastened with glew
- Y-go, *part. pr.* gone
- Y-grave, *part. pa.* buried
- Y-halowed, *part. pa.* kept holy
- Y-herd, *part. pa.* covered with hair
- Y-hold, *part. pa.* beholden
- Y-japed, *part. pa.* tricked, deceive!
- Y-lesfed, *part. pa.* relieved. See Liffed
- Y-liche, y-like, *adj. Sax.* resembling, equal
- Y-liche, y-like, *adv. Sax.* equally, alike
- Y-limed, *part. pr.* limed, caught as with bird-lime
- Y-logged, *part. pa.* lodged
- Y-masked, *part. pr.* mashed or meshed; *masche, Belg. macula retis, Kilian.*
- Y-meint, *part. pa.* mingled
- Y-mell, *prep. Sax.* among
- Ymeneus, *pr. n.* Hymenæus
- Ynough, ynow, *adv. Sax.* enough
- Yolden, *part. pa.* of yelde, given, yielded, repaid
- Yonghede, *n. Sax.* youth
- Yore, *adv. Sax.* of a long time, a little before; yore agon, long ago; in olde times yore, of time yore
- Yove, *pr. t. of yeve, v.* gave
- Youre, *pron. pass. Sax.* is used for yourres
- Youres, *pron. pass. Sax.* used generally when the noun to which it belongs is understood or placed before it; he was an old felaw of yourres, he was an old companion of yours, *i. e.* of or among your companions
- Youthhede, *n. Sax.* youth
- Yoxe, *v. Sax.* to hiccough
- Y-piked, *part. pa.* picked, spruce
- Y-queint, *part. pa.* quenched
- Y-reight, *pa. t.* reached
- Y-reken, seems to be put for the old *part. pr.* y-rekend, reeking
- Yren, *n. Sax.* iron
- Y-rent, *part. pa.* torn
- Y-ronne, y-ronnen, *part. pr.* run
- Y-sateled, *part. pa.* settled, established
- Yse, *n. Sax.* ice
- Y-served, *part. pa.* treated
- Y-sette, *part. pa.* set, placed, appointed
- Y-shent, *part. pa.* damaged
- Y-thove, *part. pa.* pushed forwards
- Y-flawe, *part. pr.* slain
- Y-sope, *pr. n.* So the name of the fabulist was commonly written, notwithstanding the distinction pointed out by the following technical verse:
- Ysopus est herba, sed Æsopus dat bona verba
- In this and many other passages which are quoted from Æsop, by writers of the middle ages, it is not easy to say what author they mean: the Greek collections of fables which are now current under the name of Æsop were unknown, I apprehend, in this part of the world at the time that Melibee was written: Phædrus too had disappeared: Avienus indeed was very generally read. He is quoted as Æsop by John of Salisbury, *Polycrat.* l. vii. *Ut Æsopo, vel Avieno, credas.*—But the name of Æsop was chiefly appropriated to
- Z z ij

the anonymous * author of sixty fables in elegiac metre, which are printed in Nevelet's collection under the title of *Anonymi Fabulae Aesopicae*. I have seen an edition of them in 1503 by Wynkyn de Worde, in which they are entitled simply *Aesopi Fabulae*: the subjects are for the most part plainly taken from Phædrus, but it may be doubted whether the author copied from the orig. work of Phædrus or from some version of it into Latin prose. Several versions of this kind are still extant in ms.; one of very considerable antiquity has been published by Nilant, *Lugd. Bat.* 1709, under the title of *Fabulae Antiquae*, together with another of a later date, which is pretended to have been made from the Greek by an emperor Romulus, for the use of his son Tiberinus. They all shew evident marks of being derived from one common origin, like what has been observed of the several Greek collections of Aesopian fables in prose; [*Dissert. de Babrio*. Lond. 1776,] like them too they differ very much from one another in style, order of fables, and many little particulars; and, what is most material, each of them generally contains a few fables, either invented or stolen by its respective compiler, which are not to be found in the other collections, so that it is often impracticable to verify a quotation from Aesop in the writers of Chaucer's time, unless we happen to light upon the identical book of fables which the writer who quotes had before him.—I have printed in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 29, a fable of The Cock and the Fox, from the Fr. Aesop of Marie, which is not to be found in any other collection that I have seen, and which I suppose furnished Chaucer with the subject of his Nonnes Preestes Tale. In the same Fr. Aesop, and in a Lat. ms. *Bibl. Reg.* 15. A. vii. there is a fable which I think might have given the hint for Prior's Ladle. A country fellow one day laid hold of a faery, (*un folet*, Fr.) who in order to be set at liberty gave him three wishes.

* Several improbable conjectures, which have been made with respect to the real name and age of this writer, may be seen in the *Menagiana*, vol. i. p. 172, and in *Fabric. Bibl. Lat.* vol. i. p. 376, ed. Patav. In the edition of these fables in 1503 the commentator (of no great authority I confess) mentions an opinion of some people that *Galsterus Anglicus fecit hunc librum sub nomine Aesopi*. I suppose the person meant was Gualterus Anglicus, who had been tutor to William II. King of Sicily, and was Archbishop of Palermo about the year 1170. I cannot believe that they were much older than his time, and in the beginning of the next century they seem to be mentioned under the name of Aesopus, among the books commonly read in schools, by Eberhardus Bethuniensis in his *Labyrinthus*, tract iii. *de Versificatione*, v. 11. See *Leyser, Hist. Poet. Med. Aevi*, p. 826. About the middle of the same century (the 13th) Vincent of Beauvais, in his *Speculum Histor.* l. iii. c. 2. gives an account of Aesop, and a large specimen of his fables, *quas Romulus quidam de Graeco in Latinum transtulit, et ad filium suum Tyberinum dirigit*; they are all, as I remember, in the printed Romulus.—Soon after the invention of printing, a larger collection of the fables of Aesop was made and published in Germany; it is divided into six books, to which is prefixed a life of Aesop *e Graeco Latina per Rimicium facta*. The three first are composed of the sixty elegiac fables of the metrical Aesopus, with a few trifling variations, and to each of them is subjoined a fable on the same subject in prose from Ro-

The man goes home and gives two of them to his wife. Soon after, as they are dining upon a chine of mutton, the wife feels a longing for the marrow, and not being able to get at it, she wishes that her husband had an iron beak (*long com li wittecoes*, Fr. long as the woodcock) to extract this marrow for her: an excrescence being immediately formed accordingly, the husband angrily wishes it off from his own face upon his wife's.—And here the story is unluckily defective in both copies; but it is easy to suppose that the third and last remaining wish was employed by the wife for her own relief.—A fable upon a similar idea, in Fr. verse, may be seen in ms. *Bodl.* 1687, the same, as I apprehend, with one in the king's library at Paris, [ms. n. 7989, fol. 189,] which is entitled *Les quatre souhaits Sainx Martin*. See *Fabliaux*, &c. t. iii. p. 311. The vanity of human wishes is there exposed with more pleasantry than in the story just cited, but, as it often happens, with much less decency.

Y-sowe, *part. pa.* sown
Y-spreint, *part. pa.* sprinkled
Y-sticked, *part. pa.* stucked, thrust
Y-storven, *part. pa.* dead
Y-take, *part. pa.* taken
Y-teyed, *part. pa.* tied
Y-trespased, *part. pa.* trespassed
Y-vanished, *part. pa.*
Yvel, *adj. Sax.* bad, unfortunate
Yvel, *adv. Sax.* ill
Yvoire, *n. Fr.* ivory
Y-wimpled, *part. pa.* covered with a wimple
Y-wis, *adv. Sax.* certainly
Y-wrake, *pa. t.* wreaked, revenged
Y-wrie, *part. pa.* covered

Z

Zeuxis, *pr. n.* a Grecian painter

mulus: book iv. contains the remaining fables of Romulus in prose only. The fifth book has not more than one or two fables which had ever appeared before under the name of Aesop; the rest are taken from the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Calilabu Damna*, and other obscurer authors. The sixth and last book contains seventeen fables with the following title, *Sequuntur fabule nove Aesopi ex translatione Remicii*. There has been a great diversity of opinion among learned men concerning this Remicius or Rimicius, (See *Praef. Nilant*.) while some have confounded him with the fictitious Romulus, and others have considered him as the editor of this collection. I have no doubt that the person meant is that Rinucius who translated the life of Aesop by Planudes and ninety-six of his fables from the Greek into Latin, about the middle of the 15th century. (See *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Aet.* in v. *Rimicius*. In his translation of the epistles of Hippocrates, ms. *Harl.* 3527, he is styled in one place *Verdensis*, and in another *Castilionensis*.) All the fables from Remicius which compose this sixth book, as well as the life of Aesop, which is professedly taken from Rimicius, are to be found in this translation by Rinucius. There is an edition of it printed at Milan about 1480, but it might very possibly have come into the hands of the German collector in ms. some years sooner, as the first translations of Greek authors were eagerly sought after and circulated through Europe at that time, when very few persons were capable of reading the originals.

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